

Q-C area teen pregnancy rates still high

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Deirdre Cox Baker The Quad-City Times | Posted: Tuesday, May 3, 2011 1:05 pm | (6) Comments

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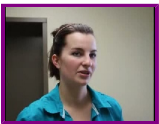
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Larry Fisher Molly Rowell, right, a junior at United Township High School talks about the results of a teen forum to kickoff Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month while Monique Redd, a Senior at Thurgood Marshall, looks on. Tuesday May 3, 2011. (Larry Fisher/QUAD-CITY TIMES)

Related Video



Teen mom Brittany Jipp

Brittany Kipp, 18, of Bettendorf, and a senior at Edison Academy in Davenport says there needs to be

stronger messages delivered to teenage fathers.

Teen pregnancy rates in the Quad-Cities remain at stubbornly high levels in comparison with statewide figures for both Illinois and Iowa as well as the United States.

Bethany for Children & Families sponsored a forum today to address the issue, pointing to the negative effects on teenagers who bear children.

The event involved teens, including teen mothers, as well as parents and adults. The group of about 40 people was challenged to come up with new plans to reduce the area's teen pregnancy rate.

Rock Island County has a teen pregnancy rate of 13.3 percent, compared with 10.1 percent in Illinois. Scott County's rate of 11.5 percent compares with 8.7 percent in Iowa. The national rate has gone down by 6 percent in the past year, said Mary Ann McLeod, Bethany's director of community services.

There need to be stronger messages delivered to teenage fathers, said Brittany Kipp, 18, of Bettendorf, a senior at Edison Academy in Davenport. Kipp, who is a new mother, also believes that parents and teens need to use better communication methods when it comes to talking about sex.

Today's recommendations will be addressed next by an advisory committee, which is charged with coming up with ways to share the forum's ideas with area students in an age-appropriate manner, McLeod said.

One idea that attracted interest today is to launch a new sex education mentoring program between high school and junior high students.

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