



AMTC

MAY/JUNE 2018

News

A Month to Celebrate Family

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— ANGELA TURNER

AMTC News

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May is Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month. It's more than simply awareness and contraceptives; at AMTC it's about celebrating family. Each young person who delays pregnancy is much better positioned to achieve goals and avoid poverty. Ultimately, this not only impacts a single individual but entire families and communities.

Let's face it—teen pregnancy is risky. It can involve STDs, emotional strain, discontinued educational and career goals, increased likelihood of poverty, and many other factors. It's difficult on others, too, like the teen's parents, the adolescent father, and the baby. There is a great deal at stake. Choices about sexual activity can affect the entire trajectory of a person's life.

Thankfully, Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) programs have made tremendous strides in decreasing the overall rate of teens who become pregnant. Still, there's much to accomplish. We are fortunate to partner with TPP organizations who are working tirelessly to change lives for the better, so much so that they are receiving recognition for it. Two of our partners were approached by the Office of Adolescent Health, of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to showcase their

exemplary organizations with videos: **Trinity Church**, of Miami-Dade County, Florida, and **Better Family Life, Inc.**, of Saint Louis, Missouri (*see story on page 2*).

Two partners will be presenting at the annual Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Conference, sponsored by the Family and Youth Services Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. They will highlight the similarities of their results, despite their differing communities: **Mission West Virginia** serves more rural areas while **Trinity Church of Harlem** is urban (*see story on page 3*). Certainly, wherever our clients are located, their work is invaluable. It is our privilege and pleasure to assist these partners, and others, to strengthen families and communities.

Angela M. Turner

Angela Turner
Principal





TPP—Telling the Story

Compelling new videos highlight clients' work

When the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health, chose three organizations to showcase Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) programs, it was no surprise that two of them were AMTC clients.

Video is a critical tool in today's communication marketplace. For AMTC clients, capturing the work on camera drives home the importance of what they do. **Trinity Church**, of Miami-Dade County, Florida, and **Better Family Life, Inc.**, of the greater St. Louis, Missouri, region, are two long-term clients that have showcased their exemplary TPP projects in compelling productions. Miranda Jones of Better Family Life feels their video was critical to the success of the project. "This video... makes you feel [our mission] through the smiles and spirit of the youth, parents, and staff." Jones is the Vice President of Youth, Family, and Clinical Services and says the video clearly shows the project helps students "make proud and responsible choices to be change agents for their generation."

In Miami, Trinity Church's Crystal Agnew was equally excited. She is

the Deputy Director of Peacemakers Family Center and sees the students themselves as the best champions for the program. Their words, faces, and body language make a powerful impression. "These programs are so much more than condoms and contraceptives.... Videos show... holistic approaches and focus on so much more than sexual activity," Agnew concluded.

Capturing results on video is critical for convincing funders and the general public that the efforts are worthwhile. It is an investment that strengthens society. AMTC Senior Evaluation Associate Melanie Porterfield has worked with both clients for over ten years. "They are less like clients to me and more like family. I have watched them launch many programs. It is always exciting to witness their achievements."

The sights and sounds of our clients' powerful work are now available for all to see. Viewers can witness the tremendous impact on individuals, their families, and ultimately entire communities. These clients are truly agents for change—for the better.

To view the two clients' videos, go to amtcassociates.com/news/.

Teen Pregnancy Did you know?

Pregnancy Rates

2 out of 100

Each year, nearly 2 of every 100 teen girls will have a child. Rates are higher among those living in poverty, living in foster care, or facing persistent racism and discrimination.

Youth in Foster Care

2.5x more likely

Girls in foster care, already at risk of dropping out of high school, are 2.5 times more likely than their peers to get pregnant.

Graduation Rates

only 40%

The national graduation rate is a critical priority—yet nearly one-third of girls who drop out of high school cite early pregnancy or parenthood as a key reason. Only 40% of teen moms finish high school, and fewer than 2% finish college by age 30.

Future Generations

3x less likely

Daughters born to women in their 20s are 3 times less likely to become teen moms themselves compared with daughters of teen moms—so it is a change that ripples across generations.

Planned vs. Unplanned

Women who decide to become pregnant, rather than having it "just happen," are better prepared emotionally and financially for the demands of having a baby.

Source: Power to Decide, <https://powerto-decide.org/what-we-do/information/why-it-matters>. Used with permission.

The difference between urban and rural youth is not as great as you might think—kids will be kids.

This is what two of AMTC's clients will be presenting about at the annual Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Conference in May, sponsored by the Family & Youth Services Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. **Trinity Church of Harlem** is in an urban environment, while **Mission West Virginia** operates in the state's rural areas. But no matter their locations, all youth served are considered at-risk for teen pregnancy.

Both organizations provide invaluable services. Mission West Virginia (MWV) works to strengthen families. It builds community partnerships to promote youth development, provide life skills, and find forever homes for youth in foster care, along with other initiatives. Trinity Church works to promote self-sufficiency and healthy lives through its programs, such as Plan Be, AmeriCorps, and Children of Inmates, to name a few. Both MWV and Trinity Church received Sexual Risk Avoidance Education (SRAE) grants.

Different environments, one curriculum

Given that Trinity Church and MWV operate in different environments, with varying cultures and ethnicities, a logical conclusion would be that they should utilize different curricula. Results suggest otherwise. MWV and Trinity Church use the same evidence-based curricula for their SRAE programs. "I was looking at their data," said Torri Childs, a Field Research Associate for AMTC, "and results and feedback from students were all so similar that I thought it would make for a good presentation to showcase how these curricula could work in either setting."

It is also a good opportunity for Trinity Church and MWV to work together. Melissa Ballard, Program Manager for MWV's SRAE Program, and Crystal Agnew, the Deputy Director of Trinity Church, Peacemakers Family Center, will present jointly. Both are experts in their fields and are certified in a number of different curricula. They are looking forward to presenting.



Young people at Trinity Church of Harlem test their knowledge of teen pregnancy facts with the help of a spinning-wheel question-and-answer game. Whether from urban or rural settings, all teens face similar risks and challenges.

CLIENT *FUN* FACTS

Better Family Life, Inc.: Daisha Robinson, who participated in the TPP program as well as attending the youth rally in both middle school and high school, is now a Youth Specialist in their After School program.

OIC of South Florida: One year, the male staff of OIC TPP wore fake pregnancy bellies to help recruit youth for its program.

Boys & Girls Club of Greater Milwaukee: The Youth Leadership Council of the Boys & Girls Club created a TPP video, from the ground floor to completion. When the Milwaukee House of Corrections youth heard about it, they decided to create their own fun video called *A Good Man*.

Trinity Church, Peacemakers: The Executive Director and her assistant are certified beekeepers. They have had bees in their Urban Garden for a year and a half. Their youth program, GEN2050, allows youth to become Certified Junior Beekeepers.

Mission West Virginia: To help build relationships with community organizations and stakeholders, MWV has a door-decorating competition and open house every December. While voting for their favorite doors, community leaders network with the staff and learn about the work they do. The popularity of this event has grown to the point that the theme for each person's door is kept top secret beforehand, and decorations often extend beyond the doors themselves, taking over ceilings, hallways, and floors.

Meet our *Associates*

Our diverse team delivers fast, relevant results for our clients. Here are two of our associates whose work includes TPP.



MELANIE PORTERFIELD

SENIOR EVALUATION ASSOCIATE

WITH AMTC SINCE 2005

EDUCATION: Fairleigh Dickinson University, New Jersey

What is your educational background?

I have bachelor's degrees in sociology, with an emphasis on criminal justice, and in computer graphic design.

How did you first get involved with AMTC?

I was working with another nonprofit organization as an educator for their community-based abstinence education program. Angie [AMTC's Principal] wrote the grant for that program and was the evaluator for them. She helped to organize the kick-off training in Milwaukee, and that's where I met her and came to work with AMTC.

What do you find most fulfilling about working with AMTC?

I would say coming from my initial position of providing direct service as an educator to helping organizations provide these programs at a much larger scale, and being successful at it. At times it feels that you've accomplished as much as they have along the way.

What accomplishments are you most proud of?

When clients meet their goals and are able to maintain and continue to obtain funding for those programs.

What do you look forward to in the future with AMTC?

I look forward to continued client growth and continuing to help Angie grow the company and our services.

Tell us about yourself outside of work.

I enjoy volunteering at my sons' school and working with kids through athletics. I somehow keep finding myself volunteering as the coach for my twins' sports teams!



TORRI CHILDS

EVALUATION ASSOCIATE

WITH AMTC SINCE 2015

EDUCATION: West Virginia University; University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

What is your educational background?

I have a master's degree in exercise and sport science and a master's in counseling.

How did you first get involved with AMTC?

I am a former Program Director for Mission West Virginia (MWV) and began working with AMTC in 2008 when MWV contracted with them to be the evaluator on a federal adolescent pregnancy prevention grant.

What do you find most fulfilling about working with AMTC?

I enjoy training and getting to know our clients and their programs. I enjoy telling the story of their program through the evaluation and reporting that we do for them.

What accomplishments are you most proud of?

I am proud of the work we do to help clients sustain funding for the important work that they do to improve their communities.

What do you look forward to in the future with AMTC?

I look forward to expanding my knowledge of the different programs we work with and increasing my skills in the area of workforce development.

Tell us about yourself outside of work.

My husband and I have three children who are very active in sports. We spend most nights at a ball field or at the gymnastics training center!