



Beyond "The Talk"

So young people grow up healthy

Winter, 2017

Change in Washington: What does it mean for adolescent health?

The results of the 2016 election have meant big changes in Washington – and those changes could have a big impact on North Carolina’s adolescents. SHIFT NC is working with partners, advocates, and supporters like you to keep teen health on the radar as Congress and the president get to work.

So what’s on the horizon? One of the biggest question marks is the future of the Affordable Care Act, which has increased youth access to sexual and reproductive health care like contraception, prenatal care, and testing for sexually transmitted infections. Changes to the Affordable Care Act, as well as changes to Medicaid and the Title X Family Planning Program, could impact access to affordable healthcare for many teens and families.



WASHINGTON D.C.

We are also closely watching federal initiatives that support teen health, like the Office of Adolescent Health’s Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative. Through 2020, the Office of Adolescent Health has committed \$37.3 million to improve teen health in North Carolina – but only if Congress continues to reauthorize the funding.

Real Facts!



85% of adults — 75% of Republicans and 89% of Democrats — favor maintaining federal funding for the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative.

Rep - 75% favor

Dem - 89% favor

So what’s the impact on North Carolina?

SHIFT NC’s **North Carolina Youth Connected** is helping Cumberland and other counties develop large-scale community-wide initiatives to serve 53,000 youth and reduce teen pregnancy by 50% by 2020.

Every Teen Counts is an initiative, led by SHIFT NC, to build the capacity of foster care agencies and juvenile detention centers to improve teen health using trauma-informed principles and evidence-based programs.

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Don’t forget to add these dates to your calendar! Check shiftnc.org for updates — or better yet, sign up online for our email alerts to get the latest event invites, engagement opportunities, and more!

MAR

March 7
Adolescent Health Advocacy Day
NCGA, Raleigh
#SpeakYOUTHtoPower

APR

April 4
State of Adolescent Health Forum
Doubletree, RTP

April 28
In the Company of Women
House of Hops, Raleigh

MAY

May 24-26
2017 Conference on Adolescent Sexual Health
Koury Center, Greensboro

SEPT

September 22
Take Flight with SHIFT NC
Durham Armory, Durham

Rise and Shine! It's Donut Time

After a year of planning with clinics and youth-serving agencies, Greensboro revelers joined us to launch **Healthy Tomorrow Alliance**, funded by the **Cone Health Foundation**. The donut-themed kickoff was just the icing on top!



Dr. Martha Perry shares what it takes to strengthen healthcare for teens.



The sprinkles on top? Lapel pins with IUDs and the new Healthy Tomorrow Alliance logo.



Partners raise a glass of OJ to mark the start of a new project year with a toast.

Change in Washington (cont.)

Cabarrus Health Alliance is rigorously evaluating Taking Responsible Actions In Life (TRAIL), a school-based program that promotes positive youth development, student leadership, and responsible decision making.

The New Jersey-based **Center for Supportive Schools** is rigorously evaluating a new model using high school juniors and seniors as peer mentors in rural high schools in North Carolina.

The **Children's Home Society** is rigorously evaluating their WISE Guys curriculum, which provides information on relationships and avoiding pregnancy specifically for young men.

NC Department of Health and Human Services is coordinating evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programming in Richmond, Graham, and Edgecombe counties.

As finalists in the Innovate Next Design Thinking Challenge, a team of doctoral students from UNC-Chapel Hill is building **MySEXEd**, an online, self-guided teen pregnancy lesson that adapts to individual students' specific learning needs.

As changes in Washington pick up steam, we'll continue working with partners to help inform lawmakers and communities about the positive impact federal initiatives are having on North Carolina youth.

BrdsNBz gets a new look, website!

SHIFT NC is excited to roll out a new look and website for our BrdsNBz text service — just in time for Valentine's Day! Supported largely by donations like yours, BrdsNBz has become a critical tool for connecting young people with the medically accurate health information they need. Check out **thebrdsnbz.org** to see what's fresh and what's on the horizon!



Increasing Healthcare Access in High Point: Meet Our Newest Initiative

SHIFT NC is joining forces with the **Foundation for a Healthy High Point** to increase access to high-quality teen healthcare in High Point. Building on SHIFT NC's strong clinic improvement model, the initiative will focus on helping High Point-area healthcare providers adopt best practices for working with adolescent patients and their families. The initiative will also help teens and families find and connect with high-quality healthcare providers. **Michelle Reese**, SHIFT NC's Senior Clinic Improvement Advisor, is leading the new initiative.

Checking In With NC Youth Connected: The next wave in teen pregnancy prevention

North Carolina's teen pregnancy rate has declined significantly over the past two decades, but remains above the national average, with additional differences from county to county. Addressing teen pregnancy to improve local outcomes is essential to ensure a continued reduction of teen pregnancy in North Carolina. Improvement can be made when key community groups work together including schools, the medical community, parents, nonprofits, faith leaders, and youth-serving systems.

The NC Youth Connected initiative, which SHIFT NC launched in fall 2015, is designed to build community-wide teen pregnancy prevention initiatives across communities in North Carolina. The initiative replicates programming and lessons learned from SHIFT NC's Gaston Youth Connected project, which reduced pregnancy rates in Gaston County, NC, by more than 45% over five years.

With more than eight teens becoming pregnant each week, Cumberland County was identified as a one North Carolina community that could greatly benefit from this model and community-wide approach. With a teen pregnancy rate that is 45% higher than the statewide rate, NC Youth Connected is providing the opportunity for the entire community to come together to support teen health and build a stronger Cumberland County.



The **NCYC team** gives fashionable props on national #ThxBirthControl day.

Over the last year and a half, NC Youth Connected's project team talked with community leaders, youth-serving systems including local schools and health providers, parents, teens and the larger community to ensure the initiative truly reflects the needs of the community. The initiative has identified many of the big known unknowns – who gets pregnant, are those pregnancies planned and prepared for, what do teens need, and what do parents want and need to be address the issue.

One major focus of NC Youth Connected is helping the community introduce evidence-based approaches, like using the Get Real curriculum in area middle schools. Other evidence-based approaches include increasing referrals and linking strategies to improve teen's access to health care for addressing their sexual health needs. By addressing teen pregnancy in these various settings, in addition to improving local outcomes, NC Youth Connected is committed to effective prevention of teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and other adolescent sexual health issues in Cumberland County and across the state.

GET REAL rolls out in Fayetteville middle schools

Sexuality education is an important component of health education – and it's supported by parents, researchers, and public policy. Simply put, learning about sexual health helps teenagers become healthy adults.

More than 1,400
6th and 7th graders
have participated in
GET REAL since
September 2016!

NC Youth Connected recognizes that schools play a pivotal role in helping young people be healthy, safe, and responsible – and stay that way for the rest of their lives. In partnership with the **Cumberland County School System**, NC Youth Connected launched a new evidence-based prevention program for middle schoolers this fall.

To get the program up and running, schools received curriculum materials, teachers received training, and parent meetings have been held to help them understand the lessons.

And this is just the start! In partnership with a community leadership team, NC Youth Connected is mobilizing local leadership to help more youth access the information and support they need to grow up healthy!

Learn more at ncyouthconnected.org.
Follow the initiative on Facebook @ncyouthconnected.

Let's do this!

Your financial support helps us make a big impact on North Carolina youth — from responding to changes in Washington to offering BrdsNBz to helping communities mobilize around tough challenges. **Visit shiftnc.org to make a donation today!**

Dear Investors in Adolescent Sexual Health

By Rodney Crossover

I am writing in appreciation of the work SHIFT NC is doing on behalf of young people across North Carolina, and to thank you for your past contributions to SHIFT NC. I have been pleased to support SHIFT NC for several years.

As a business owner, I believe the business community has a solemn responsibility to support organizations that aim to make our society a healthier, safer, and more prosperous place to live today and for future generations. A business is sustained by the community in which it operates. We rely on our communities, and we have a vested interest in ensuring that our communities are strong. We should continue to invest in SHIFT NC because SHIFT NC is investing in our communities.

We know that childbirth too young has detrimental consequences for our workforce and economy due to lost tax revenue because of lower educational attainment and income among teen parents. We also know that children born to teen parents are more likely to repeat the cycle. These statistics are not good.

I believe that even young people who are living in the most challenging of circumstances will succeed when they have hope that their lives will be better in the future. They need information and skills to protect their health, resources that they can access easily in their communities, and relationships with adults who celebrate their successes and redirect them when they are veering off their path to success.

SHIFT NC helps to equip our communities with these resources. Chances are good that teachers, social workers, nurses, or other professionals in your community who work with young people have been touched by the work of SHIFT NC, because SHIFT NC seeks to ensure that "every adolescent grows up in a state that is equipped to support their sexual health."

Please join me in continuing to support the work of SHIFT NC.

Regards,
Rodney Crossover
Father, Donor, and Owner of Crossover Green, LLC



Rodney Crossover, with his wife Sherry Barr and their two sons.

Thank you

Generous gifts from donors like you help us quickly and effectively respond to the needs of North Carolina's adolescents. At the end of last year, you helped us raise more than \$5,000 that we can immediately put to work at events like Adolescent Health Advocacy Day or through our BrdsNBz Text Line. We look forward to your continued support as we all work together to help young people grow up healthy.

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