

## **iVive Tu Juventud! Live Your Youth!**

- Minnesota's Latino adolescent population is increasing rapidly—In 1995 there were 16,200 10-19 year olds (2% of the population); in 2000, 24,300 (3%); it is estimated that there will be 31,200 (4%) by 2005 and 34,100 (5%) by 2010.
- It is critical that communities pay attention to the needs of Latino teens and families providing them with educational, social and health care services to help them postpone sexual activity and avoid early pregnancy.
- Minnesota ranks second highest in Latino teen pregnancy rates in the country (second to North Carolina)—The average rate for 1998-2000 was 140.6/1000 females, ages 15-19.
- While Latino teen pregnancy rates have been declining in the country as a whole, the Minnesota Latino teen pregnancy rate increased 43% from 1989-1991 to 1998-2000 (from 98.1 pregnancies/1000 teens 15-19 years old to 140.6/1000).
- Latino teens are at higher risk for early pregnancy and early parenting due to many factors that combine to limit their future options for success, including:
  - ✧ high rate of poverty
  - ✧ high rate of school dropout
  - ✧ lack of culturally appropriate health and social services
  - ✧ lack of opportunities to participate in healthy youth development activities
  - ✧ earlier onset of sexual activity and a large percentage of sexually active teens never or rarely using contraceptives
  - ✧ lack of communication between parents and youth about sexual health, teen pregnancy prevention issues

### **THE POSTER**

Parenting and non-parenting students at the Guadalupe Alternative Program in Saint Paul, as well as Spanish-speaking adults in adult education classes, contributed their perspectives on teen pregnancy to the development of this poster. Conversations were facilitated by Sandy Naughton, Health Educator at Health Start, a community-based health clinic in Saint Paul. According to Sandy, "We had to consider the diversity within Spanish-speaking populations. Influences such as religion, financial status and education were only some of the influencing factors for teens and pregnancy. There was disagreement as to how these issues mattered to teens and their decision-making. There was one unifying belief: that the family is the deciding influence. What the family thinks, believes in, communicates and teaches is what will determine the choices teens will make."

*"The teens' advice to other teens is heartfelt, generous and clear. Wait to become a parent."*

MOAPPP is very grateful to all of the poster teens for sharing their message and to Health Start and the Guadalupe Alternative Program for their collaboration on the project.

**Minnesota Organization on Adolescent Pregnancy, Prevention and Parenting  
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