

A Place to Call Home



Housing Needs of Pregnant and Parenting Youth Needs Assessment

Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Campaign of NC 2012-2013

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APP Coordinators and Participants

Key Informant Interviewee Partners

Housing Needs of Pregnant & Parenting Youth Needs Assessment

- History
- Literature Review
- Adolescent Parenting Program focus groups
- Adolescent Parenting Program survey
- Key Informant Interviews



History, or How This Came to Be...

- “A 17 year old mother & her 5 month old son need housing.”
- “I’d like to open a home for teen parents.”
- Compile list of housing resources (updated 2013)
- DHHS New Maternity Home Fund Rules (2012)
- Trainings and Technical Assistance
 - APPCNC’s Teen Parent Network Meeting-Florence Crittenton Home (2/99)
 - Forum: Safe & Secure Homes for teen parents & children (4/05)
 - Second Chance Homes Work Group (2005-2007)
- Consultation on developing housing for teen parents
 - YWCA Teen Parent Mentor Program>>My Sister Susan’s House
 - Winston-Salem Teen Parent Housing Coalition



Varying definitions of homelessness

- Definition of age range for “youth” differs (12-20, 14-24)
- Department of Housing and Urban Development ¹
 1. Literally homeless
 2. Imminent risk of homelessness
 3. Defined as homeless under other federal statutes, and
 4. Attempting to/fleeing domestic violence or other danger
- NC Department of Health and Human Services ²
 1. Live on the streets or in shelters
 2. On the verge of eviction
 3. Lack resources to obtain housing
 4. Live in overcrowded settings & substandard conditions

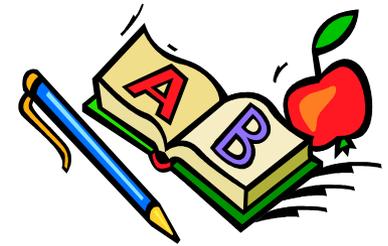
Our Working Definition of Homelessness

- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 criteria for homeless children and youth ³
 - Lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence...including:
 - Shared housing, living in motels, hotels, camp grounds
 - Living in emergency or transitional shelters
 - Are abandoned in hospitals
 - Are awaiting foster care placement
 - Primary nighttime residence that is a private or public place not designed for use as regular sleeping accommodations
 - Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, etc.
 - Migratory children who qualify according to above circumstances

Source: National Center for Homeless Education (center.serve.org/nche/legis/mv-def.php)

Homeless Students

- 1.6 MILLION teens are homeless ⁴
- 10% of homeless teens are pregnant ⁵
- Nationally 75% of homeless youth drop out of high school or will drop out of high school each year
- NC Homeless Liaison Coordinator only required to report # of homeless students
- NC DPI does NOT REQUIRE LEAs to report data on specific subpopulations.



IMPROVE DATA COLLECTION ON PPT & HOMELESS STUDENTS

Source: National Alliance to End Homelessness. Fundamental Issues to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness (2006)
Pregnancy among three national samples of runaway homeless youth, *Journal of Adolescent Health* (1998)

Risk Factors for Teen Homelessness

- Lack of supportive and functional family
- Adolescent pregnancy
- Physical or sexual abuse and trauma
- Mental illness (youth or parent)
- History of being in state custody
- Substance abuse
- Financial pressures
- Housing instability ⁶

Source: Risk Factors for Homelessness in Adolescents Released from Psychiatric Treatment. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*. 2000

Negative Impact of Homelessness

- Lack of transportation, a valid residence, immunization records, and health insurance threaten homeless youths' ability to access health care, pursue academic careers, and utilize social services.⁷
- Homeless youth are at greater risk of:
 - Contracting infectious diseases
 - Diabetes
 - Dental problems
 - Sexually transmitted infections ⁸

Sources: The mental and physical health of homeless youth: a literature review. *Child Psychiatry and Human Development* 2012

Homeless youth in the United States: description and developmental issues. *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development*. 1999

Housing Options in NC for PPT



Maternity Homes (9)

- Move out after baby's birth

Homes for Teen Parents (7)

- May live there while pregnant
- Newer homes include(d)
 - My Sister Susan's House (IPV)
 - My Aunt's House (closed)

Transitional Living Programs

- Youth, not pregnant or parenting
- 82% move to secure home

Foster Care & LINKS (DSS custody)

Domestic Violence Shelters (18+)

Other: Family Care Homes,
Substance Abuse Facilities

- Residential programs include prenatal/childbirth instruction; parenting education; pregnancy prevention & healthy relationships; counseling, life, employability, and independent living skills; referrals; housing goals
- Local minor parent coalitions worked to open new homes; formed partnerships, often under management of residential care agencies

Maternity Housing Sustainability

- Requires sufficient funding (start-up and operational)
 - Costly (average \$250,000/yr.); requires 24/7 staffing
- Housing options decreased in 5 years (6 closed)
 - Smaller, rural homes rely only on Maternity Home Fund
- Funding limited (private, federal, state/Maternity Home Fund, contract/DSS, Domestic Violence)
- Licensing - lengthy process
- Are other housing options less expensive and effective?

Licensing and Maternity Home Fund

Licensing:

Apply through NC Division of Social Services, Regulatory and Licensing Services Division

Maternity Home Fund:

- Provides reimbursement for agencies for providing housing
- Often exhausted before year's end

Maternity Home Fund 9

- Rule change as of August 1, 2011:
 - Home must first be accredited for 3 years before applying for license
 - Then, home must be operational for one year, submit audit before applying to fund **OR**
- Home comes under management of agency that has been accredited for 3 years, then submits application
- Ensures agency is competent, but is a barrier to prospective new homes

Bricks, Mortar, and Community: Core Components of Supportive Housing ¹⁰

Supports & Resource to Promote Self-Sufficiency

Help youth develop basic self-sufficiency skills, so s/he will be able to transition to independent living, access resources and services as needed without help of case manager.

Supports & Resources to Promote Housing Stability

Facilitate attainment of affordable housing in a safe neighborhood and continued housing stability & independent living upon completion of the program.

Supports & Resources to Promote Financial Stability

Help youth work toward financial stability by facilitating educational attainment and employment at a livable wage, as well as financial literacy.

Source: *Bricks, Mortar, and Community: The Foundations of Supportive Housing for Pregnant and Parenting Teens.*
Healthy Teen Network and Child Trends

Bricks, Mortar, and Community: Core Components of Supportive Housing

Supports & Resources to Promote Successful & Engaged Parenting and Attachment

- Facilitate successful and engaged parenting skills, child development knowledge, fostering attachment between parent(s) and child.

Supports & Resources to Promote Healthy Relationships

Cultivate a sense of self-worth and right to healthy relationships with partners, peers, family and the community, as well as the skills to resolve conflict, solve problems, and negotiate.

Conclusion: Homelessness among Pregnant and Parenting Youth

- In North Carolina a growing number of pregnant and parenting youth lack safe and stable housing.
- Homelessness among this population affects educational outcomes and mental health while increasing the risk for repeat pregnancies, interpersonal violence, and substance use.
- Research suggests that homelessness is associated with numerous negative effects on the cognitive, emotional, and physical development of young children.

The Need for Safe and Stable Housing among Pregnant and Parenting Youth in North Carolina

Adolescent Parenting Program Focus Group and Survey Results

250 APP participants - 2013



Descriptive Statistics

- Of the 205 female respondents:
 - 92% were between the ages of 15-19
 - 81% were currently parenting a child
 - 48% identified as African-American, 31% identified as Hispanic, and 16% identified as White/Caucasian



Housing Instability

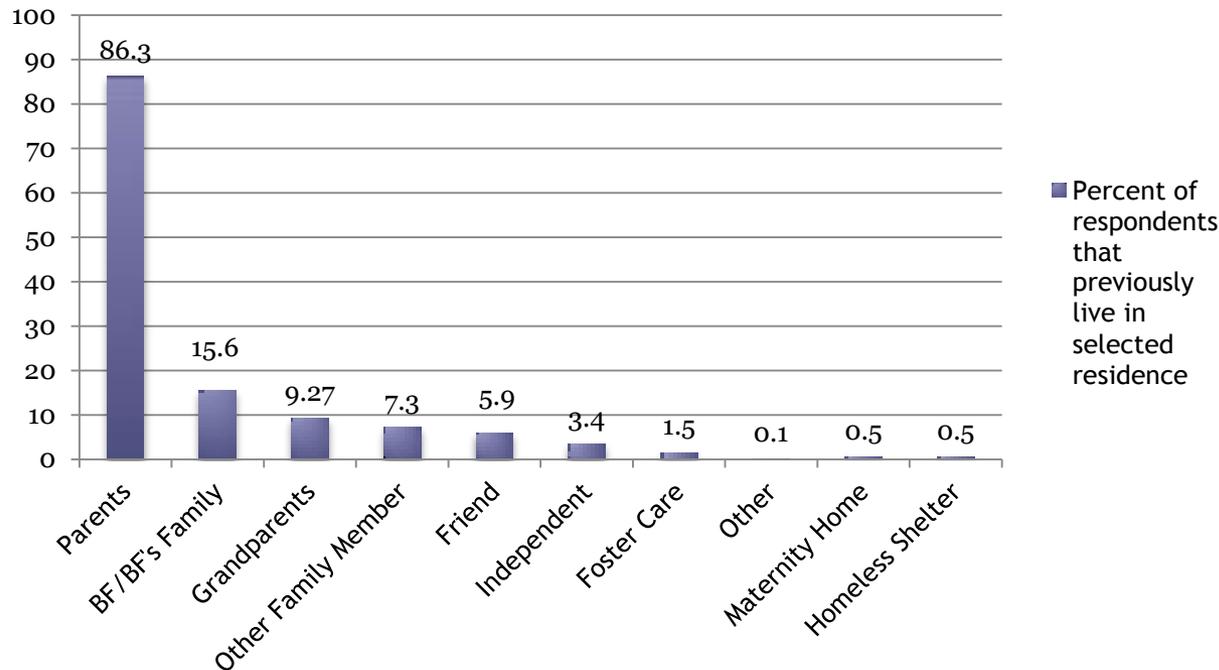
- When asked about their living situation for the past three years,
 - 15% indicated two or more recent residences
 - 7% indicated three or more recent residences
 - 44% listed past residences other than with their parents



Respondents' Past Residences

“With parents” was the most common response; however, a significant portion of respondents have recently lived with their boyfriends (15%) grandparents (9%) or other family members (7%)

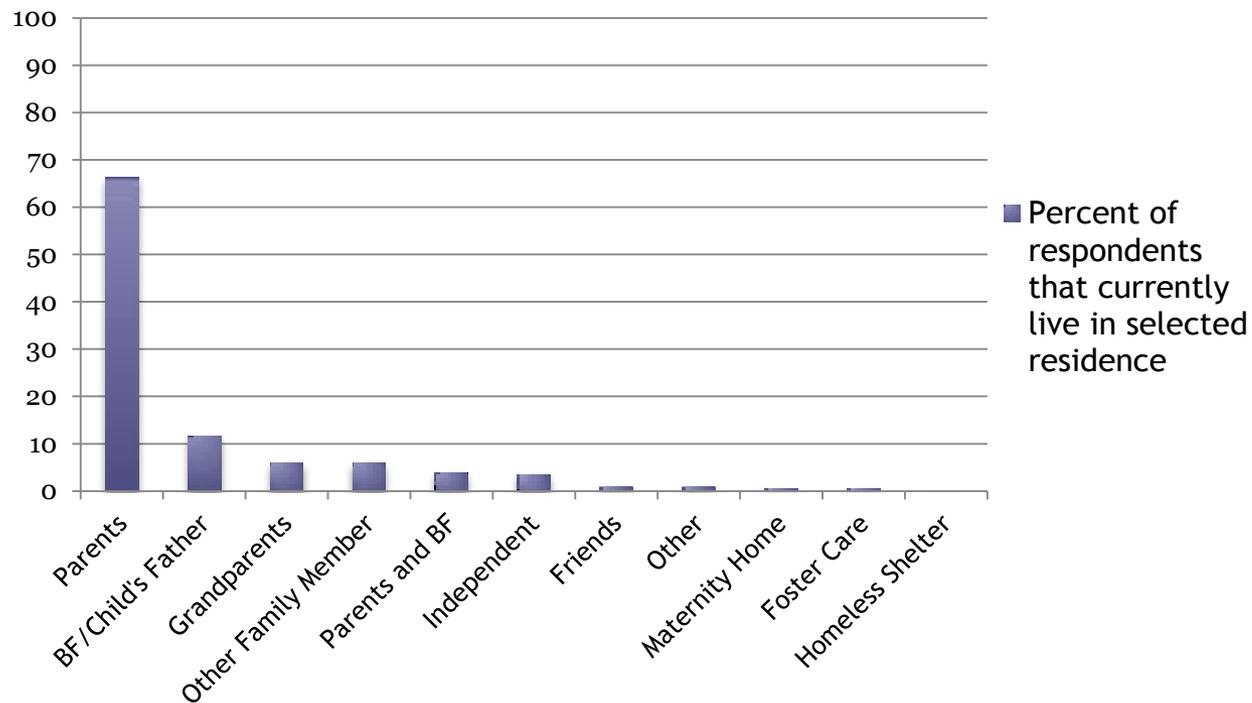
Past Residences by Type



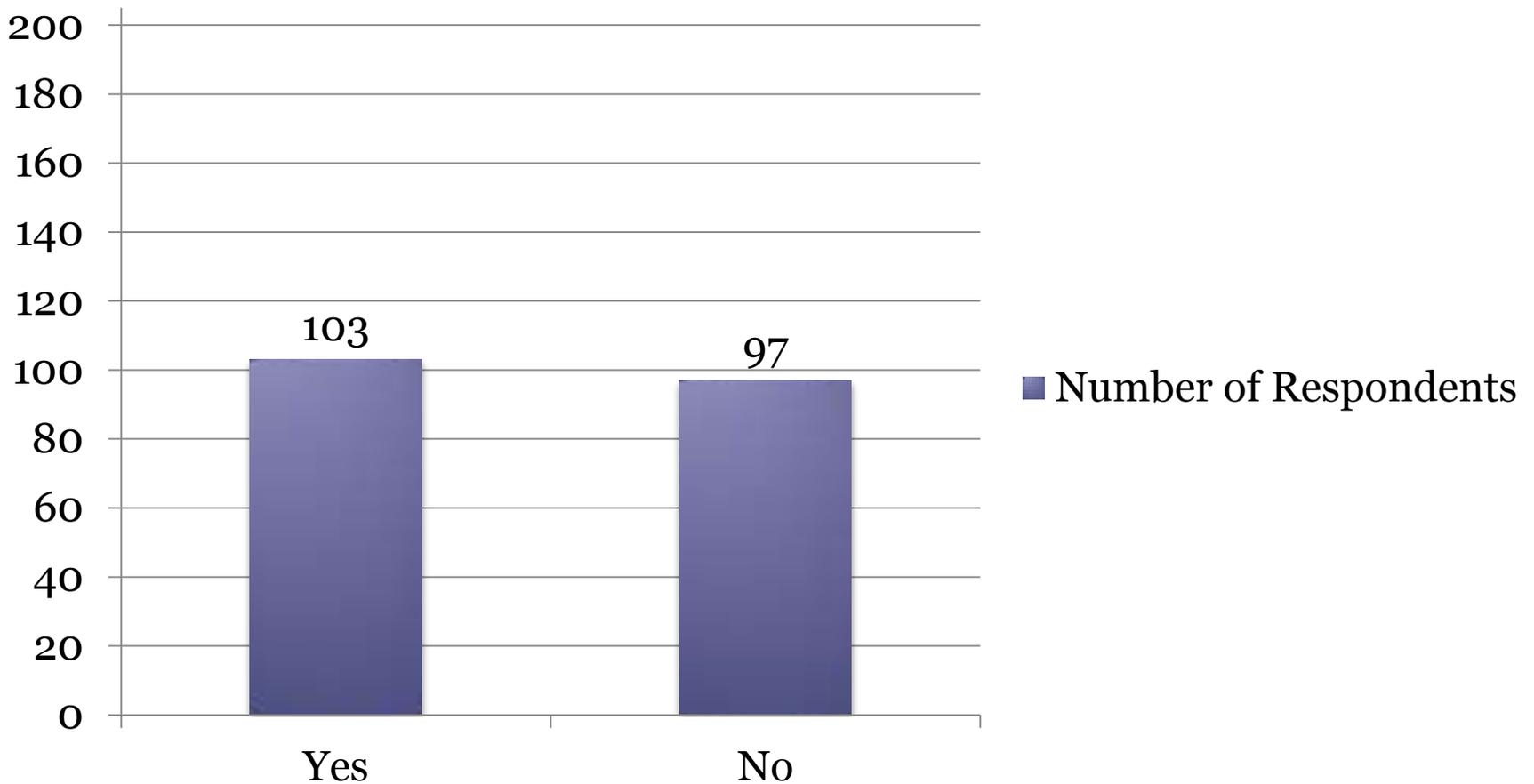
Respondents' Current Residences

The majority of respondents (66%) live with their parents; however, a significant portion live with their child's father (12%) or family members other than their parents (12%)

Current Residences by Type



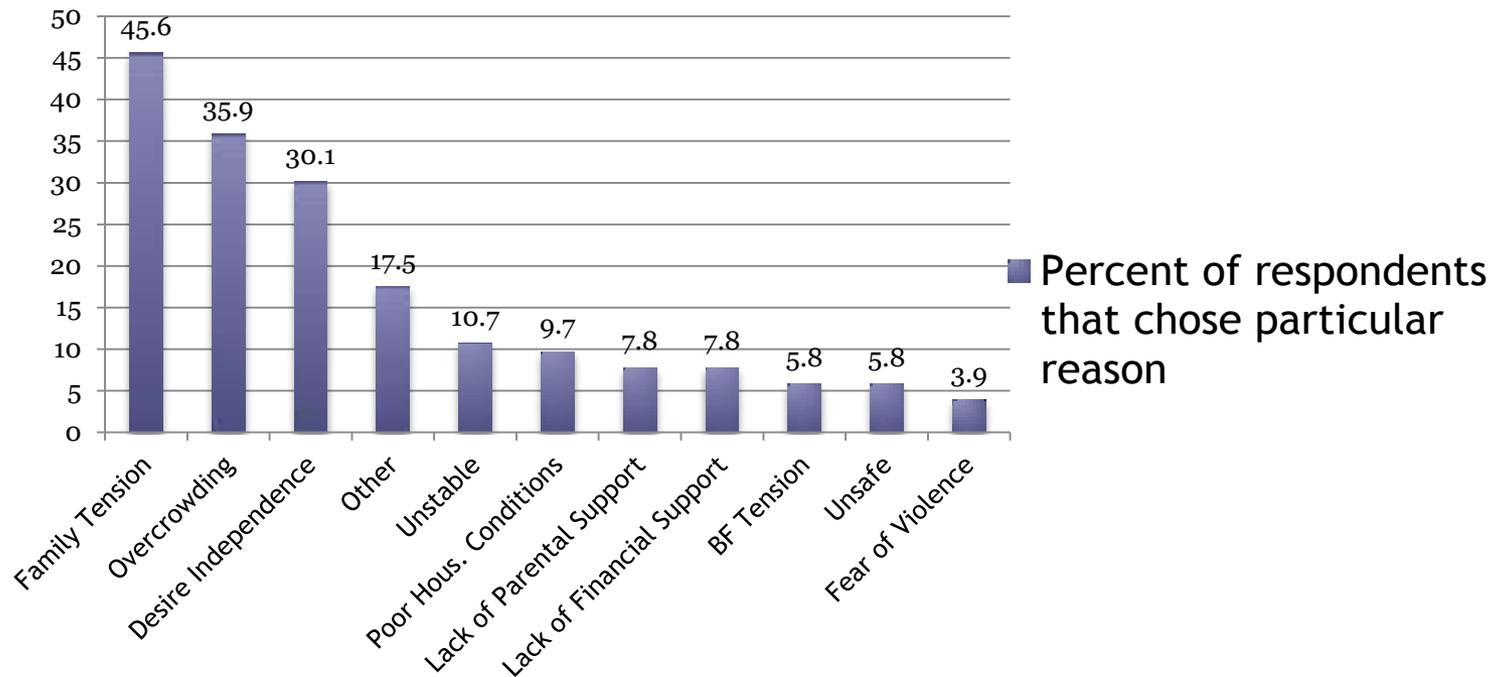
Responses to the question: “Have you ever wished that you and your child had somewhere else to live?”



Desire to Move?

50% of respondents indicated they wished they or their child had somewhere else to live

Reasons Given for Desiring Alternate Residence

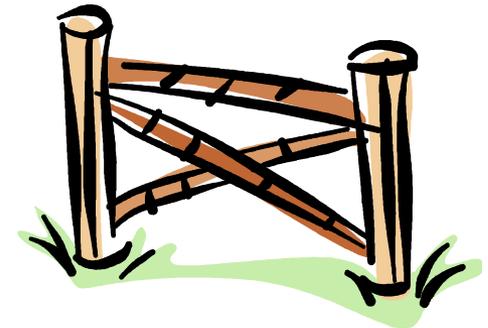


Why 50% of PPT want to live elsewhere?

- **FAMILY TENSION (45.6%)** - “You lose trust and they say ‘you wanna go have a baby, you do it on your own.’”
- **OVERCROWDING (35.9%)**
- **DESIRE FOR INDEPENDENCE (30.1%)**
- **FEAR OF VIOLENCE (19.4%)**
“I want my child to be safe.”

Barriers Teens See to Better Housing

- When asked about major obstacles young moms face in finding safe, affordable housing respondents emphasized:
 - Age restrictions and housing policy*
 - Lack of employment/income
 - High cost of independent living
 - Lack of transportation
 - Immigration status
 - Lack of affordable childcare
 - Hesitation about leaving home community if housing is in another town
 - Foster care system limits options for teen mom & child to stay together



*Maternal age requirements for shelters; landlords won't rent to those under 18

What Teens Want in a Residential Home

What is most important in new home environment?

Respondents answered:

- Privacy
- Safety
- Receiving parenting and social support
- Structure and rules

What skills do you want to learn in a residential facility?

Respondents answered:

- Parenting skills
- Cooking
- Financial management
- Employability skills
- Academic skills (help with schoolwork)



Conclusions

- A significant portion of APP participants have experienced housing instability in the past three years.
- Approximately half of APP participants wish they had somewhere else to live, often citing family tension, overcrowding, or desiring greater independence as their motivations.
- There is a need for greater housing services targeted at pregnant and parenting youth in North Carolina.

Descriptive Statistics

Age

Age	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
13	1	0.5%
14	6	3%
15	19	9%
16	45	22%
17	62	30%
18	42	21%
19	21	10%
20	2	1%
21	1	0.5%
22	1	0.5%

Race

Race	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
White/Caucasian	33	16%
African-American	98	48%
Hispanic	63	31%
Multiracial	8	4%
Asian	1	0.5%
Native American	1	0.5%
Pacific Islander	0	0
Other	1	0.5%

Number of Respondents by County

County	# of Resp.	Percent	County	# of Resp.	Percent
Alamance	12	5.9	Martin	1	0.5
Anson	2	1	Mecklenburg	37	18.1
Buncombe	18	8.8	Moore	1	0.5
Cabarrus	5	2.4	New Hanover	6	2.9
Edgecombe	13	6.4	Onslow	12	5.9
Gaston	9	4.4	Pitt	1	0.5
Greene	7	3.4	Rowan	2	1
Harnett	11	5.4	Vance	22	10.7
Henderson	21	10.2	Washington	2	1
Lee	4	2	Martin	1	0.5

Key Informant (KI) Interviews

- From February to May, 2013, **twenty-one (21) key informant interviews were conducted** to gather information from experts in the field on issues related to homelessness for pregnant and parenting teens
- Key informants' responses are included in the following 7 slides

Three (3) Master of Public Health students (Dept. of Maternal and Child Health, UNC Gillings School of Public Health) completed 14 Interviews; one (1) APPCNC staff completed 5 interviews; and two (2) Task Force members completed 3 interviews

We very much appreciate the time and thought that the interviewees took to share their expertise, experience, and lessons learned.

Causes of Homelessness:

- Generational poverty/cycle of family poverty
- Declining Economy
- Inadequate housing resources for pregnant/parenting teens
- Access to appropriate resources
- Teen/family conflict and dysfunction
- Inadequate family support
- Interpersonal violence
- Increased desire for independence
- Teen misperception of homelessness
- Multiple problems (physical/sexual abuse, neglect, substance abuse, mental illness, behavioral problems)
- Lack of economic independence



What's working in North Carolina?

- Programs that build, strengthen and maintain family relationships
“We work with young women on mending family relationships, if there is an appropriate family involved.”
- Developmentally appropriate maternity homes
Staff trained in adolescent development; programs balance rules & structure and honor teens' natural need for independence
- Wrap-around services
Effective services (housing & other) that coordinate the educational, financial, and personal needs that are often source of breaks in teens' safety net.

What's Working in North Carolina?

- **Programs that view autonomy and independence as primary goals** - support self-sufficiency instead of taking a punitive response to teen pregnancy & parenthood. “We ask them about their preferences and then work with them to bring about positive changes”
- **Programs that offer broad skills-building**
Programs help teens build multiple skill sets around parenting, education, employment, healthy relationships, etc.
- **Programs that meet broad needs**
Program help meet pregnant & parenting teens' full needs, including support services like child care, transportation, and health care needs.

Key Informants - Why so few supportive housing options in North Carolina?

- The economic downturn stretched the entire safety net (DSS: child services mandated & older youth less likely to receive services/foster care)
- Strict state regulations make it hard to establish new maternity homes (“Now, unless you’re accredited through 1 of 3 organizations, you can’t open up a mother-baby or maternity home.”)
- More professionals need special training to work with pregnant & parenting teens (“Having the right staff, well-trained, with the appropriate approach, makes a world of difference.”)

Key Informants - Why so few supportive housing options in North Carolina?

- **Stigma against pregnant & parenting teens** (“They are trying to survive in a world that’s not accepting them....”)
- **Lack of housing options near a teen’s home community** (“It’s very tough to leave everything you know and all your support systems and move somewhere very far away.”)
- **Families face more economic challenges in general** (“Poverty is a big issue. The way the economy has been the past few years, many families are suffering and living in crowded, unsafe places.”)
- **Housing assistance is in short supply** (Many families lost their homes due to bad economy. They had access to TANF & low-income housing. Now, this type of assistance is extremely limited or doesn’t exist.”)

“ You would think that when you’re talking about homeless moms and babies that the money would be flowing in.... That is not the case.



Unsuccessful Interventions

- Teen too independent for supportive housing
- Serious mental health problems not conducive to group living
- Pattern of unstable housing & unsupervised living result in a difficult adjustment to supervised housing
- PPT think they can manage on their own
- Residential services that are overly structured and don't empower PPT

Conclusion: North Carolina has a Need for Safe & Stable Housing for Pregnant and Parenting Teens

- Work to ensure adequate & appropriate housing for Pregnant and Parenting Teens (PPT)
- Aim to locate human services, schools, recreation, and transportation near shelters/homes
- Need to increase coordination between local, regional, state, and national agencies re housing
 - Share info and referrals
 - Increase resources
 - Improve data collection
 - Increase funding sources and amounts

Needs Assessment Recommendations

Improve Data Collection in NC

- Statewide assessment form for providers to collect data on pregnant and parenting teens (including homelessness status)
- Use data to document need, identify funding sources, and advocate for supportive policies

Develop Statewide Advocacy Network

- Develop statewide providers' network to foster collaboration & information-sharing among providers working with this population
- Expand group of stakeholders to include advocates, pregnant and parenting teens, and policy-makers
- APPCNC develop Google Group to share info
- Convene a Housing Forum to educate providers and advocates and to develop strategies to expand housing options
- Engage young parents as advocates

Needs Assessment Recommendations

Explore Alternative Housing Models

- Reevaluate traditional group home models and explore other models for independent living (e.g. host homes)
- Collaborate with existing systems of care (foster care, domestic violence shelters, etc.) to improve current programs and incorporate innovative models

Additional Recommendations

- Reevaluate current Maternity Home Rules and explore modifications that enable development of new homes
- Advocate for increased funding for Maternity Home Fund
- Improve understanding of existing policies and funding for residential housing for pregnant & parenting adolescents

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Safe Housing >> Successful Pregnant and Parenting Teens >> Bright Futures for Families & Communities



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

Margaret Mead



Support for shelters and transitional living and housing programs is necessary if we are going to change the landscape for homeless boys and girls in America.

Jewel



Acknowledgements

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