



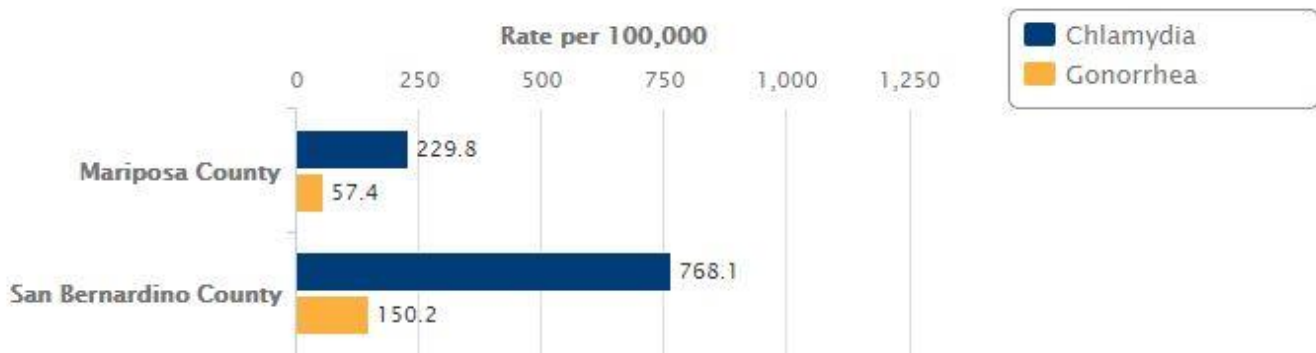
GETTING AHEAD OF THE STD AND TEEN PREGNANCY EPIDEMIC ON OUR COUNTY

School Districts in San Bernardino County need to update their sex education curriculum and prevent the teen pregnancy and STD epidemic from escalating among our youth. The California Healthy Youth Act, AB 329, requires all public schools in California to update their sex education curriculums to be medically accurate, unbiased, and include sex trafficking prevention, rape awareness & LGBTQ issues. Acknowledging these subjects has proved to prevent STDs and teen pregnancy, as well as other risky behaviors that can prevent students from being successful. The growing statistics in our area show a need for policymakers and educators to take action. The students in San Bernardino County schools need to educate themselves with the knowledge to protect their health and their future.

A Growing Problem in Our County

Teens in San Bernardino County have some of the highest sexually transmitted disease (STD) and teen pregnancy rates in the state. It is estimated that in a typical San Bernardino class of 500 high school students, as many as 320 will engage in sexual intercourse by graduation. Half of these students will contract a sexually transmitted disease by the time they reach age 25. In San Bernardino County between 2011 and 2015, there was a 54% increase in reported gonorrhea cases among young adults aged 15 to 24. In 2015, approximately 1,800 of the counties 7,000 reported cases of chlamydia were among teens aged 15 to 19 and the third most cases in the state for teens. While overall teen pregnancy rates have dropped in the U.S., by 2014 nearly 1,700 teens in California aged 15 to 17 gave birth every week. In 2010, the state spent \$956 million on teen pregnancies. The increased number of teen pregnancies and cases of STDs cost the county thousands of dollars each year. Increasing education efforts and outreach programs in schools is the only way to prevent the problem from escalating.

STD rates for teens in Mariposa and San Bernardino County



Understanding the Problem and the Solution

Elizabeth Morales was raised a Catholic by her activist, pro-life mother, Susana. It was taboo to say sexually reproductive words within the home while Elizabeth was growing up. Words like vagina had to be replaced with "peechee" or "hoohoo." Susana was not happy to see anything sexual at all, whether it was commercials, movies, or revealing clothing. She opposed sex education in schools, strongly. After Elizabeth showed Susana the benefits of teaching adolescents their options instead of shaming them, Susana became a supporter of sex education in schools. Susana understands that it is not all about sex, but it is about allowing young adults the chance to an education about their own bodies. It is about giving the youth a chance to lead their lives with the proper tools and information to protect their own health.

The California Healthy Youth Act

The California Healthy Youth Act (CHYA) mandates schools to update their current sexual health education curriculum, to include LGBT issues, rape awareness, healthy relationships, and sex trafficking prevention. The school district must notify all parents that their child will be given the class and give parents the option to excuse their child for any reason. The school must help encourage positive behaviors toward body image, gender, sexual orientation, relationships, and family. Schools must also teach the benefits of being in committed, healthy relationships and having long term partners. Students will be encouraged to be open with their parents about their concerns revolving around sex. CHYA was created to help youth be best prepared for real life, health-detrimental situations. The law was passed in 2016, but we are asking schools to update their curriculums by the 2018-2019 school year and have full implementation by the 2021-2022 school year.

Other Successful Cases

The Oakland Unified School District (OUSD) and the CDC's Division of Adolescent and School Health worked together to create well-implemented programs in Oakland.

- In 2011, the OUSD and found a lack of consistency in sexual health education across the district.
- The school district sought feedback from experts to begin rolling out the program a few schools at a time. By 2015, they had participation from all 15 high schools in their new 'Sex Ed Week.'

- After implementing the program, they have seen a reduction of students having unprotected sex.

The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) created a multi-agency collaboration to create a comprehensive and age appropriate program.

- The program started back in 2002 to provide high schools students from Compton Unified School District and LAUSD free condoms and access to age-appropriate, reproductive health clinics.
- The It's Your Game program was created and used to promote abstinence while informing students about healthy relationships, goal-setting, ways to say no and delaying techniques.
- They have also seen a reduction in unsafe practices as well as other risky behaviors, such as drug abuse and staying in unhealthy relationships.

San Bernardino County Health Team

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