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Group steps up to prevent teen pregnancy

By Kellie Cobb

JONESBORO -- More than 275 students and adults "stepped up" Saturday morning to raise awareness about the prevention of teen pregnancy.

The group was participating in the Reality Check Walk-Run at the Jonesboro High School track. The event was a community project for Locke Isaacson, who is on the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. Laura Cebulski, with PACES and adult coordinator of the event, was pleased with Saturday's turnout.

"When Locke had come up with the idea several months ago, I had really expressed concern that she could pull it together in time. ... We talked about what was realistic and what to expect. ... The credit all goes to Locke," Cebulski added.

Isaacson and other organizers of the event encouraged participants to STEP UP -- Standing Together Effectively Preventing Unintended Pregnancies. Participants were asked to walk or run eight laps -- or two miles -- around the track.

"We just thought two was in the middle. It would be a challenge for some people, but not too much to scare people off," Cebulski said.

"And it's a long enough time that you can hear some information," Locke added. As the runners and walkers circled the track, statistics about teen-age pregnancy were read. Signs with teen pregnancy statistics were also posted along the track.

Jessica McCuiston, a 15-year-old student at MacArthur Junior High School, said the event supported a good cause.

"I know two girls that are pregnant, and I don't think that's right," McCuiston said.

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Dr. Vye Watson also agreed that the walk is for a great cause.

"Kids need to know about the risks of teen pregnancy, and they need to be aware of the ways to prevent it," she said.

Organizers also handed out literature on teen pregnancy following the walk.

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