

# Youth and Community Engagement Strategies across Sexual Health Programs in DC

Expanding our Experience and Expertise: Implementing  
Effective Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Programs

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Office of the

State Superintendent of Education



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
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# Introductions

- The Office of the State Superintendent (OSSE):  
Healthy Youth Development Team
- District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS):  
Office of Youth Engagement
- TPP Grantees

# Acronyms

- DCPS: District of Columbia Public Schools
- DHS: DC Department of Human Services
- OSSE: Office of the State Superintendent of Education
- SSC: Student Support Center
- TANF: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- UDC: University of the District of Columbia
- YAC: Youth Advisory Committee

# Overview

- Introductions
- Objectives
- History of the Youth Sexual Health Project: A Framework for Change
- Youth Advisory Committee at OSSE
- New Heights Program at DCPS
- Strategies for Engagement
- Case Studies
- Lessons Learned
- Q&A

# Objectives

- At the end of the session, participants will be able to:
  - Identify specific strategies for engaging youth and the community in sexual health programming
  - Understand and anticipate the challenges that may arise when developing youth-inspired sexual health programs
  - Identify implications for their own school district or organization

# History

- Youth Sexual Health Project: *A Framework for Change* (2009)
  - Committee on Health launched the YSHP
  - Goal of developing youth-inspired sexual health programming strategies
  - Working with youth advisors, the Committee investigated sexual health information awareness and attitudes
  - Focus groups, key informant interviews, youth surveys and media assessments
- Several findings and lessons learned
  - Five guiding principles developed to drive sexual health programming for youth in DC





# Youth Advisory Committee



- OSSE's Youth Advisory Committee (YAC)
  - Comprised of 21 middle and high school students from across DC
  - Mission: to develop a cadre of young leaders with critical-thinking skills who will share their knowledge and expertise around adolescent health issues
  - Develop youth led projects and ensure the activities implemented are meeting the needs of young people
- History
  - Began October 2009
  - Funded by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's DC Improving the Health and Educational Opportunities for Young People Grant



# Youth Advisory Committee



- Requirements & Structure
  - 8<sup>th</sup> -12 grade student enrolled in a DC Public School or DC Public Charter School
  - Commit for 9 months with the option for a summer internship
  - Monthly stipend based on attendance and participation
- Programming
  - Trained by various community stakeholders
  - Collaborate and plan community events
  - Conduct outreach and recruitment

# The YAC Experience Video



**Brigid**  
**Member Since:** August 2010  
**Grade:** 11    **Age:** 16  
**Neighborhood:** Southwest, DC



**Shawanda**  
**Member Since:** August 2011  
**Grade:** 11    **Age:** 16  
**Neighborhood:** Southeast, DC



**David**  
**Member Since:** August 2010  
**Grade:** 11    **Age:** 15  
**Neighborhood:** Northwest, DC



**Linda**  
**Member Since:** August 2010  
**Grade:** 12    **Age:** 17  
**Neighborhood:** Northwest, DC

# New Heights Pregnant and Parenting Students Program

- New Heights
  - Comprised of 13 DCPS high schools and two charter high schools
  - Mission: support program to help student stay and succeed in school
  - Outcomes: increase attendance and graduation rates, prevent subsequent pregnancies
- History
  - Two schools funded by TANF since the 90's
  - DC received OAH funding to expand to 13 additional schools
- Requirements & Structure
  - Original two schools have program coordinator and program assistant
  - 13 additional schools have program coordinator
  - Funded evaluation , an important component
  - Collaboration among DHS, SSC, and DCPS
- Programming
  - Case management services
  - Three life skills workshops per week
  - Youth development component

Activity:  
Youth Development  
Organizational Assessment

A Youth Development Approach is a process by which all young people seek ways to meet their basic physical and social needs and to build competencies (knowledge and skills) necessary to succeed in adolescence and adulthood

# Youth Development Approach

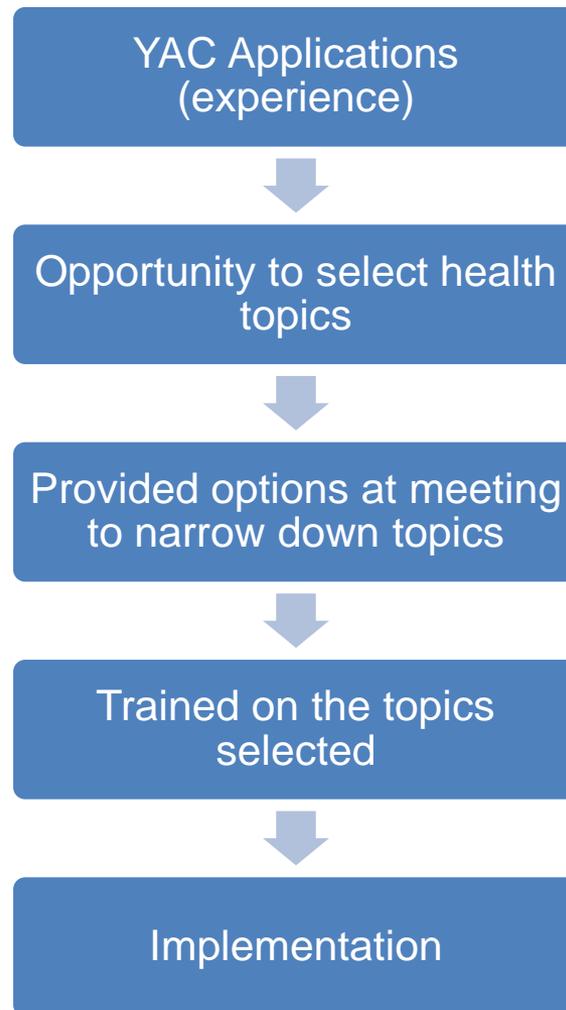
## DCPS- New Heights

- Youth advisory team for sustainability
- Involvement in program design
- Leadership roles at program site
- Youth development approach to case management

## OSSE- Youth Advisory Committee

- Increase participation through ownership of planning
- Purposeful structure/ program design
- Reinforcing responsibilities
- Highlight the importance of decision-making
- Consequences and impact

# Example: Incorporating Youth Ownership



*Stakeholders* are people, groups or institutions which are likely to be affected by a proposed intervention (either negatively or positively), or those which can affect the outcome of the intervention

# Identifying Key Stakeholders

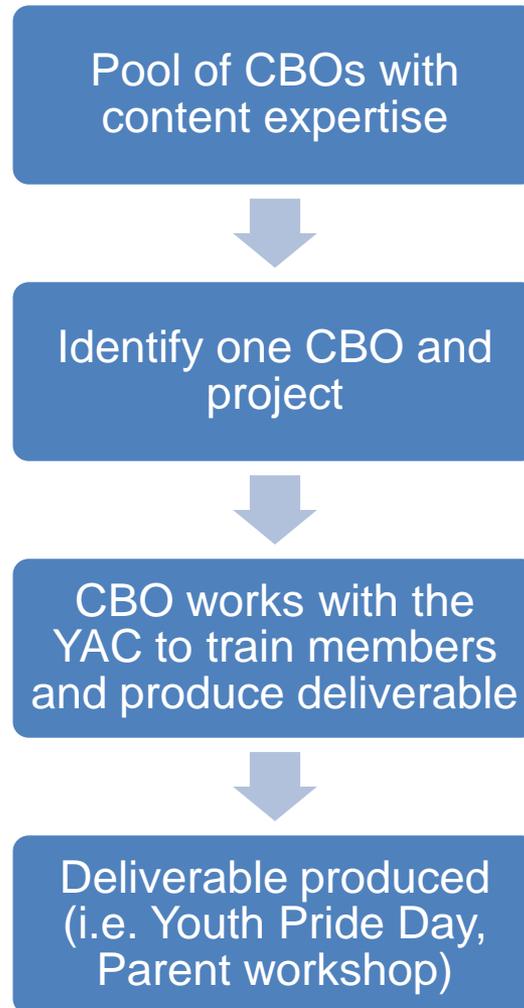
## DCPS- New Heights

- Youth – program participants
- CBOs – workshop providers and service providers
- Community members – community awareness campaign
- School and Program staff – program implementers and service providers
- Management team – DHS, DCPS, UDC, SSC

## OSSE- Youth Advisory Committee

- Youth – recruitment, application process
- CBOs – expertise for trainings, partnerships, enhance platforms
- Community members – reinforce need for topics covered
- Staff – influences program direction
- Officials- serve as youth representatives

# Example: The use of CBO Stakeholder



Community Engagement is the process of working collaboratively with groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interests or similar situations with respect to issues affecting their well-being

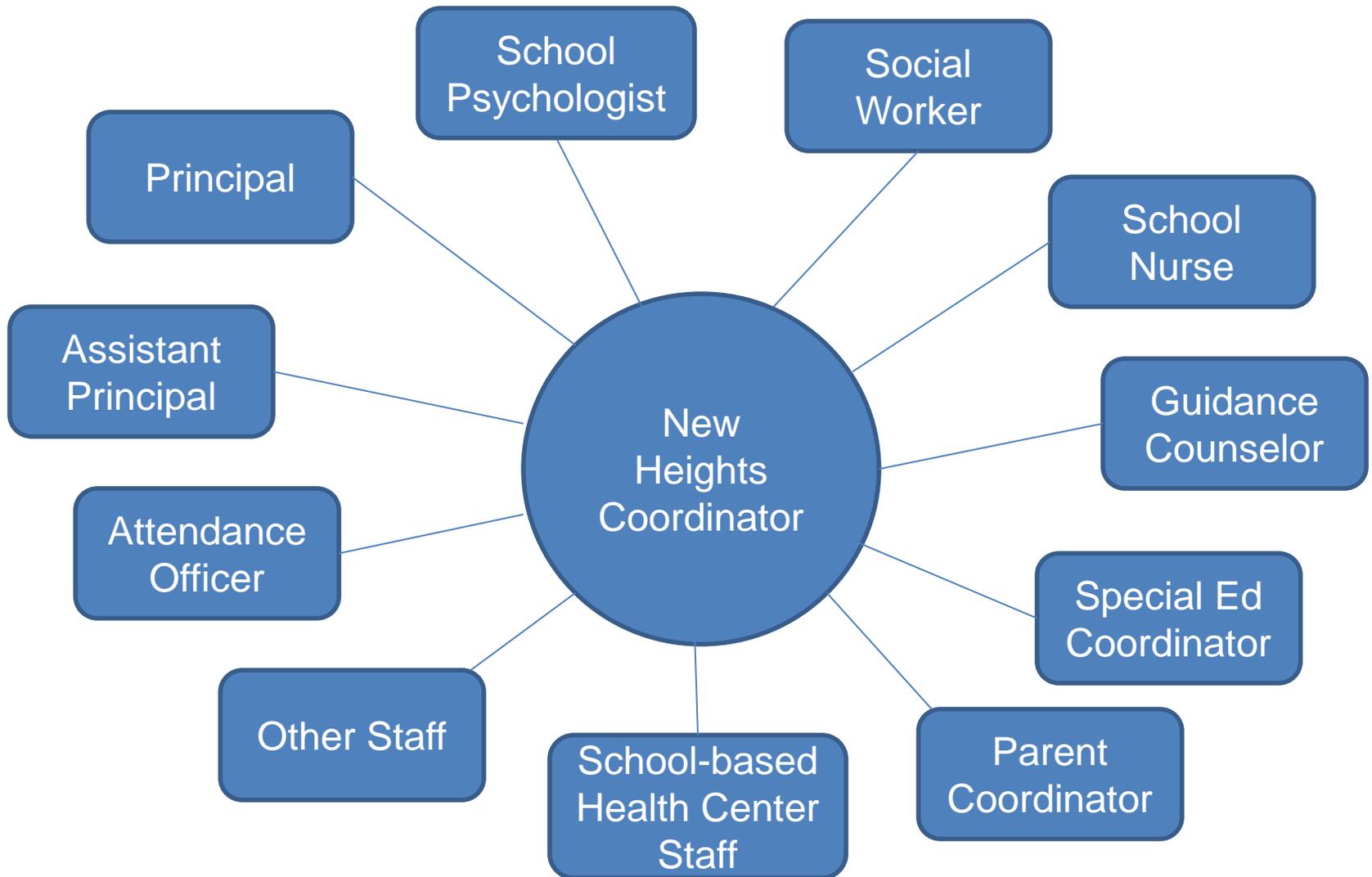
# Ongoing Community Engagement

## DCPS- New Heights

- Stakeholder needs assessment for expansion
- Management team board comprised of multiple DC agencies
- School administration and staff meetings
- Vetting process

## OSSE- Youth Advisory Committee

- Building relationships through outreach
- Using existing platforms
- Branding
- Leverage community needs to tailor and implement relevant programming
- Frequent communication



# Case Studies Activity

- In your small group, take 10 minutes to read and discuss your scenario
- Within your group come up with three strategies to address the problem
- Select one person to report back

# Lessons Learned

- Youth ownership is key for engagement
- Community engagement doesn't happen overnight
- Make sure you know your community stakeholders in order to tailor program design and activities
- Important to hold community accountable for the development of youth—not just that school, that health care provider, that family etc.

Q & A



# Thank You!

## **DCPS**

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