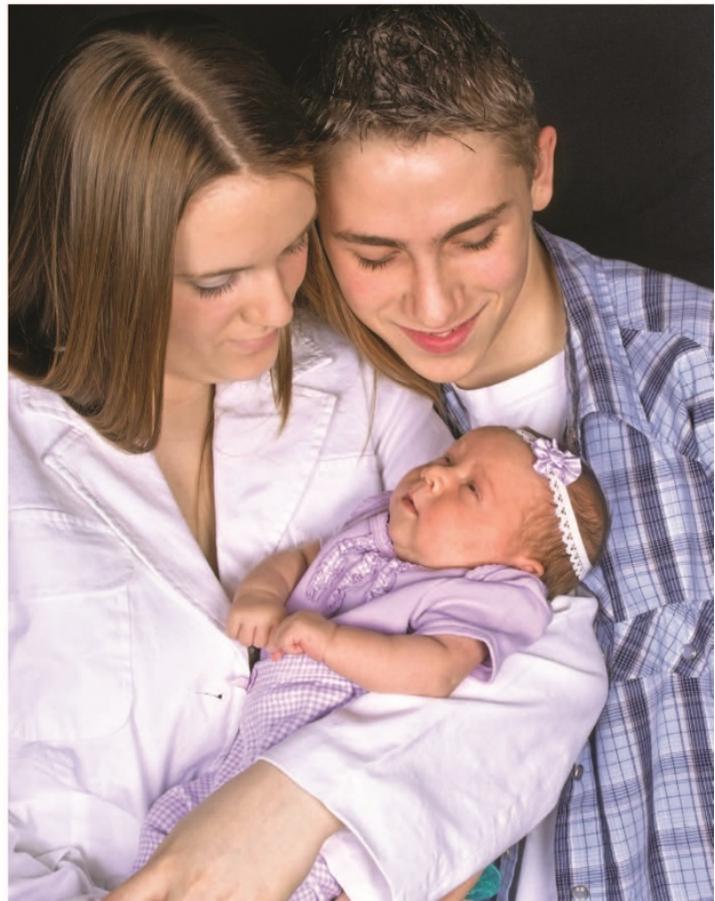




Highlights: 2014 & 2015



FYSB Family & Youth
Services Bureau



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LETTER FROM DEBBIE A. POWELL, DEPUTY ASSOCIATE COMMISSIONER

Dear Readers:

The past two years were exciting and busy times for the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) as a whole and for each of our programs. We looked both inward and outward, strengthened our priorities, and recommitted to our mission and vision.

We launched a new brand identity, commemorated the 40th Anniversary of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act and the 30th Anniversary of the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act, and made progress toward strengthening knowledge of ways to prevent teen pregnancy, especially for the most vulnerable young people.

Every day, we kept in sight our vision of a future in which all our nation's youth, individuals, and families—no matter what challenges they may face—can live healthy, productive, violence-free lives. We believe that we can, as a nation, put an end to three of our toughest problems: youth homelessness, adolescent pregnancy, and domestic violence.

FYSB's programs fund and provide leadership for a nationwide network of support for vulnerable youth, families, and individuals. Our grantee partners—from State agencies and community- and faith-based institutions to national hotlines and resource centers—make better outcomes possible for youth, families, and individuals every day.

We do this work for the survivors who have had to leave their homes because of a violent partner, and who have worried about the safety of their children and their pets. We do this for young people who end up on the street because they've clashed with their parents. We do this work so that every teen will have the skills, support, and resources to avoid too-early pregnancy and parenthood.

Working with our Federal and private partners is integral to our success. We are getting better and better at banding together and working in concert to enhance the safety and healing of people living in situations marked by violence and abuse and to ensure that every young person can look forward to a healthy future.

During his time at FYSB, Bill Bentley worked to elevate FYSB's visibility for each of our three distinct programs. We will continue to build on Mr. Bentley's efforts and we will continue to enhance our partnerships with other federal agencies, our grantees, and other stakeholders who champion our mission to end youth homelessness, adolescent pregnancy, and domestic violence. I hope you'll enjoy reading about our key accomplishments in 2014 and 2015. Thank you for joining us in our work.

Sincerely,

Debbie A. Powell, Deputy Associate Commissioner
Family and Youth Services Bureau

ENDING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Each year, tens of thousands of U.S. youth run away from home, are asked to leave their homes, or become homeless. Through programs authorized by the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA), FYSB supports street outreach, emergency shelters, and longer-term transitional living and maternity group home programs to serve and protect these young people.

We know that in the years 2014–2015, many more young people than our grantee partners were able to serve needed prevention, shelter, and supportive services like employment, education, and life-skills training. We are committed to reaching the Federal government's goal of preventing and ending youth homelessness in 2020 by working with our Federal, State, and local partners to make at-risk youth and their families a bigger priority in every community across the nation.

As part of the Federal interagency effort to collect better data, the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) used by United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was expanded to incorporate measures of runaway and homeless youth grantees which previously reported to the Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) through the Runaway and Homeless Youth Management Information System (RHYMIS). The effort to combine RHYMIS program-specific data elements with HUD's universal data elements is part of a larger initiative to coordinate and improve the accuracy of Federal counts of our nation's homeless. This integration preserves the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program's ability to collect client-level data about the youth served through the Basic Center and Transitional Living Programs, but also extends this ability to capture client-level data for Street Outreach Program youth for the first time.

This availability of new data will strengthen the information gathered about homeless youth encountered on the street with regard to demographics, and their specific experiences and needs, such as the length of time they are homeless and whether they came out of the child welfare or juvenile justice systems, and their expected housing outcomes. We will continue to work with grantee partners to ensure that they are collecting and reporting vital and high-quality data that will ultimately benefit all stakeholders working to end youth homelessness in 2020.

We do this work because no young person deserves to be homeless. By raising awareness of the issues runaway and homeless youth face, deepening our knowledge of what they need, and equipping programs with evidence-informed resources, we can make sure every young person is safe and on the road to a successful adulthood.

Below is a snapshot of what the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program accomplished in the years 2014–2015:

Numbers Served in 2014 by FYSB Programs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 23,460 young people received shelter, counseling, and other services from FYSB-funded basic center programs.• 45,987 youth, adults, and professionals contacted basic centers for advice and brief support.• 2,134 older youth and young adults entered transitional living programs funded by FYSB.• 12,616 young people who came into contact with a street outreach worker went on to spend at least one night in shelter.

Celebrated 40 Years of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act with Cyndi Lauper to #EndYouthHomelessness

The 40th Anniversary of the RHYA served as a focal point for:

- Raising awareness of the issue of youth homelessness in communities across the nation, the needs of homeless youth, and the steps communities can take to help.
- Raising awareness of FYSB's RHYA programs (including the National Runaway Safeline) and Federal efforts to end youth homelessness in 2020.
- Recognizing the accomplishments of the field over the past 40 years and encouraging continued momentum to end youth homelessness.

Ending Youth Homelessness DC: A Call to Action was a media event FYSB hosted at the National Press Club in Washington on October 22, 2014. It garnered coverage by C-SPAN, NBC News affiliates, The Washington Post, and other outlets. The event promoted the results of FYSB's Street Outreach Program Data Collection Study and elevated the issue of ending youth homelessness to a national audience.

Figure 1: Reach of RHYA 40th Anniversary Commemoration

- 100 in-person attendees
- 1,200 online viewers
- 17 media outlets
- 3,000 website visitors
- 16 bloggers advocates
- 1,400 tweets posted by 700 contributors (including Senator Patrick Leahy, singer Cyndi Lauper, and actor Mark Wahlberg)
- 5.1 million Twitter followers reached

Presenters included Mark Greenberg, Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Acting Assistant Secretary; Debbie Powell, FYSB Deputy Associate Commissioner; Resa Matthew, FYSB Director of the Division of Adolescent Development and Support;

Laura Zeilinger, United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) Executive Director; Cyndi Lauper, Grammy, Emmy, and Tony Award-winner; as well as three formerly homeless youth, Jessica McCormick, Anthony Ross, and Syncere St. Jamyz.

Approximately 100 guests and media outlets attended the event in person. More than a thousand people watched the event via livestream on youthhomelessness.acf.hhs.gov.

Deepened our Understanding of the Issues Facing Street Youth

In 2014, we released the executive summary of our first-of-its-kind study of 873 14-to 21-year-olds living on the streets in 11 cities. The study highlighted the troubling role that family conflict plays in youth homelessness: more than half of homeless youth surveyed became homeless for the first time because they were asked to leave home by a parent or caregiver.

Respondents included street youth served by a cohort of FYSB's Street Outreach Program grantees and street youth who were not using services. The study found the following:

- On average, the youth became homeless for the first time at age 15.
- The average youth spent nearly two years living on the streets.
- More than 60 percent were raped, beaten up, robbed, or otherwise assaulted during their time on the streets.
- Nearly 30 percent of participants identified as gay, lesbian or bisexual, and nearly 7 percent identified as transgender.
- 53 percent of youth were unable to enter a shelter because it was full.

Music icon and activist Cyndi Lauper responded to the report: "No young person deserves to experience homelessness, especially because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, which is why we must stand with them to help them live the happy and healthy lives they do deserve."



The report underscored the need for more services for homeless youth, including prevention and family support, provided by FYSB and our partners, and the limitations of the resources and shelters that are available to youth and their families. We are using the report to make the case for even more Federal, State, and local resources. The common goal must be to prevent homelessness in the first place.

When youth do become homeless, communities need the resources to move them quickly to safe settings; help them complete their educations and get jobs; and, when possible, facilitate their return to their families.

Worked to Improve Services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Youth

As many as two in five homeless youth may be lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or questioning (LGBTQ), and are also disproportionately youth of color, according to several studies. Often, young people leave home or are kicked out because of family conflict or disapproval after they come out.

Many Runaway and Homeless Youth Program grantee partners have long tailored their programs to provide safe, welcoming, inclusive, and culturally competent services to LGBTQ youth. But we have found that many other programs need technical assistance to ensure they underpin their work with a firm understanding of the unique pressures and prejudices LGBTQ youth face and the types of support they require.

A three-year project FYSB funds, “3/40 BLUEPRINT: Creating the Blueprint to Reduce LGBTQ Youth Homelessness,” is mining existing evidence and resources to help FYSB-funded transitional living programs provide safe and affirming services for LGBTQ youth.

The 3/40 BLUEPRINT is a collaboration of the University of Illinois at Chicago’s Jane Addams College of Social Work, the Center for the Study of Social Policy, and the Human Rights Campaign Foundation. Researchers from the three organizations are, over the course of three years:

- Reviewing the social science literature on LGBTQ youth and homelessness
- Assessing the needs of LGBTQ youth in transitional living programs as well as programs’ needs for training and support
- Identifying and analyzing screening and assessment tools, existing and emerging practices, and trainings for social service providers that serve runaway and homeless youth

“The goal is to gather everything we know about LGBTQ youth and best practices for serving them,” said Principal Investigator, Alan Dettlaff, Associate Professor in the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

A technical expert group of Runaway and Homeless Youth Program staff, youth, and researchers is providing advice and direction for the project. In addition, project staff have visited a handful of transitional living programs and conducted focus groups with youth and staff. The summary and review findings, as well as assessment tools, of the 3/40 BLUEPRINT are in development now. The tools and tips will be disseminated to FYSB staff as well as our grantee partners and will help us continue to provide LGBTQ homeless youth with safe, culturally responsive, and affirming services.

In addition to addressing the special needs of specific populations such as LGBTQ youth, FYSB addresses the needs of youth who left foster care after age 18. Grantees of the Transitional Living Programs provide long-term residential services to homeless youth ages 16 to 22 and helped nearly 3,000 homeless youth transition to life on their

own in 2014. In response to the growing need for evidenced-based programming, a research evaluation of the Transitional Living Program began in 2012 and is anticipated to be released in 2016.

In 2016, funding will be available for a Transitional Living Program Demonstration Project: LGBTQ Runaway and Homeless Youth and Young Adults Who Have Left Foster Care After Age 18. The purpose of this demonstration grant is to implement, enhance, and/or support a framework or model to promote the effective transition from homelessness to self-sufficient living. The target populations are LGBTQ runaway and homeless youth ages 16–21 and young adults who left foster care after the age of 18 (up to the age of 21) but need alternative housing and services. Our goal is to help these youth transition from homelessness to self-sufficient living.

Creating Networks of Support for LGBTQ Survivors of Abuse

Sonja felt like she didn't have anyone to talk to about the abuse in her relationship with another woman. Her parents saw signs of trouble, but they did not want to appear homophobic by saying something inappropriate. So, both Sonja and her family stayed silent, until she reached out to the NW Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian and Gay Survivors of Abuse (the NW Network). Knowing that isolation can impact victims' decisions to stay in abusive situations, the NW Network gave Sonja and her family the tools to create a safety net of real, personal support.

“By and for” is a key principle of the NW Network's mission and services. Started by lesbian survivors of abuse in 1987, the community-based agency brings on staff members, leaders, and volunteers who are also survivors who identify as part of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer (LGBTQ) communities. Indeed, many individuals seeking safety and support after abusive relationships find people and resources they can rely on through the NW Network.

With support from the Family and Youth Services Bureau, the NW Network is collaborating with the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) to develop the National LGBTQ Domestic Violence Capacity Building Learning Center. This project will create a one-stop resource for practice, policy, research, training, and technical assistance related to domestic violence in the LGBTQ community.

ENDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: 30 YEARS OF THE FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND SERVICES ACT

A 2010 study found that approximately 12.6 million people in the United States experienced rape, physical violence and/or stalking by a current or former spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend.¹ Through programs authorized by the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA), we support emergency shelter and supportive services for victims of domestic violence and their dependents.

Every day, survivors across the country find the courage to escape an abusive relationship. In 2015, more than 25,000 persons made their first call to the FVPSA-funded National Domestic Violence Hotline. On just one day in 2015, more than 71,000 women, children, and men found housing, legal help, and emotional support from a domestic violence program.² However, close to 10,000 survivors never received the assistance they sought, because domestic violence programs continue to be at maximum capacity, while funding remains stagnant. Our work in this arena has focused on raising awareness of the important work that is being done by advocates and organizations across the nation. We are also promoting collaboration across the Federal government. By shedding light on the intersection of domestic violence with other pressing issues, like homelessness, we are finding new partners in our work to keep individuals, families, and children safe from violence.

Below is a snapshot of what the Family Violence Prevention and Services Program accomplished in the years 2014–2015.

Celebrated 30 Years of the Family Violence Prevention and Services Act

In honor of FVPSA's 30th Anniversary, we rolled out a public information campaign to raise awareness of the Act and its impact across the nation.

For more than 30 years, FVPSA has supported community-driven solutions to domestic violence, domestic and dating violence prevention education, and a network of programs and services to respond to domestic violence across the country, territories and Tribal communities.

¹ Black, M. C., Basile, K. C., Breiding, M. J., Smith, S. G., Walters, M. L., Merrick, M. T., & Stevens, M. R. (2011). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report*. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf.

² National Network to End Domestic Violence. (2016). *Domestic Violence Counts 2015: A 24-Hour Census of Domestic Violence Shelters and Services*. Washington, DC: National Network to End Domestic Violence. Retrieved from http://nnedv.org/downloads/Census/DVCounts2015/DVCounts15_NatlReport.compressed.pdf.

The anniversary campaign:

- Celebrated 30 years of FVPSA's history, relevance, impact, and reach
- Clarified what services and supports are funded by FVPSA and share FVPSA's longstanding commitment
- Promoted the Act's mission, vision, and commitment to all survivors of violence and abuse, including the support of services for Native American families, children, and culturally specific communities
- Lifted up FVPSA's importance as a pillar of empowerment in the response to domestic violence, including references to the health and social service aspects of a community's response
- Honored FVPSA's foundational role in strengthening and sustaining a national infrastructure of shelter and support services for domestic violence survivors and their families, including the support of the National Domestic Violence Hotline

Today, FVSPA supports nearly 1,600 shelters, 200 tribes and Tribal organizations, and domestic violence coalitions in 56 states and territories. FVSPA funds the National Domestic Hotline and nine national resource centers and culturally specific institutes.

Our FVSPA grantee partners responded to 2.6 million crisis calls in 2014. They provided supportive services, such as counseling, support groups and advocacy to 838,361 victims and their children. In addition, they served 30,860 Tribal domestic violence victims and their children in shelter and supportive services.

We are proud of these programs that provide a lifeline to millions of women, children, and men each year.

Enlisted All of the Administration for Children and Families in Raising Awareness of Domestic Violence

We all have a role to play in ending domestic violence. Operating on that principle, in 2014, Acting Assistant Secretary Mark Greenberg launched Administration for Children and Families (ACF)-wide discussions about working together to address domestic violence. We saw this as an important step in raising national awareness about the impact of domestic violence on the lives of children, youth, women, and men accessing ACF-funded services every day.

“The work of advocates will continue until we, as a culture, refuse to tolerate relationship violence. Until then, I'm proud that FVPSA actively engages communities to create that culture change from within.”

*Marylouise Kelley,
Director, Division of
Family Violence
Prevention and Services*

Throughout Domestic Violence Awareness Month, ACF agencies released guidance on supporting families impacted by domestic violence. Each agency suggested action steps and resources that could be used by local child support agencies, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families agencies, child care programs, resettlement agencies, community action councils, early childhood programs, and child welfare programs to facilitate closer coordination with domestic violence service providers.

The collaborative effort reached more than 56,000 ACF employees and grantee partners and made inroads in ensuring that all health and human service providers have the capacity to:

- Recognize the impact of domestic violence
- Respond effectively with trauma-informed strategies
- Safely link families to domestic violence services

The initiative also promoted the role that FYSB played in helping families access safe and trauma-informed programs funded by FVPSA in each U.S. State and territory.

A Domestic Violence Shelter Gives Lummi Families Hope

Karen first came to the Lummi Victims of Crime (LVOC) domestic violence shelter in 2006 to be safe from her boyfriend. He apologized, she returned to him, and that cycle was repeated three times. Karen had her boyfriend's child, and because she was using drugs, the child was placed in foster care, which eventually became a permanent placement. The fourth time she fled to the shelter, she was pregnant again, and her child was born at the shelter. This baby too was placed in foster care when she continued to use drugs, but ultimately she underwent a 30-day treatment to become sober, and, in the safety of the LVOC shelter, she was given her baby back. Eventually, Karen found other housing for herself and the child, and her child is now seven years old, in school, and thriving. She still thanks LVOC for being there for her, but her LVOC advocate always reminds her that she was the one who did the work to get what she wanted.

LVOC is a Tribal grantee of the Family and Youth Services Bureau's Family Violence Prevention and Services Program. For more than 25 years, it has been helping adults and young people affected by domestic violence, sexual assault, elder abuse, and other types of violence. The staff of 14 not only operates the shelter, but also offers crisis counseling, on-scene advocacy for domestic violence and sexual violence survivors, support groups, safety planning and referral, legal advocacy, traditional healing and therapy referrals, and community education.

In 2014, the LVOC domestic violence shelter expanded from 16 to 32 beds, but it still has to turn people away. Survivors and their children can stay as long as they need to, and families can stay together. Tribal Council dollars provide essential support to sustain this domestic and sexual assault program to help the Lummi people break the cycle of generational trauma.

Funded an Intimate Partner Violence Screening and Counseling Pilot Project

Intimate partner violence (IPV) affects one in every four women and one in every seven men in his or her lifetime in the United States. IPV is experienced by 71 percent of female and 58 percent of male victims before the age of 25.³ Victims of IPV are at increased risk for chronic health issues, such as heart disease, asthma, depression, HIV/AIDS, and unintended pregnancies. These survivors need access to trauma-informed services and supports. FVPSA has joined with other Federal agencies in an innovative collaboration focused on training and technical assistance to address these issues.

In 2014, FVSPA entered into an inter-agency agreement with the Office on Women's Health and the Bureau of Primary Health Care at the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to fund phase one of an IPV screening and counseling pilot project in three, geographically diverse HRSA-supported health centers. The National Health Resource Center on Domestic Violence at Futures Without Violence, a FYSB grantee partner, uses its existing IPV screening and counseling tools and strategies to provide training and technical assistance to these health centers.

The training will focus on how to:

- Implement best practices
- Create stronger, more formal relationships between the health centers and community-based domestic violence programs.
- Provide IPV screening and counseling as part of well-woman care
- Improve long-term health outcomes for female patients

On December 16, 2015, six additional pilot sites were funded. These sites will receive targeted training and technical assistance to implement clinic protocols for IPV screening, assessment, and response. Futures Without Violence will manage and provide support to these sites.

The six additional sites are:

- Brockton Neighborhood Health Center and Family and Community Resources (Brockton, Massachusetts)
- CommuniCare Health Center and Empower Yolo (Davis, California)
- Eastern Iowa Health Center and AMANI (Cedar Rapids, Iowa)
- La Comunidad Hispana and Domestic Violence Center of Chester County (Kennet Square, Pennsylvania)

³ Breiding, M. J., Smith, S. G., Basile, K. C., Walters, M. L., Chen, J., & Merrick, M. T. (2014). Prevalence and Characteristics of Sexual Violence, Stalking, and Intimate Partner Violence Victimization — National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, United States, 2011. *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. Surveillance Summaries*, 63(8), 1-18. <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/ss/ss6308.pdf>.

- Mariposa Community Health Center and Catholic Community Services (Nogales, Arizona)
- Thundermist Health Center and Sojourner House (Woonsocket, Rhode Island)

Launched Domestic Violence and Housing Technical Assistance Consortium

Too often domestic violence victims struggle to find safe, affordable housing options. In 2015, FVPSA formed a consortium with the Department of Justice and the Department of Housing and Urban Development to better address the critical housing need of domestic violence victims and their families.

FYSB, along with its partners, has already awarded \$2.3 million in grant funding to four nonprofit organizations:

- District Alliance for Safe Housing (Washington, D.C.)
- National Network to End Domestic Violence (Washington, D.C.)
- National Resource Center for Domestic Violence (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania)
- Training Development Associates (Laurinburg, North Carolina)/Collaborative Solutions, Inc. (Birmingham, Alabama)

As part of the consortium, these grantees will work with domestic violence and homeless service providers nationwide to improve policies, identify promising practices, and strengthen collaborations to improve housing options for survivors and their children.

“Domestic violence is a primary cause of family homelessness because many victims leave their homes to pursue safety. Victims of domestic violence need housing options that meet their immediate and long-term needs. This interagency consortium will help us marshal federal resources to address domestic violence.”

*Commissioner Rafael López
Administration on Children, Youth
and Families*

We are committed to supporting the goal of preventing and ending homelessness among families, youth, and children in 2020 as leading members of the Domestic Violence Committee of the Federal Interagency Working Group to End Family Homelessness.

ENDING TEEN PREGNANCY: PREP TEENS FOR THE FUTURE

Although teen birth rates have been falling for the last two decades, 249,078 babies were born to women aged 15 to 19 years in 2014.⁴ According to recent research, the United States has the highest rate of teen pregnancies among Western industrialized nations. Teen pregnancy and childbearing can carry high health costs and emotional, social, and financial costs for both teen parents and their children, and thus the need for efforts to end adolescent pregnancy is as great as ever.

Our Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program supports State, Tribal, and community efforts to promote medically accurate, age-appropriate education to prevent teen pregnancy and the spread of sexually transmitted infections. Through a holistic approach to programming, youth participants are learning skills to make healthy decisions and to prepare for successful transitions to adulthood.

We administer 173 adolescent pregnancy prevention grants throughout the nation and several U.S. territories. These programs target vulnerable populations by providing culturally relevant and age-appropriate comprehensive and abstinence-only sex education. To reduce factors that put youth at risk and boost factors that protect them, grantee partners enhance the youth experience by providing mentoring, counseling, adult supervision, and/or programming on adulthood preparation subjects.

Below is a snapshot of what the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program accomplished in the years 2014–2015:

Promoted Evidence-Based Pregnancy Prevention

When it comes to preventing adolescent pregnancy, we know that teens themselves are the key. Compared to 10, 15, or 20 years ago, more teens are using contraception and fewer teens are having sex. However, researchers rightly point out that some teens may be more focused than others on avoiding pregnancy by abstaining or using contraceptives.

Homeless youth, foster youth, youth in areas with high birth rates, and young people who have already had children are the young people that we most need to reach, providing them with access to sexual health education and services and, just as important, a vision for a better future.

Congress authorized the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP), as part of the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA). Most of the funding goes to formula grants to States and territories. Forty-two states, the District of Columbia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands began receiving formula grant funds in 2010, and three additional States began receiving funding in

⁴ Hamilton, B.E., Martin, J.A., Osterman, M.J.K., & Curtin, S. C. (2015). Births: Final Data for 2014. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr64/nvsr64_12.pdf

2011. In 2014, 49 states received a total of \$43.7 million in funding. The grants focus on vulnerable, high-risk youth populations, and on preparing youth for the future.

Though we provide the funding, State PREP grantees have discretion to design their programs to best meet the needs of their young people, as long as they align with several primary expectations. Programs must:

- Be evidence-based
- Provide education on both abstinence and contraceptive use
- Be medically accurate, age-appropriate, and culturally relevant
- Educate youth on at least three of six adulthood preparation topics

PREP programs have trained nearly 2,500 educators in delivering evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention curricula to highly vulnerable youth. The following statistics highlight the ways we are addressing disparities through our PREP programs:

- 74 percent of PREP programs target youth in high-need areas
- 34 percent of PREP grantees target youth in foster care
- 22 percent of PREP grantees target LGBTQ youth
- 25 percent of PREP grantees target pregnant and parenting youth

Evaluating Pregnancy Prevention Approaches Study – PREIS Grantees

We need to increase our understanding and expand the available evidence on effective ways to reduce teen pregnancy. Three Personal Responsibility Education Innovative Strategies (PREIS) Program grantee partners are participating in the Federal evaluation of Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Approaches (PPA) in collaboration with the Office of Adolescent Health. Studying the impact of the grantees' projects will result in better understanding in the teen pregnancy prevention field of successful methods for working with vulnerable youth populations such as youth in foster care and pregnant and parenting teens.

The three PREIS sites are:

- **Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy:** a comprehensive, skill-building sexual health education curriculum, Power Through Choices, designed specifically to address the unique risks of youth in foster care and other out-of-home care settings in Oklahoma, California, and Maryland.
- **Children's Hospital of Los Angeles:** a structured curriculum, AIM 4 Teen Moms, delivered to teen mothers in home visits and two group sessions.
- **Ohio Health Research and Innovation Institute:** a telephone-based care coordination to reduce rapid repeat teen pregnancies and promote healthy birth spacing. This program uses motivational interviewing and provides access to family planning and other support services.

FYSB Grantees Take a Holistic Approach to Preventing Teen Pregnancy among Vulnerable Youth

At Bethany Christian Services in Grand Rapids, Michigan, a Competitive Abstinence Education grant from FYSB funds 16 weeks of carefully calibrated programming and services for refugee and U.S.-citizen foster youth. Youth participate in an evidence-based positive youth development intervention called Teen Outreach Program (TOP), plus a trauma-informed curriculum created by Bethany staff. The mostly 14- to 18-year-olds (and a few older youth) also benefit from a host of social services and referrals offered by Bethany.

“Because they don’t have control, [foster youth] take control anywhere they can in their lives — sexual relationships, acting out in school, knowing healthy boundaries but choosing to go against them because that’s in their power,” says Youth Development Specialist Linette Dyer. “Our program teaches them that they do have control.”

The Georgia Campaign for Adolescent Power & Potential (GCAPP) is another example of an adolescent pregnancy prevention group broadening its sights to focus on the overarching issues teens face. This linkage of prevention topics is consistent with the notion of PREP and adult preparation as addressing more than simply disease prevention or avoiding unplanned pregnancy.

“Obesity is a big one,” says Kim Nolte, GCAPP’s vice president of programs and training. “So we’ve started expanding our work into adolescent health and well-being.”

New GCAPP initiatives include a curriculum for parents to improve their children’s eating habits. The organization is also collaborating with seven Atlanta churches to develop a physical activity plan for young people living in “food deserts,” where there are few grocery stores and other sources of healthy food.

Closing the Gap in Teen Pregnancy Prevention Rates

In 2015, the Affordable Care Act provided funding for the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program (APP) to administer a nationwide project to support 155 State, Tribal, and community grantees implementing evidence-based or promising practices that support healthy transitions to adulthood while addressing risky behaviors. APP supports the utilization of positive youth development as well as trauma-informed approaches through four PREP and two Abstinence Education Programs.

We are closing the gap in teen pregnancy prevention rates by funding State, Tribal and community grantee programs that address the needs of youth in their communities.

- In Michigan, the Inter-Tribal Council implements Making Proud Choices in five Tribal communities to prepare native youth, ages 11 to 18. The program has served 150 Native youth.
- Hope for Miami implements the Teen Outreach Program (TOP) program for 11 to 15-year-old middle school youth, many of whom are migrant workers, in the Miami-Dade area. Hope for Miami has served over 2,000 youth.
- The Kentucky State Department for Public Health selected two program models, Reducing the Risk and the TOP. These programs provide comprehensive sex education through the school system and have served more than 10,000 youth.
- In Louisiana, Sisters, Informing, Healing, Living, Empowering (SIHLE) is a peer-led, social-skills training intervention aimed at reducing HIV sexual risk behavior among sexually active, African American teenage females, ages 14 to 18. The program is active in eight regions in Louisiana and has served 550 females.

As we continue to develop innovative programs to reduce the number of teen pregnancies, FYSB and ACF's Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation have contracted with Mathematica Policy Research to conduct the PREP Multi-Component Evaluation. The evaluation effort consists of three components: (1) a Design and Implementation Study, (2) a Performance Analysis Study, and (3) an Impact and Implementation Study. All three components are critical for informing current and future efforts to implement evidence-based programs to prevent teen pregnancy. Additionally, findings from innovative programs will help fill gaps in the knowledge base of teen pregnancy prevention programming and improve efforts that address the needs of vulnerable populations.

In January 2015, APP reported seven key performance measures to Congress from the data collected from the first reporting period on program participation (August 1, 2013, to July 31, 2014). The first three performance measures focus on the number of participants served by PREP programs and offer insight into the recruitment and retention strategies of the programs. The fourth performance measure reflects the number of evidence-based programs in which the majority of youth are from highly vulnerable populations. These youth are participating in programs with proven effectiveness in preventing teen pregnancies. The fifth measure examines out-of-school program participants completing at least 75 percent of the intended program hours. This is an important measure as it addresses the program's ability to retain participants in an out-of-school setting. PREP has a legislative mandate to serve highly vulnerable populations, including youth in foster care, homeless or runaway, living with HIV/AIDS, pregnant or parenting, LGBTQ, involved in adjudication systems, in residential treatment for mental health and/or have trouble speaking/understanding English. The sixth performance measure focuses on the percentage of programs in which the majority of youth are from these highly-vulnerable populations while the seventh measure offers insights in to PREP's adult preparation subjects. It measures the percentage of youth who view the PREP program as preparing them for the transition to adulthood.

The next round of performance measures data will be reported to Congress in 2016 for State, Tribal, and Competitive PREP. This second round of data collection will help illustrate grantee's progress as more participants enroll in and complete programming. Additional information on how performance measures of structure, cost, and support for implementation, as well as the most popular programs selected by PREP grantee partners, will be available.

CONCLUSION

FYSB's activities over the past two years have consistently supported the organizations and communities that work daily to put an end to youth homelessness, adolescent pregnancies, and domestic violence. By highlighting the intersection of homelessness with other problems like adolescent pregnancy and/or family violence, we reached new groups of people and found new partners in our work every day.

- We held a high profile media event celebrating the 40th Anniversary of RHYA. Pop icon Cyndi Lauper shed light on the difficult situations many young people face in their own families, and several formerly homeless young people shared their powerful stories.
- We served as a leading part of the Federal effort to end youth homelessness in 2020, working with HUD and USICH regularly.
- We awarded grants to nearly 50 States focusing on a holistic approach to preventing teen pregnancies and preparing youth for the future.
- We worked with dozens of ACF agencies during Domestic Violence Awareness Month and continue to actively seek out partnerships with other organizations and Federal agencies.
- We celebrated the dedication of our staff, particularly Sarah Axelson and Shawndell Dawson, recipients of the HHS Secretary's Award for Excellence in Management in 2014 and 2015, respectively.
- We also took a look inward, refreshed our identity, and launched a new logo that signals empowerment and strength—things we see in our grantees and in the young people and families they tirelessly serve.

Thanks to FYSB's work, more people are aware that thousands of individuals and families struggle with these issues every day: family conflict and violence, poverty, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and rejection because of sexual orientation and gender identity. Our efforts have raised awareness about the important work our grantee partners do to ensure that our nation's youth, individuals, and families—no matter what challenges they may face—can live healthy, productive, violence-free lives.