

# Foundation Recognized as a Leader in Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs

The Riverside Community Health Foundation is excited to announce that our “Keeping it Real” Young Men’s Conference has been recognized by the State Office of Family Planning (OFP) as an example of best practices within the field of teen pregnancy prevention. Our annual Young Men’s Conference, which is held in partnership with the City of Riverside, Parks, Recreation, and Community Service Department, brings together over 250 young men, ages 12 to 22, to discuss the consequences surrounding incarceration, gang affiliation, fatherhood, and drug use and abuse. The goal of the conference is to encourage young men to identify their strengths and recognize the important role their actions play in shaping the Riverside community.

The Foundation has made teen health and pregnancy prevention one of our top priorities for the past ten years. “The teen birth rate in Riverside was well above the state average in the early 2000s, so we decided to develop teen pregnancy prevention programs to combat it,” said Foundation President/CEO Dan Anderson. The Foundation began by starting a Teen Clinic at our Eastside Health Center, and later added our two core teen pregnancy prevention programs: Project t.e.a.m. (Teenage Education to Avoid Motherhood) and Project X-Men.

Project t.e.a.m.’s goal was to empower youth, both male and female, to avoid social pressures, to recognize the risks of teen pregnancy, and to protect themselves against sexually transmitted infections.



Project X-Men was designed to help young men break out of cycles of teenage fatherhood and violence, and emphasized the importance of making good decisions.

In 2005, the Foundation received a \$1.7 million Community Challenge Grant. The grant allowed us to redouble our efforts to address teen pregnancy, as well as expand our teen health services program by adding three goals: preventing teen pregnancy and supporting teen development, promoting a comprehensive educational approach to youth development, and developing community programs that supported parental involvement in the community. The additional funding allowed us to start four new services in the community:

- Peer to Peer, a program that allows Project X-Men and Project t.e.a.m. students to continue their health education with our certified health educators
- Parent Informational Presentations
- “Keeping it Real” Young Men’s Conference

- Clinical linkage services, with the establishment of twice-weekly Teen Clinics at our Eastside Health Center and Arlanza Family Health Center

Most recently, Project t.e.a.m. was revamped to become Project T.R.U.S.T. (Teaching Responsibility, Understanding, Self Resiliency and Tolerance). The new program keeps the pregnancy prevention aspect of Project t.e.a.m., but includes more of an emphasis on personal development and growth.

For the last five months, our health educators Maune Vaca and Denise Ramirez have worked inside of RUSD to help the district meet its state-mandated educational code, teaching HIV/STI prevention, personal safety, and drug and alcohol awareness. This week our health educators will finish teaching the curriculum to every ninth-grade student in the district.

“Our comprehensive approach to the prevention of teen pregnancy has proven very successful throughout the last six years,” said Stephanie Smith, Director of Health Education at the Foundation, “Moving forward, we’ll continue to strengthen the program foundation we have.” Smith is currently working with RUSD to bring additional health and wellness programs to students, as well as developing curriculum to help the district meet its educational codes. In the last six years, area businesses and organizations have contributed over \$305,900 dollars to the Foundation’s teen programs! Thanks to the community’s generous support, our teen health services pro-

grams have provided over 35,000 health services and interventions to youth since 2005.

## Meet the Foundation’s Teen Health Services Health Educators



From Left to Right:  
Maune Vaca: B.S. Health Science, emphasis on school health. Certified Community Health Worker. CBEST teaching credentials. Maune is our program associate and children and youth health educator.

Jesus Gaeta: B.A. International Studies. Certified Community Health Worker. Jesus is our X-Men educator and heads up our male teen and adult health education.

Denise Ramirez: B.S. Health Science, emphasis on community health. Certified Community Health Worker. Certified Health Education Specialist. Denise is our youth and community health educator.

**For more information on the Foundation’s teen health services programs visit [rchf.org](http://rchf.org).**