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Ten Promising Practices in Teen Fatherhood Programs

For many years, teen fathers were either overlooked or blamed for their role in teen pregnancy. However, interest in designing programs to reduce teen pregnancy and to enhance outcomes for babies and children, as well as meet the needs of this vulnerable population, has increased in recent years. A National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse brief authored by Child Trends, *Promising Teen Fatherhood Programs: Initial Evidence Lessons from Evidence-Based Research*, identifies ten common features of "model" and "promising" programs for teen fathers. Eighteen fatherhood programs were assessed and, of these, one was identified as a "model" program and three as "promising" programs.

Based on the evidence from these programs, more effective teen fatherhood programs:

1. Partnered with community organizations such as schools, pre-natal clinics and programs for teen mothers to help recruit and engage teen fathers.
2. Had program staff develop one-on-one relationships with teen fathers, either in small groups, through individual case management, or through mentoring services.
3. Offered a comprehensive array of services to teen fathers that went beyond only parenting information.
4. Began with a theoretical program model and used theories of change or logic models that were effective with adolescent parents.
5. Delivered services in engaging and interactive ways.
6. Conducted needs assessments and/or used participant feedback to provide teen fathers the services they wanted.
7. Hired professionals who were experienced, empathetic, enthusiastic, well-connected in the community, and carefully matched to participants.
8. Incorporated teaching methods and materials that were appropriate for teen fathers and their culture and age.
9. Used an incentive with teen fathers and their families.
10. Mentored teen fathers.

A more detailed report, *Elements of Promising Practice in Teen Fatherhood Programs: Evidence-Based and Evidence-Informed Research Findings on What Works*, provides additional information about the 18 fatherhood programs, including the four that fit the criteria as "model" or "promising" programs.

