

Background

- Fremont County is home to nearly 41,000 people, 20% of whom are Native American.
- Compared to state and national statistics, Fremont County reports pointedly worse teen pregnancy rates.
- Though the area has some sex education programs in place, teen pregnancy is still a major issue.
- Community members, healthcare workers, and school faculty all agree that adolescent pregnancy rates are high, but have not yet found a solution to the problem.

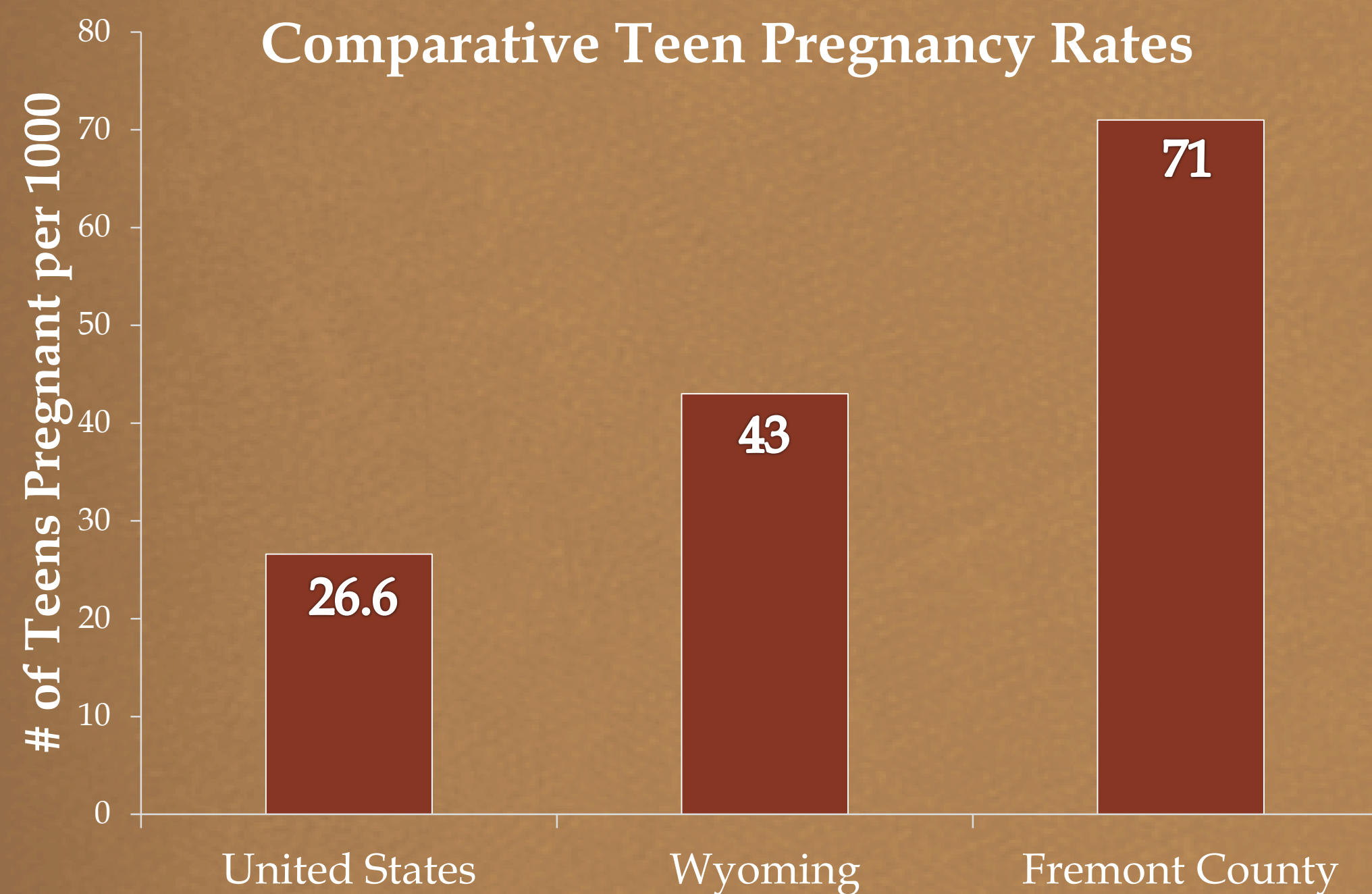


Educating the Leaders of our Future: Reducing Teen Pregnancy in Fremont County, Wyoming

Tyler Baldwin • 2014 RUOP iii3

Purpose

To decrease teen pregnancy rates in Fremont County through instruction that encourages teens to obtain an education, teaches them how to set and achieve life goals, and trains them on proper decision-making skills.



Methods

- Studies have shown that Positive Youth Development programs (PYDs) have been effective in reducing teen pregnancy.
- Since the casino is well known by the target population, has available transportation to and from its location, and because it is already very supportive of community efforts, it appears to be both a good location for meetings and a good partner for implementing the program.
- Visits with the casino nurse, casino faculty, and local adolescents provided useful feedback on my proposed initiative.

Results

- Community health plan includes:
 - Bringing in local college graduates and successful businesspeople of Native American descent as well as college recruiters to instruct and motivate teens during monthly meetings at the local casino, a very popular and prominent business in the community
 - Incorporating PYD ideals into the instructions given
 - Offering free contraceptives at each meeting
 - Providing door prizes as incentives for meeting attendance
- A casino nurse agreed that inviting local community members to teach would be more effective than bringing in people with whom the teens don't relate. She also said the casino is currently in the process of installing condom dispensers in all of its restrooms to promote safe sex.
- One person liked using the casino as a meeting location because it is well-known in the community.

Discussion

- Community members and potential partners were very supportive of my plan and willing to help out in any way possible.
- Plan implementation appears very feasible.
- One major obstacle is providing reliable transportation to and from meetings. It is also possible that the casino might not be allowed by the National Indian Gaming Commission to host an adolescent-targeted program.
- Due to the complexity of the issue, other youth programs should be involved in conjunction with this initiative that aim at reducing teen pregnancy.