

# Promoting Science-Based Approaches— Getting To Outcomes Success Stories: The Pennsylvania Coalition to Prevent Teen Pregnancy (PCPTP)

## About The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy:

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization supported largely by private donations. The National Campaign's mission is to improve the lives and future prospects of children and families and, in particular, to help ensure that children are born into stable, two-parent families who are committed to and ready for the demanding task of raising the next generation. Our specific strategy is to prevent teen pregnancy and unplanned pregnancy among single, young adults. We support a combination of responsible values and behavior by both men and women and responsible policies in both the public and private sectors.

## Case Study Participant: Susan E. Washinger, Project Coordinator for the Pennsylvania Coalition to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

The Pennsylvania Coalition to Prevent Teen Pregnancy (PCPTP) is a state coalition that provides support and technical assistance to community-based organizations focused on preventing teen pregnancy. In 2007, PCPTP partnered with Adagio Health (Adagio) to move Adagio's Center for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention (CAPP) programming from a peer education program to a science-based program in 23 counties in western Pennsylvania. After completing a needs assessment and review of their peer education program with the [Tool to Assess the Characteristics of Effective Sex and STD/HIV Education Programs](#), Adagio started working with PCPTP at step two of the Promoting Science-Based Approaches-Getting to Outcome (PSBA-GTO) process—choosing goals and outcomes for the program. Since the beginning of their partnership with PCPTP two years ago, Adagio has moved through every PSBA-GTO step, and is currently working on steps 9 and 10 (Outcome Evaluation, and Continuous Quality Improvement and Sustainability). The challenges that Adagio has faced along the way fall primarily under step 4—program fit.

After attending a "Characteristics of Effective Programs" training hosted by PCPTP, Adagio was interested in using PSBA-GTO to build a foundation for their science-based teen pregnancy prevention programming. The agency liked the logical framework that

PSBA-GTO provided and the fact that it enabled them to map out a firm plan of action for implementing a science-based program in numerous schools. Currently they are working to adapt two science-based programs for implementation in 23 target counties in western Pennsylvania.

*Fit.* When Adagio connected with PCPTP for help with selecting a science-based program to prevent teen pregnancy, they were already implementing an agency-developed peer education program in 23 counties. The peer education program reached over 10,000 youth each year and focused on 14 topics of adolescent reproductive health. Adagio wanted to find one science-based program that would fit in all 23 counties, could be easily adapted to 8 lessons in a classroom setting, reach across age groups (middle school and high school), and resembled their previous program. After reviewing all potential curricula, they decided to pilot *Focus on Kids*.<sup>3</sup> Adaptations to the curricula were made in two steps. First, during the pilot process Adagio diligently worked with the curriculum facilitators to review each lesson after it was taught and record what adaptations were made to tailor the program in each school in "real-time". Facilitators discussed what adaptations were made and why they were made at staff meetings. Any recurring adaptations are being considered as universal

adaptations for future rounds of implementation. Adagio officially made adaptations to *Focus on Kids* in the 2008-2009 school year and since then has implemented 119 series of *Focus on Kids* with 1,785 high school students. During the pilot phase of the project, the evaluation data made it clear that *Focus on Kids* was not an appropriate fit for the middle school students due to the level of knowledge about reproductive health and physiology required for the curriculum (middle school students had not yet received the relevant health and science classes needed to fully understand the curriculum). As a result, Adagio decided to select another science-based program and will be piloting *Making a Difference*<sup>b</sup> in the upcoming 2009-2010 school year.

In summary, one key success of Adagio's experience with the PSBA-GTO process was their ability to identify and implement a science-based program—*Focus on Kids*—in many different counties. Although the implementation process was challenging given the number and variety of communities,<sup>c</sup> PSBA-GTO provided a clear framework for Adagio, and their commitment to working through each step with fidelity was critical to their success.

### **About the Putting What Works to Work Project**

Putting What Works to Work (PWWTW) is a project of The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy funded, in part, by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Through PWWTW, the National Campaign is translating research on teen pregnancy prevention and related issues into user-friendly materials for practitioners, policymakers, and advocates. As part of this initiative, the *Science Says* series summarizes recent research in short, easy-to-understand briefs.

### **Author Information**

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<sup>a</sup> *Focus on Kids* (1996) is a community-based program. For more information on this program please refer to *What Works* at <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/resources/works/PWWTWreports.aspx> and *Emerging Answers 2007* at <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/ea2007/>.

<sup>b</sup> *Making a Difference! An Abstinence-Based Approach to HIV/STD and Teen Pregnancy Prevention* (1998) is a community-based program. For more information on this program please refer to *What Works* at <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/resources/works/PWWTWreports.aspx> and *Emerging Answers 2007* at <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/ea2007/>.

<sup>c</sup> Although curriculum can be tailor to fit the needs of various communities, it is critical to obtain guidance on major adaptations from the program developers (in this case ETR associates) in order to maintain the integrity of the program, and increase the likelihood that it will be effective in changing behavior.