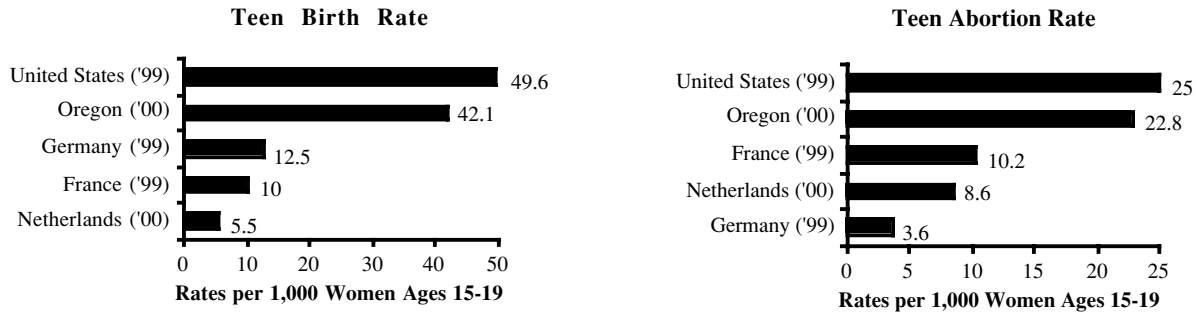


## **BACKGROUND**

Despite substantial declines during the last decade, the United States – and our own state of Oregon – continue to have teen pregnancy rates that are among the highest in the industrialized world. Our teen birth and abortion rates as well as the incidence of sexually transmitted infections and HIV are dramatically higher than in western Europe.



With pragmatism and unyielding commitment, Europeans have successfully shaped an approach to adolescent sexuality and behavior that has proved remarkably effective. *What are they doing? Can we learn from their experience? And does it make sense to explore and adapt these strategies to our own teen pregnancy prevention efforts here at home?*

## **MASS MEDIA CAMPAIGNS: ARE OUR EUROPEAN COLLEAGUES ON TO SOMETHING?**

A key piece of the successful European approach to adolescent sexual health issues is education, much of which is communicated through mass media campaigns: TV, radio and print ads, infomercials, public service announcements, bus ads, billboards, video, posters, postcards, pamphlets, CD-ROMs... the vehicles are many and varied. Media provide positive and effective messages about sexually transmitted infections and the prevention of unintended pregnancies. They help shape social norms that reinforce healthy sexual attitudes and behaviors among the general population. These campaigns are thoughtful, well researched, responsive to public need and incredibly entertaining. They have evolved over time as each year's campaign is evaluated to determine what worked, what didn't, and what the focus might be for the next round.

How mass media in Germany, France and the Netherlands became a major partner in providing sexual health messages is an important story that may inform and direct us in our own efforts. All three countries invest heavily in mass media campaigns as an avenue to break down societal taboos about discussing responsible sexual behavior. The degree of cooperation and commitment by industry professionals is wonderful and refreshing to see.

## **—PROPOSAL—**

Planned Parenthood Health Services of Southwestern Oregon (PPHSSO) will host luncheon forums during the week of September 15<sup>th</sup> in Portland, Eugene and Medford, in part to showcase and learn from western Europe's clever and innovative mass media campaigns. This will also be

an opportunity to solicit the feedback, wisdom and guidance of Oregon's media professionals, along with community groups, organizations and individuals who care about the health and well-being of Oregon youth. Can we apply the lessons learned from western Europe's mass media efforts? How do we work appropriately, effectively and in partnership with media in developing local campaigns around adolescent sexual health issues? **Can we do better?**

The luncheon event will include:

• **Panel Presentation**

- Visiting professionals from Germany, France and the Netherlands will share highlights of their country's mass media efforts along with the history, evolution and adaptability of these campaigns to other cultures;
- Barbara Huberman, Director of Sexuality Education at Advocates for Youth in Washington DC, will talk about effective U.S. media campaigns around sexual health issues;

• **Q & A / Debrief**

- An opportunity for questions, reactions and interactions with both panelists and other participants. This important discussion will help guide the Rights, Respect, Responsibility® initiative as it prepares to develop the mass media campaign for Oregon.

Rights, Respect, Responsibility® (RRR®) is a bold and innovative Oregon initiative that is in its third year of helping young people develop healthy sexual attitudes and behaviors. Spearheaded by Planned Parenthood Health Services of Southwestern Oregon.

**Since 2001, support for RRR® activities has been provided by:**

Planned Parenthood Health Services of Southwestern Oregon  
E. C. Brown Foundation  
The Northwest Health Foundation  
PPFA Fund for the Future  
The Collins Foundation  
The Woodard Family Foundation  
Lane County Commission on Children and Families  
Jackson County Reduce Adolescent Pregnancy Partnership  
Josephine County Reduce Adolescent Pregnancy Partnership  
Rose Tucker Foundation

Additional information about this initiative can be obtained at [www.wecandobetter.org](http://www.wecandobetter.org) or by contacting the Rights, Respect, Responsibility® Coordinator, Joanne Alba: 541-344-1611 x 14 or [joanne.alba@pphsso.org](mailto:joanne.alba@pphsso.org).