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News

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**Free materials available on human sexuality.

DALLAS--A list of informational materials on human sexuality appropriate for children, teenagers and parents is being made available to community groups by a coalition of approximately 35 agencies participating in the Cherish the Children campaign. The list, prepared by Richardson Independent School District librarian Polly Gilbert, includes descriptions of both audiovisuals and printed materials with age guidelines.

Cherish the Children: Facing the Problems of Teenage Pregnancy is a community emphasis in Dallas during the month of March. Participants are planning special programs during that time, and the speakers bureau is offering speakers on the various social and economic problems resulting from "children having children." Problems caused by inappropriate adolescent pregnancies may range from loss of educational opportunities for the mother to severe health problems for many of their premature infants--and even child abuse. Not only are there often severe losses to the mother and child, but also the community as a whole is affected by this problem.

Medical consultants to Cherish the Children include Dr. Norman Gant, professor and former chairman of Obstetrics and Gynecology at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas, and Dr. Drew Alexander, Dallas pediatrician and adolescent specialist. Alexander is also clinical assistant professor at UTHSCD and serves as advisor to the school's Young Adult Clinic, located at Parkland Memorial Hospital, and West Dallas Youth Clinic on the grounds of Pinkston High School.

These advisors believe that it is important to bring these problems to the attention of the public since current studies show that four out of 10 adolescent females and six out of 10 adolescent males today are experiencing sexual intercourse at least by their 16th year. And 1980 figures for Dallas County show that there were 495 births to young women under 15, 3,283 births to those 15-16, 7,536 to 17-18 and 11,313 to teens 18 or more years old.

Because sexuality is such a sensitive subject, Gilbert recommends that parents and teenagers personally select books and media that reflect their value systems and standards of taste. However, all books and materials included have been favorably reviewed and recommended for library purchase by the following professional journals: Booklist, Media and Methods, School Library Journal and Science Books and Films. In addition, books and audiovisuals have been screened to ensure that the information included is correct and presented in a balanced manner.

Individual lists, which may be copied for groups, may be obtained by calling Cherish the Children at 214/620-9779 (the March of Dimes). Names will also be taken for a similar fiction list which will be available at a later date. Speakers can be booked by calling Kaye Spencer at 214/688-2938.

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