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Reproductive Health & Wellness Program



THIS ISSUE

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RECLAIM: Peer Advocacy at UC Threatened by Martha Walter

The University of Cincinnati Women's Center houses a unique program that school administrators are trying to shut down. RECLAIM Peer Advocates are a group of students who are trained to be advocates, activists, and to offer support to fellow students that are survivors of sexual assault, rape, or other gender based violence. They are equipped to work with peers at any stage of their recovery process, raise awareness of sexual and gender based violence on UC's campus, and foster change that will keep students as safe as possible. Considering that one in four women college women will be raped, it seems like a no-brainer that programs such as this should exist. This student-led model of activism is also a best-practices model for sexual assault response on campuses.

I was trained as a RECLAIM Peer Advocate during my sophomore year of my undergraduate program. This group of people was among the most diverse, supportive, and forward thinking I've ever had the privilege of working with. We learned how to respond to a 24/7 hotline (in the form of 2 shared cell phones that we took turns carrying,) to determine if the survivor needed someone to talk to, what needed to happen if it was a recent assault and they wanted to make a police report, if they wanted to go to the hospital for a rape kit, and to help contact friends or family if that was what they chose. Reporting sexual assault on campus can be extremely difficult for students. Considering that 85-90% of assaults against college women are committed by someone they know, (50% of which occur on a date,)¹ it can be very scary to accuse someone who may be a part of their social circle. The risk of exclusion, being called a liar, losing friends, feelings of embarrassment, fear of telling family, etc. can often mean that telling an advocate who is detached from the situations is a really great option. RECLAIM peer advocates not only work with survivors, but seek to change the overall culture of campus by promoting messages about what obtaining consent means.

I received a message from a fellow RECLAIM alumni last week stating that the administration had ordered the Women's Center to disband the program. We suspected this may be to make way for a partnership between the school's Title IX office and Women Helping Women (WHW), a local organization that supports sexual assault survivors. WHW is an amazing organization, but we feared this partnership could potentially mean that students will be required to report their assault to the police in order to receive treatment or resources, even if reporting is not what they wish to do. This would also makes anonymous help from a supportive peer impossible. Additionally, WHW already exists as an optional resource for survivors and peer advocates if they choose to utilize a community based support network. WHW released an op-ed in full support of the RECLAIM Program if you're looking for more information from their perspective. (See references for link)

After attending a meeting this week to learn more about the situation, it is becoming clear that the University administrators are not being transparent, nor are they adhering to the Just Community Principles that are a part of the Bearcat Bond that everyone involved with UC is expected to uphold. The Bearcat Bond states: "As a member of the University of Cincinnati, I will uphold the principles for a Just Community and the values of respect, responsibility, and inclusiveness. I will promote the highest levels of personal and academic honesty and aspire continuously to better myself, the Bearcat community, and the world²." The Just Community Principles laid out as a part of this bond include things like accepting responsibility, embracing freedom and openness, promoting civility, and seeking integrity. Based on what I learned at the meeting, the administration is doing none of those things. First, the Women's Center was told to cancel the RECLAIM 5 day training just days before it was scheduled to begin. When students requested a meeting with representatives from the Office of Student Affairs, they were told that the pro-

gram would not go forward as it had existed. I learned at this point that the cell phone hotline had been taken away during the 2014 school year, so the program hadn't been functioning at capacity for over a year as this meant peer advocates couldn't provide direct services to students. The day after this meeting, the official UC Twitter account stated that the RECLAIM program would exist as-is (still meaning that there were no advocates providing direct services to students as they should have been). Within minutes of the UC tweet, a call was placed to the Women's Center strongly encouraging them to repost the UC message, verbatim, on their own social media. It was very apparent that this language was coming from the administration, and not from the Women's Center staff, but they feared losing their jobs so they reposted a screen shot of the message. The administrators claimed they were trying to calm the student outrage by "asking" the Women's Center to repost the existing UC approved message. Women's Center staff have been moved around, coerced into promoting a message that does not support their perspective of the situation. They, and the students they serve, are feeling threatened, and the administrators behind these changes are, at best, not being transparent. At worst, student voices being silenced. The trust that existed between the Women's Center, students, and the administration is quickly evaporating. A program that exists to give assault survivors a voice, if and when they choose to express it, is being silenced — stripped of that voice by those who should be among it's first line of defense.

Now the administrators are asking what they can do to make this right. They've said that RECLAIM can resume, but school has started and the peer advocates don't have time to complete a 40 hour training. The University needs to re-establish full support of the Women's Center, including providing them with full funding, allowing the staff and students to operate as they see fit, and deferring to the expertise of the people they hired to run these...
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RECLAIM (continued from p. 1)

...programs. They should take responsibility for the coercion and misrepresentations they've perpetuated. They need to acknowledge that advocacy AND education are the core of the RECLAIM program, and not try to reduce it to just a peer education program. Most importantly, they need to adhere to the Just Community principles that everyone in the UC community should follow.

The UC Women's Center definition of consent is this: "Consent is legally defined as verbal expression of a person's willingness to participate in an act or event. Consent can be withdrawn at any time during an act or event. In Ohio, consent can only be legally given if you are conscious and sober³." According to the National Institute of Justice, less than 5 percent of attempted rapes on college campuses are reported to administration or the police. In addition, the report states: "Failure to recognize and report the crime to law enforcement officials may contribute to underestimating the extent of the problem and may affect whether victims seek medical care. However, those who report in other contexts, such as through a confidential reporting system, are more likely to seek medical or counseling services." After a few years of having little support from UC, the interim director of the Women's Center has resigned. Amy Howton is one of the most joyful, compassionate, supportive, and open minded people I've ever met or had the privilege to work with. In another student's words, she is a "ferocious warrior and advocate for self-care, for students, for integrity." I don't know the exact circumstances of her resignation, but it certainly seems as though UC made it hard for her to do her job effectively. No matter the circumstance, UC has lost an incomparable advocate for the voice of women on campus, and lost the trust of a large group of students who have now been traumatized during the first weeks of a new school year.

**"Viagra" for Women?**

A new drug recently approved by the FDA is being marketed as a version of Viagra for women, but it may not be as simple as that. The drug is called flibanserin, (brand name Addyi). It claims to treat hypoactive sexual desire disorder (HSDD), or low libido, in women. So what is the problem? The drug, rejected for FDA approval two times before being pushed through by women's advocacy groups, comes with some pretty serious side effects. And it may not even work for most women. The FDA says that only 8-13% of women taking the actual drug saw an improvement in their desire to have sex over those taking the placebo, resulting in only one more 'sexually satisfying event' per two months. In addition, side effects impacted one in five women taking the drug, including drowsiness, dizziness, fainting, and even 'extremely low blood pressure.' The drug's side effects are made worse when a woman drinks alcohol or uses hormonal contraception⁴. Most of the drugs marketed to men to improve their sex lives have more to do with issues like erectile dysfunction or low testosterone, not the more abstract "low sex drive" or "lack of desire" being marketed to women. These pills for men can be taken as needed if the issue is erectile dysfunction, but women taking flibanserin would have to take the drug every day. Other critics have said that the pharmaceutical industry is wrong to tell women that this is truly a medical condition, and that it may just be a 'disease' invented to convince women that there is an issue to be treated. However, is it possible that any potential treatment is better than nothing?

While HSDD may not be a real medical condition, there may be plenty of women out there who enjoy sex but don't feel like they want it anymore for a variety of reasons. If a woman wants that desire back, maybe this is a good choice for her to try. Shouldn't that be enough of a reason to give women this option, or at least continue research into the subject? Shouldn't we acknowledge that women can want their sex drive back because sex is fun and can be an important part of life, without having to tell women they've got a mental dysfunction that society seems to need to justify this? Trusting women to know that they want sex to continue in their lives is as important as trusting a woman to take control of her own reproductive health care, not shaming her for enjoying sex, and a trusting in her ability to take control of her own life choices. After all, there are more than 20 drugs on the market to enhance the sex lives of men⁴, but birth control is one of the biggest political debates of our time. So, if this new drug isn't very effective, maybe this is just a signal that we need more research into the subject of women's sexuality. Or maybe we should first acknowledge that it's time to stop policing women's sex lives.

Combating Infant Mortality

By Sarah Halula

September is infant mortality awareness month. Why is this relevant to you? Cincinnati has one of the highest rates of infant mortality in the United States with Hamilton County suffering a total of 522 infant deaths from 2010-2014. From January 2015 to July 2015 alone, there were 55 infant deaths in Hamilton County. A majority of these tragedies are due to babies being born too early. Furthermore, African American women are 2.7 times as likely as white or Hispanic women to suffer the loss of an infant. While these numbers are scary, there are steps that can be taken to help combat infant mortality by preventing preterm birth. Two targets that should be sought in prevention include smoking cessation and spacing of pregnancy.

While you may be familiar with the importance of laying a baby on their backs for sleeping to help prevent sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and the importance of stopping smoking during pregnancy, many people are not as familiar with the importance of spacing their pregnancies. "Spacing" refers to the time between the birth of one baby and becoming pregnant with a subsequent baby. Cradle, a Cincinnati based program aimed to combat infant mortality, suggests at least 1 year between the birth of one baby and becoming pregnant with the next. The American Congress of Obstetrics and Gynecology suggest 1.5 to 2 years, and the World Health Organization suggests 2 years.

Pregnancy is hard on a woman's body. Spacing pregnancy allows nutrients, such as folate to be restored and allows the body to heal completely. What are the risks of becoming pregnant again too soon after giving birth? Complications of preterm birth that may result from inadequate spacing of pregnancy include having the baby too early (preterm birth), having a baby that is very small (small for gestational age), the "water breaking" too early (premature rupture of membranes) which may result in infection for the baby, and death of the baby or the mother. A short time between pregnancies may also increase the risk of the infant being affected by autism or schizophrenia.

The trend stops here. It is time that the people of Cincinnati raise up. Women and men must join together in the fight against infant mortality. How can you be sure to space your pregnancy effectively? Talk to your OB/GYN doctor during pregnancy about the methods of birth control that are available to you to use after giving birth. A list of birth control methods is available at bedsider.org. In addition, breastfeeding your newborn can help prevent ovulation, a process responsible for getting pregnant. It is important to use birth control in addition to breastfeeding in order to be sure to prevent pregnancy. To inform and educate our area about Infant Mortality Awareness Month, there are a number of events set to take place ... (listed on page 4)

Men's Health goes to C.I.T.I. Camp

By Eric Washington

In 2014, The Cincinnati Police Department (CPD) and Cincinnati Health Department (CHD) – Men's Health Initiative Program (MHI) partnered on a Minority Youth Violence Prevention Initiative Grant (MYVPI) to address growing problem of minority youth committing violent crimes and how public health can make healthy communities make safe communities. In a recent article, "Preventing Victimization: Public Health Approaches to Fight Crime", the authors write that "A new idea is catching across the United States, crime and violence spread like viruses do, and a person's overall health is deeply intertwined with a person's safety. Living in a violent neighborhood can wreak havoc well-being and poor health can, in turn lead to dangerous behavior. If dangerous behavior is like a contagious disease, perhaps positive relationships can serve as an antidote. Like inoculations against illnesses, some cities are finding that treating a few key carriers of harmful behavior or altering a few environments where the "illness" of disorder thrives, can increase the health and safety of an entire community⁵."

In an effort to address this growing city problem, The Cincinnati Police Department designed a youth program called Children in Trauma Intervention (C.I.T.I.) The C.I.T.I. Program was conceptualized by CPD in 2011, with the first session beginning in January 2012. This program was carefully selected because of the vast number of inner city youth who have experienced some type of trauma in their lives and because the effects can be a contributing factor in delinquent behaviors. The C.I.T.I. Camp is intended to work with middle school age youth (11 to 14) who are considered to be "at risk" because they have demonstrated discipline problems at school, home, community or/and negative contact with the criminal justice system. The CITI Camp program was designed as a preventative/intervention (gangs, drugs, violence) program that uses police officers as mentors in an effort to reduce the number of African American youth, in particular, who become involved with the juvenile justice system. The program will use informed discipline as taught by Trauma Informed Care (TIC) and social work counseling practices. It is believed that by creating and maintaining positive interaction with these youth who have been identified as at risk of becoming involved in the violent crimes and/or at risk of not graduating from high school, there will be a reduction in the number of youth arrested and placed in the juvenile justice system. As a result of these delinquent behaviors, students are considered to be "at risk" of not successfully

TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: AMANDA DOBSON, CNP

Name: Amanda Dobson

Hometown: Cincinnati or West Chester, Ohio

Favorite movie/book and why:

Book: *Call the Midwife Series*. I loved it because it is a memoir told in a voice with which I can relate. It takes place in the East End of London in the 1950's. The author discusses community health nursing and midwifery care with such love and compassion that, in turn, sparks the same passion for helping others in me.

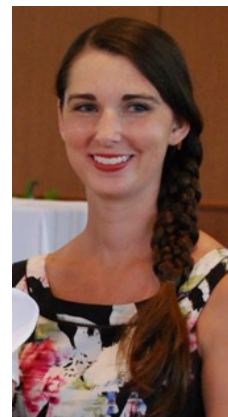
Movie: *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel*. It is such an enjoyable movie about the vibrancy of life that can be attained even in old age. I enjoy the theme of making the best of a bad situation in the most pleasant of ways.

What do you do for thebodyshop? I am a women's health nurse practitioner. I see patients and do what I can to help them reach their reproductive and other health goals.

What do you love about working in reproductive health? I love working with such an awesome staff. Everyone believes in this cause and has been wonderful in helping me adjust to this new role. Additionally, I am lucky to be in a program that has so many resources and birth control options easily available to the patients.

When you're not at work, where might we find you?

While not working, I am usually with my family. We often can be found making dinner together or exploring Cincinnati's many different restaurants.



graduating from high school. CPD have displayed how this model can integrate a public health component to achieve more positive results.

The C.I.T.I. Camp focuses on the following six objectives:

- To improve coordination, collaboration, and linkages among local Law Enforcement (CPD) and public health (CHD)
- To improve academic outcomes among C.I.T.I. Program student participants
- A reduction in negative encounters with law enforcement
- Increased access to needed public health (preventive and primary health care services)
- A reduction in community violence and crimes perpetrated by minority youth
- A reduction in violent crimes against minority youth.

As part of the CPD and CHD collaboration, the CHD will provide Early Period Screening and Diagnostic Testing (EPSDT) for each of the student participants in the C.I.T.I. program. The screening will include a complete physical assessment as well as a mental health assessment for each student. Each student will also be given an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) questionnaire to assess risks of increased health issues associate with maltreatment or other adverse childhood experiences. CHD will also provide Men's Health Initiative

(MHI) intervention that will provide five reproductive health modules training. MHI is a unique component of the Reproductive Health and Wellness Program (RHWP) at the Cincinnati Health Department that specializes in providing outreach and health services to adolescent males who have been historically underserved by the existing health infrastructure. These services cover a broad range of important topics including family planning, responsible sexual behavior, communication, violence prevention, and the prevention of sexually transmitted infections. Through prioritization of self-created goals (e.g., completing high school, thinking about employment, establishing health goals) and through education about health options relevant to one's own circumstances, individuals will become empowered to actively make choices to improve their lives. The Minority Youth Violence Prevention Initiative Grant (MYVPI) requires three spring, summer and fall cycles of ten intense training sessions. C.I.T.I. Camp has successfully completed two of three cycles of students. The first was conducted at Oyster High School with fourteen students successfully completing the program. The second cycle was conducted at Woodward High School with forty six students successfully completing the program and starting September 14, 2015 the C.I.T.I. Camp will complete its final cycle at Aiken High School.

MEN'S HEALTH

Interested in the Men's Health Initiative for your organization?

The Men's Health Initiative performs health education seminars at local community-based organizations. We currently have seminars on the following topics:

Reproductive Anatomy, Pregnancy, and Sexuality • STIs and Protecting Yourself • Relationships and Communication • Family Planning • Fatherhood • Puberty • Bullying

thebodyshop

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH & WELLNESS PROGRAM

Reproductive Health Suite
Clement Health Center
Cincinnati Health Department
3101 Burnet Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45229

RHWP Hotline:
513-357-7341

Appointment scheduling through the CHD Call Center:
513-357-7320

The Reproductive Health and Wellness Program (RWHP) or the body shop, is a five-year grant awarded by the Ohio Department of Health to the Cincinnati Health Department and is funded by the federal Title X program. The primary objective of this program is to provide access to contraceptives and reproductive health services to the men and women of Hamilton County, especially to the most underserved populations, so as to reduce the number of unplanned pregnancies, unwanted pregnancies, and ultimately, the number of poor pregnancy outcomes. Through these direct services, education and outreach, the program also hopes to cultivate a culture of responsibility, well-being, and empowerment in regards to sexuality and reproductive health. To date, we've enrolled thousands of individuals, and continue to grow, learn, and serve.

For additional information regarding the project, please contact Dr. Jennifer Mooney at:

jennifer.mooney@cincinnati-oh.gov

Hopefully you're enjoying a few end of summer avocados (or avocuddles)!

Don't forget to use your favorite method of birth control + a condom every time!



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WHW Op-Ed can be found here: <http://www.cincinnati.com/story/opinion/contributors/2015/08/30/opinion-loss-uc-rape-survivor-program-troubling/71437468/>

Continued from page 2: Infant Mortality awareness events

- Tuesday, September 1st at 1:30pm at the United Way – FIMR & Cradle Cincinnati will release their Safe Sleep report to the community.
- Saturday, September 12th at 9am in Mt. Auburn – There will be a community walk to bring awareness to the high infant mortality rate in the neighborhood.
- Thursday, September 18th at 11:30am at CHD offices at Burnet&MLK– The first of a series of Infant Vitality Brown Bag lunch discussion sessions, this one focusing on Maternal and Prenatal Education
- Thursday, September 18th at 11am at Price Hill Health Center – the rededication of Price Hill Health Center celebrating all the new updates made to the center over the past several months.
- Wednesday, September 23rd at 11am at the Hamilton County Administration Building – Cradle Cincinnati Champions for Change awards to those who are working to end infant mortality in our region