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HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES AGENCY (HHS) PROGRAMS

7. The Cal-Learn Program serves welfare recipients under 19 years of age who are custodial parents or pregnant. The purpose is to encourage teen parents to stay in or return to high school or an equivalent program and earn a diploma or its equivalent.
8. Cal-Learn is a mandatory program for those who are under 19 years of age, receive cash assistance through Cal-WORKS, are pregnant or reside with his or her child in the same qualifying family, and have not obtained a high school diploma or equivalent.
9. The Cal-Learn Program provides financial incentives to those who stay on the program. These financial incentives will be removed if the participant drops out.
10. The Adolescent Family Life Program (AFLP) is available to pregnant or parenting teens. Goals of AFLP are to help the young parents give birth to a healthy baby, complete their education, avoid future unplanned pregnancies, and develop good parenting skills.
11. AFLP is offered to girls up to age 18 and boys up to age 20. Teens work with a Social Service Worker who provides guidance and resources.
12. The HHS has an outreach program to help those with perinatal depression. There are effective and well-researched options for treatment available to teen mothers. The most common complication from childbirth is perinatal depression. Often referred to as perinatal mood and anxiety disorders, symptoms can appear any time during pregnancy or up to 12 months after childbirth and are experienced by women regardless of age.
13. For Fiscal Year 2013-2014, there were a total of 269 pregnant teens on the Medi-Cal program in Tulare County. Of these, 192 were 18 to 19 years of age and 77 were 15 to 17 years of age.
14. For Fiscal Year 2013-2014, there were a total of 203 pregnant teens which were recipients of the CalFresh program in Tulare County. Of these, 150 were 18 to 19 years of age and 53 were 15 to 17 years of age
15. For Fiscal Year 2013-2014, there were a total of five Foster Care recipients who had been pregnant. Three were age 17, one was age 18, and one was age 19. None were 15-16 years of age. As of this writing, there are no pregnant teens in the Foster Care program.

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION (GENERAL):

16. A \$357,000 sex education grant was given to seven organizations in the San Joaquin Valley by the state in 2014, was shared between Fresno, Kings, Madera, and Tulare Counties. The goal of the funding was to reduce teen pregnancy rates through education.

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17. Teen pregnancy rates at Orosi High School are reported to have dropped 50% from 2010 to 2014 with teen pregnancy awareness outreach funded by grant awards.
18. California Education Code 51933 states, “school districts may provide comprehensive sexual health education”. California Education Code 51934 states, “...all pupils in grades 7 to 12, inclusive, receive HIV/AIDS prevention education ...at least once...in middle school and at least once in high school.”

TULARE COUNTY SCHOOL SURVEYS:

19. All the schools visited by the Tulare County Grand Jury met the California State requirement to teach HIV/AIDS prevention once in middle school and once in high school.
20. The classroom teachers or Tulare County Office of Education (TCOE) staff taught the HIV/AIDS lessons after receiving at least two days of training by TCOE.
21. Parents are notified by a school letter prior to starting an HIV/AIDS and sexual education unit in the classroom.
22. All parents are given a choice whether their student should take the class.
23. The curriculum was decided by the local school board. The following HIV/AIDS instruction was implemented at some of the schools the Grand Jury visited:
 - a. Positive Prevention HIV/STD Prevention for California Youth
 - b. Focus on Youth
 - c. Making Proud Choices
 - d. Making a Difference
 - e. American Red Cross/Center for Disease Control
24. The following teen pregnancy prevention programs were in place at the schools the Grand Jury visited:
 - a. Positive Prevention Plus Supplemental Program
 - b. Choices Prevention Program
 - c. Health Science Adolescent Center for Disease Control
 - d. California State National Health Standards
 - e. Safe – Jim Sullivan Prevention Program
25. When asked by the Grand Jury, school personnel outlined factors which seem to affect the teenage pregnancy issue:

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- a. Limited Education - Student Dropouts
 - b. Family Structure – Single Parents, Drug or Alcohol Issues
 - c. Economics – Below poverty level
 - d. Social Media – Movies, Internet usage, etc.
 - e. Television Programs – “Teen Mom” and “16 and Pregnant”
26. School personnel identified a wide disparity in race and ethnicity, with rates among both African Americans and Hispanic teens remaining twice as high as other ethnic groups.
27. School personnel interviewed by the Grand Jury expressed their concerns that not enough parents were talking to their teenagers about pregnancies because they felt uncomfortable discussing the topic. Therefore, these parents felt the schools should handle this topic because of the training teachers received in that specific area.
28. School staff indicated that they did not provide counseling to young women facing an unintended pregnancy. School personnel did encourage the young women to talk to their parents and to stay in school.

FINDINGS:

- F1. The majority of teen pregnancies in Tulare County are occurring with mothers 18-19 years of age. While still included in teen demographics, this age group is also considered adults.
- F2. While having a significantly higher rate than the state average, teen pregnancy rates have been steadily dropping in Tulare County.
- F3. The HHSA has numerous programs in place for pregnant teens and teen mothers. The majority of these programs assist teens after they are pregnant. Less focus was apparent in teen pregnancy prevention.
- F4. Although it may be difficult to prove a direct link, it is widely recognized that economic inequality, social marginalization and other structural factors affect teens’ sexual behavior patterns. How these behaviors are linked with teens’ race or ethnicity, educational achievements or family income is difficult to prove.
- F5. There was a wide disparity in race and ethnicity, with rates among both African Americans and Hispanic teens remaining twice as high as among other ethnic groups.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- R1. Increased coordination between public agencies within Tulare County involved with the teen pregnancy issue.