

TEEN HEALTH EXPRESS

CHILD ABUSE



Volume 1: Issue 1 (Summer 2009)

In this issue:

Child Abuse pg. 1

Did you know? Pg. 2

Teen Pregnancy pg. 3

WHO: Abuse can happen in any family, regardless of any special characteristics. However, in dealing with parents, be aware of characteristics of families in which abuse may be more likely

WHAT: Child abuse is harm to, or neglect of, a child by another person, whether adult or child.

WHY: WHY DOES CHILD ABUSE HAPPEN? There is no easy answer to this question, because many factors are involved. However, child abuse is most likely to occur when parents are struggling with:

- Stress...Pressures from money problems, everyday frustrations, illness or heavy responsibilities.
- A painful childhood...Adults who were mistreated as children may, without meaning to, continue the pattern of abuse with their own children.
- Alcohol or other drugs...can blind a parent to a child's needs or may reduce inhibitions and tolerance levels so that parents may be more likely to lash out.
- Isolation...Without friends or relatives nearby, parents can feel overwhelmed by the demands of raising a child.
- Inexperience with children or unrealistic expectations...If parents don't know what to expect from children, they may expect too much. Besides lacking the parenting skills necessary to raise a child, the parents may have no models of successful family relationships from which to learn.
- Immaturity... Very young, insecure parents often can't understand their child's behavior and needs.

Unmet emotional needs...Parents may expect children to take care of them and to satisfy their need for love, protection and self-esteem.

RESOURCES:

WHY: <http://www.preventchildabuseva.org/fag.htm>

WHAT, WHO: http://www.keepkidshealthy.com/welcome/commonproblems/child_abuse.html

ALCOHOL



**DID YOU
KNOW?**

- Drinking too much alcohol can cause a liver disease called cirrhosis. Source: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/liverdiseases.html>
- Teen smoking can cause you to have panic attacks, anxiety disorders and depression. Source: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/smokingandyouth.html>
- Each year drug abuse results in around 40 million serious illnesses or injuries among people in the United States. Source: <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/drugabuse.html>

NUTRITION

What Is Nutrition? Nutrition is the science that studies the process by which living organisms

acquire all the things that are necessary for them to live and grow.



- Nutrition focuses on the role of nutrients, which are defined as substances that the body cannot make on its own and include things like vitamins, minerals, and certain macromolecules.
- Good nutrition requires a satisfactory diet, which is capable of supporting the individual consuming it, in a state of good health by providing the desired nutrients in required amounts.
- Nutrition is one key to developing and maintaining a state of health that is optimal for you.

OBESITY



- DC has the highest rate of racial disparities in the nation with regards to obesity: 8 % of whites are obese, while 31% of African-Americans are obese.
- Ward 8 has the highest obesity rates at 36% while Ward 3 has 12%
- Women in DC are tied with four other states – Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas – for the highest obesity rates 37% in the nation.

Source: Summit Health Institute for Research and Education (2008) – *The Obesity Epidemic in Washington, DC.*

TEENAGE PREGNANCY

Most teenagers don't plan to get pregnant, but many do. Teen pregnancies carry extra health risks to the mother and the baby. Often, teenagers don't receive timely prenatal care, and they have a higher risk for pregnancy-related high blood pressure and its complications. Risks for the baby include premature birth and a low birth weight.

Babies born in the U.S. to teenage mothers are at risk for long-term problems in many major areas of life, including school failure, poverty, and physical or mental illness. The teenage mothers themselves are also at risk for these problems.

Teenage pregnancy is usually a crisis for the pregnant girl and her family. Common reactions include anger, guilt, and denial. If the father is young and involved, similar reactions can occur in his family.

Adolescents who become pregnant may not seek proper medical care during their pregnancy, leading to an increased risk for medical complications. Pregnant teenagers require special understanding, medical care, and education--particularly about nutrition, infections, substance abuse, and complications of pregnancy. They also need to learn that using tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs, can damage the developing fetus. All pregnant teenagers should have medical care beginning early in their pregnancy.



Source (Internet):

<http://www.aacap.org/page.wv?name=When+Children+Have+Children§ion=Facts+for+Families>

Pregnant teens can have many different emotional reactions:

- * Some may not want their babies.
- * Some may want them for idealized and unrealistic ways.
- * Some may keep a child to please another family member.
- * Depression is also common among pregnant teens.
- * Many people sometimes finding newborns irritating.
- * Some get overwhelmed by guilt, anxiety, and fears



Aban Institute and Associates, Inc.

Discover. Engage. Educate. Participate in Life Changing Activities.

This newsletter was created by DC Summer Youth Employment Workers who participated in Aban Institute and Associates, Inc. summer health program. The youth selected, researched, and wrote the topics as well as created the name and layout of the newsletter. Youth include: Shanice Galloway, Jerrell Henry, and Khalil Perkins. Throughout this summer the youth explored various health topics and are learning to become health advocates for themselves, their family and community. The views expressed are those of the youth and do not necessarily reflect the views of Aban. Please visit Aban's website to learn more about our weekly summer health activities at Anacostia Park Roller Skating Pavilion in Southeast, Washington, DC.



Aban Institute and Associates, Inc.
P.O. BOX 30754
Washington, DC 20030

www.AbanInstitute.org
CALL: 866-611-7660
EMAIL: abaninstitute@gmail.com