



MESA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Working Together for a Healthy Community

NEWS RELEASE

Date: May 3, 2012

Contact: Karen Martsolf, PIO
256-2453 (Office)/ 778-1249 (Cell)
karen.martsolf@mesacounty.us

May is National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month

Unintended pregnancy identified as a winnable battle in Mesa County.

May is National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month and Mesa County Health Department wants to take this opportunity to inform the community about teen births in Mesa County. Through a recent community assessment, Mesa County Health Department, in conjunction with community partners, identified **obesity, suicide, and unintended pregnancy** as **Mesa County's Winnable Battles** to be addressed over the next several years.

In an effort to decrease the teen birth rate in Mesa County, community leaders, concerned citizens, and the Teen Sexual Health and Pregnancy Prevention Coalition will host a summit in June (date, time and location to be determined) to discuss unintended pregnancies with an emphasis on teens. Mental and public health professionals, researchers, parents, advocates, students, and concerned citizens will hear from state and local leaders to better understand teen pregnancy and learn some of the best, most innovative methods for preventing teen births. As the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports, preventing teen pregnancy is a priority because of its huge economic, social, and health costs on teen parents, their families, and our community.

Historically, Mesa County's teen birth rate for youth ages 15-19 has been higher than the state's rate. Mesa County Health Department's goal is to decrease the occurrence of teen pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases through comprehensive science-based sexuality education, parental involvement, and family planning services. Jeff Kuhr, Public Health Director states, "We have dedicated, knowledgeable staff available to provide education, training and workshops. We want to mobilize the community, engage parents, caregivers, and schools, as well as engage youth to help create responsible and positive behaviors regarding sexuality."

The summit will bring together the best minds and most passionate advocates for unintended pregnancy and will provide a unique educational opportunity for those interested in learning more about this topic.

For more information please visit our website at www.health.mesacounty.us

"Mesa County Health Department—Working Together for a Healthy Community."