Program: Girls Inc. Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy
Reviewer: Taylor Vogt
Date: October 2012

Abstract: If I were to rate Girls Inc. Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy, I would say that there is a “Good likelihood that it is effective”. I chose this rating because given the evaluation by OJJDP, and comparing the Carrera program and Safer Choices, GIPAP shares a lot of similarities and those programs have been also been rated promising. The GIPAP is a widespread, influential, program that teaches young girls how to become self-advocates, healthy and smart young women, who are capable of making healthy, positive decisions regarding their sexual health. The GIPAP has been scientifically evaluated through a controlled study and the results have been shown that the program components can influence the likelihood and frequency of teenage girls becoming pregnant. The Rochester community could benefit from programs like GIPAP and Carrera. I recommend that the current Rochester teen programs think of ways to adopt certain practices of Girls Inc. and to test them in our community. Teen pregnancy is a social concern that affects the whole community. It is costly, and the consequences for teen mothers are neither promising nor improving.

1. Describe the Program or Strategy.

   Girls Inc. (www.girlsinc.org) is a nationwide non-profit organization that serves 125,000 young adolescent girls, between the ages of 6 and 18. Their mission is to empower female teenagers to be strong, bold, and to make positive choices in life. Girls Inc. has a list of nationally recognized programs that are research based, and delivered by trained mentoring professionals. There are various programs designed to tackle different social problem areas such as; peer pressure, drugs, alcohol, education and relationships. The main program that I am reviewing, is Girls Inc. Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy also known as GIPAP. This program is an abstinence program, which is geared towards lowering the number of adolescent and teenage girls who are pregnant. GIPAP is offered in a 1,000 of the Girl’s Inc. locations across the U.S and Canada.

   Within GIPAP, there are three sub-programs, designed to target certain age groups. First, “Growing Together” is targeted to educate 9 to 11 year old girls about various sexual and health topics. Some topics might include anatomy, pubescence changes, hygiene, sexual development, and emotional changes. This group also stresses the importance of having your parents play the role of sexual educators.

   The second sub-program is “Will Power/Won’t Power”, and includes girls from ages 12 to 14. This is a ten-session program in which the girls build and practice skills to
better understand the importance of making positive choices in various sexual situations. Common topics of discussion in this age cohort are values, relationships, hygiene, assertiveness, communication, media influence and abstinence.

Lastly, the “Taking Care of Business” program targets ages 15 to 18 and continues to build on the skills learned in the previous program. Girls learn more specific ways to make sexual decisions such as contraception use. They learn more about sexual health and the risks of having sex, HIV, AIDS, STD’s and pregnancy. A focus of this group is life goals, and being able to achieve those life goals and protect oneself from poor sexual choices that can hinder and make it impossible to achieve such goals. At some affiliates of Girls Inc. there is a fourth program, called “Health Bridges” which connects young girls to various health professionals in their communities to educate them about different services their community has to offer.

2. What type of crime is it intended to prevent or reduce?

Girls Inc. and GIPAP are trying to reduce the amount of sexual activity and exploitation that occurs between the ages of 9 and 18. If we can reduce the number of teen moms a year we might be able to curb other social and economic issues that stem from teen pregnancy. Teen pregnancy accounts for $11 billion per year in taxpayer costs to help fund the increase in health care, foster care, and lost tax revenues because of low education and low income among teen moms (www.cdc.gov). According to the CDC website (www.cdc.gov), about 50% of teen moms achieve a high school diploma before turning 22 years old. Also, the children of teen moms are more likely to have lower education, more health problems, be incarcerated at some point in their adolescence and face unemployment more than other teenagers. Even though, there is a decline in birth rates for teens in the U.S, there is an increase in the severity of the consequences of adolescent pregnancy and it is turning into a social concern.

3. Is the program or something similar reviewed on Blueprints for Violence Prevention (http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/) or Crime Solutions (www.crimesolutions.gov)? Provide Citations.

GIPAP has similar qualities to other teen pregnancy prevention programs that have been reviewed by various agencies. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (www.ojjdp.gov) has reviewed GIPAP and been rated promising. The
description and results of the scientific evaluation of GIPAP is later on in this review. The website link for the OJJDP Review is http://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/Girls%20Inc.%20Preventing%20Adolescent%20Pregnancy%20%20174;-MPGProgramDetail-705.aspx. Girls Inc. has been evaluated by Blueprints and rated promising and they used the OJJDP review.

4. Is there a clear theoretical foundation?

   There is strong research and literature on different theories of how pregnancy prevention programs should be organized and enforced. Most programs get labeled ineffective because they are poorly maintained and organized.

   Often times, researchers use adolescent decision making theories and connect them to prevention programs. Adolescent decision-making can be divided into three factors; cognitive factors, social and psychological factors, and cultural and societal factors (Gordon, 1996, p. 562). Looking at all three of these factors that influence adolescent decision making can help us understand how and why young teenage girls make sexual decisions. Then we potentially would be able to teach, and provide skills that would aid them in making positive decisions in sexual situations. This is similar to what Girls Inc. is trying to do. They provide skills and teach girls how to make powerful and positive decisions in difficult sexual situations.

   Leticia T. Postrado and Heather Johnston Nicholson wrote a review on the effectiveness of Girls Inc., specifically the preventing adolescent pregnancy program, which is also the review the OJJDP used in its evaluation (Postrado & Nicholson, 1992). The authors highlighted the fact that the Girls Incorporated National Resource Center educated themselves on the prominent themes of prevention programs. First, they should be age appropriate, start early, and should teach decision making and communication skills. Secondly, they should foster parent-child communication and encourage contraceptive use. Finally, the younger teens were encouraged a little more than the others to delay their sexual involvement for sexual developmental reasons (Postrado & Nicholson, 1992, p.357-358). There is a lot of literature on the importance of these three prominent prevention themes.
5. Is there a direct, indirect or no clear theoretical link to crime reduction?

There is no clear link to crime reduction; however, we can see a decrease in the birth rates for teenage mothers across the country. Through the evaluations of the more promising, effective programs, researchers have been able to conclude that there are declining birth rates, girls are waiting longer to have sex, and there is an increase in contraceptive use.

6. Describe the logic model. Diagram it. How is it intended to reduce crime?

GIPAP logic model is simple. The mentors provide information, skills, and knowledge to the girls in the program. Through various exercises and workshops the participants learn and master different skills to make positive decisions regarding their sexual health and activity. Now once they are educated on various sexual topics, the hope is that they either chose abstinence or make smart decisions to avoid teen pregnancy.

[Diagram of GIPAP logic model]

7. Does this program or strategy exist in this community? If yes, what agency is it run through? How long has it been in existence here? How is it funded?

Rochester Community & Teen Pregnancy Prevention

Rochester, NY has many teen pregnancy and sexual health programs designed for both males and females. Before we elaborate on those programs, we should discuss the
details of teen pregnancy in both the City of Rochester and Monroe County. Monroe County in 2010 had a population of 744,300 people, 28% of them reside in the City of Rochester. Monroe County is also the most racially and ethnically diverse county in the region. From 2006 to 2010, 19% of the children in Monroe County were living in poverty, and in the City of Rochester, 44% of children were living in poverty. When it comes to teen pregnancy, Rochester had a teen pregnancy rate of 76 per 1,000 teenage girls (15-19) in 2006, which is three times the NYS rate and two times the national rate. In Rochester, single mothers head 43.92% of the households, more than twice that of Monroe County, NYS and the U.S. (http://www.communityplace.org/media/othercollateral/2012Feb27CommunityAssessmentCPGR.pdf).

Even though Monroe County and Rochester have some of the highest teen pregnancy rates in the state, there have been slight declines in the last few years. However, teen pregnancy still produces many other social concerns. These social concerns stem from teen pregnancy and make it more difficult for young teenage mothers to be successful. Below is a table showing the teen pregnancy rates in Monroe County and comparing them to Upstate NY (http://www.health.ny.gov/statistics/chac/birth/tp151726.htm). However, there is a limitation here, we are not positive how the researchers of this data are defining Upstate NY.

<table>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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Table 1 Monroe County Teen (Ages 15-17) Pregnancy Rate per 1,000
As you can see, the teenage birth rate has been higher in Monroe County alone compared to upstate New York. However, the birth rate has seen a decline in both the county and the state.

According to the Metro Council for Teen Potential, “19% of total births in the City of Rochester in 2007 were to teen mothers. These 672 children will fill 30 kindergarten classrooms in our City School District in September, 2012”(http://www.metrocouncil.us/pdf/teen_birth_stats.pdf). This poses some serious questions and concerns for the City of Rochester and the City School District as to education planning, funding, and future initiatives.

The Rochester Community has a few major teen and youth programs that have pregnancy and sexual health sub-programs. The Metro Council for Teen Potential is a coalition that believes a community wide approach to educate youth on healthy lifestyles mainly in the neighborhoods that need the most help. One of their initiatives, “Family Talk” is a communication workshop that works with parents and teens to communicate correctly about sexual and substance use. Family Talk is most similar to Girl Inc.

The Community Place of Greater Rochester is a non-profit agency that promotes equal health, social and economic lifestyles throughout the Greater Rochester area. Lastly, The Comprehensive Adolescent Pregnancy Program (CAPP) is a collaboration of community agencies working together. The evidence based programming is the most similar to GIPAP. CAPP is funded through grants, state and local government funding as well as local agencies. Their goal is to decrease teen pregnancy and decrease HIV/AIDS in Rochester. They have different programs, that all unite to decrease risky sexual behavior and promote positive development and healthy teenagers (http://www.cityofrochester.gov/article.aspx?id=8589938031).

8. Does it exist in other communities? If yes, where?

Pregnancy programs similar to GIPAP exist in all communities across the country. They are evident in the school systems, after school programs, as well as, community recreation centers. Some of the programs that have been rated to have some effect by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy are, Reducing the Risk (California), Pregnancy Prevention for Urban Teens (Baltimore, MD), Postponing Sexual
Involvement (Atlanta, GA), Teen Outreach (30 States), and Community Based Education (South Carolina) (Webster & Weeks, 1995, p.1-4). Girls Inc. itself exists in every state in the U.S, including Washington D.C and two Canadian providences, Alberta and Ontario. Within New York, there is a Girls Inc. in Buffalo, Long Island, NYC, Schenectady, Syracuse, Ulster, and Westchester County.


A study by Nicholson and Postrado (1992) was done about GIPAP at four different Girls Inc. sites. The OJJDP used this study as the basis for their review. The study used a questionnaire as the main measurement tool and it was given over a two year time period, at the beginning of each program year, before the program started, and at the end of the last program year. The researchers used a pretest-posttest quasi experiment design. The whole evaluation compared girls who participated in two or more programs with those that participated in one program and non-participants too. The two outcome variables were sexual intercourse without birth control and pregnancy experience. The data showed that those who participated in one of more of the program components were significantly less likely to experience pregnancy than those who did not participate at all. Also, the findings concluded that those who participated in two or more program components were significantly less likely to engage in sexual intercourse without birth control than those who participated in one component. Therefore, the OJJDP, declared Girls Inc. Preventing Adolescent Pregnancy, as a promising prevention program.

10. Provide a review of at least two research studies (Include research design, data and findings)

Program 1: Carrera Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program: Reviewed by, The Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy

The Carrera Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program (www.http://stopteenpregnancy.childrensaidsociety.org/) is a long time youth development program that serves disadvantaged teen’s ages 13-15. The program’s main component is reproductive health care. The Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy
evaluated the Carrera program to hopefully increase their chances of receiving more governmental funding. The Carrera program met the Top Tier Evidence Standard, which has been defined by recent Congressional legislation to include, “interventions shown in well designed and implemented randomized controlled trials, preferably conducted in typical community settings, to produce sizable, sustained benefits to participants and or society” (http://coalition4evidence.org/wordpress/).

The research design chosen by the Coalition, was a large, multi-site randomized controlled trial at 12 different community centers in 6 states during 1997 and 2004. There was a total of 1,163 teens, aged 13 to 15 who were not pregnant or parenting a child. Teens were randomly assigned to the Carrera Program or a control group. The data they received was taken over a 3 to 7 year time period (http://toptierevidence.org/wordpress/?page_id=172).

The findings after a three-year period (average age was 17) showed that for Carrera group females, they were 40% less likely to have ever been pregnant, and 50% less likely to ever have given birth. When comparing the Carrera group to the control group, the Carrera group was 16% more likely to have had some work experience and positive effects on some educational outcomes such as PSAT scores. After a seven-year period, the Carrera group was 30% more likely to have graduated from high school or obtained a G.E.D than the control group. The Carrera group was also 37% more likely to enroll in college (http://toptierevidence.org/wordpress/?page_id=172).

Overall, the Carrera Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program meets the Top Tier evidence findings that can hopefully provide the program with crucial funding, in order to expand and improve.

Program 2: Safer Choices

Safer Choices is a theory based educational program designed to reduce risky sexual behaviors and increase contraceptive use to prevent HIV, STD’s, and pregnancy among high school students. The researchers chose to do a randomized controlled trail involving 20 high schools in California and Texas. The total number of 9th grade students was 3,869 and they were tracked for 31 months (1993-1996). The data was collected using self-report surveys and the total response rate was 79%. Overall, the data had the
greatest impact on measures involving condom use. Safer Choices reduced the frequency of sexual intercourse without a condom and reduced the number of sexual partners a person had without a condom. Overall, Safer Choices was effective in reducing risky sexual behaviors that can lead to HIV, STD’s, and pregnancy (Coyle, et al., 2001, 82-93).

11. How would you rate this program or strategy?
   a. Generally recognized as effective
   b. **Good likelihood that it is effective**
   c. Inconclusive
   d. Probably not effective
   e. Generally recognized as not effective
   f. Harmful or likely to be harmful

If I were to rate GIPAP, I would rate it “Good likelihood that it is effective”. I chose this rating because given the evaluation by OJJDP, the Carrera program and Safer Choices, GIPAP shares a lot of similarities and they all have been rated promising.

12. Conclusion summary of the program, the findings, and your recommendation.

   The GIPAP is a wide spread, influential, program that teaches young girls how to become self-advocates, healthy and smart young women, who are capable of making healthy, positive decisions regarding their sexual health. The GIPAP has been scientifically evaluated through a controlled study and the results have been shown the program components can influence the likelihood and frequency of teenage girls becoming pregnant. The Rochester community could benefit from programs like GIPAP and Carrera. I recommend that Rochester teen programs think of ways to adopt certain practices of Girls Inc. and to test them in our community. Teen pregnancy is a social concern that affects the whole community. It is costly, and the consequences for teen mothers are neither promising nor improving.
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