

**NDPS Certification Program Field Project Report**

**Fort Worth Independent School District Adolescents Pregnancy and Project  
Reach and Compensatory Education Home Instructions (CEHI)  
For Dropout Prevention**

**Kathleen S. Hodges LBSW, Specialist IV Student Engagement and School Completion  
Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD)  
100 North University Drive, Suite NE 238  
Fort Worth, Texas**

**[Katy.hodges@fwisd.org](mailto:Katy.hodges@fwisd.org)**

**817-815-7161**

***Key words:* Early Intervention, Pregnancy, Parenting Students, Student Support,  
Graduation**

**Funding Sources:**

Funded through Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD) for all staff, donations and community support. Previously grants from United Way, community resources through Sid Richardson, donations, and through FWISD.

**Project Cost and Budget Narrative:**

Salaries and services for 17 staff members.

**Project description:**

The Mission of Project Reach, “is to enable school-age parents, through coordination of Education, medical, social, job readiness, child care and other needed services, to become self-sufficient, responsible, job-oriented citizens.”

The program wants each student to become a valuable contributor to the community of Fort Worth. The program’s focus is to help students who are struggling to complete school due to pregnancy and parenting. With support from the Project Reach staff members, these students can stay in school and graduate. Through the program, students receive assistance with medical needs during pregnancy for both the mother and child. This assistance extends once the child is born and as long as the student is in school. The social worker designs a plan of care for the student, sees the student 2-3 times a month or more, if required; monitors their attendance and grades to reduce risk of issues and resolve problems as quickly as possible. They can help the student with day care placement and cost, job training, transportation, and required parenting classes; assist the student with government funding and community resource.

The other part of this program is the Compensatory Education Home Instruction (CEHI) which provides academic support for students who are unable to attend school due to prenatal complications and delivery of the child.

Director, Mrs. Leticia Magana, speaks with great passion for this program and how our students benefit from all that is offered. “That they feel that there is someone who generally cares what is happening to them”.

**Staffing Pattern:**

- Director
- Administration assistance
- Thirteen Social workers, one for each main high school and junior high school.

**Population Served:**

They serve students from 12-20 years old, which includes fathers and parenting students. Every race and nationality are included in the services.

**Project Origination:**

The program started because a district employee recognized that the pregnant teenagers were dropping out of school; this person was Rebecca Minnieweather who began the program. Then Mrs. Nina Jackson came along in 1990 and worked to improve the program by adding more

services. Nina Jackson used to go down where the student got on the bus and talk with the pregnant students to get them back in school. The program has grown since Ms. Minnieweather saw a need to help these students; it is now district wide and the staff has even increased since Mrs. Jackson retired and passed away. These two women saw a need in their community and built this program into what it is today.

### **Issues Addressed:**

- Students dropping out of school
- Lack of medical care during and after pregnancy
- Increase graduation rates
- Parenting Skills Training

### **Results:**

Increase number of students graduating from high school for the school year of 2016-17.

- 306 Students enrolled in Project Reach
- 145 Graduated
- 8 Dropouts
- 1 Unknown
- 297 returning parents

### **Strategies and Intervention:**

- School visits
- Hospital visits
- Home visits
- Child-care when a student returns to school
- Medical care for mother and child
- Donation of clothing, baby items and more

### **Projected Timeline:**

Began in 1990 and the program is still in operation at Fort Worth ISD. Outcomes are reviewed yearly.

### **Special conditions, Expertise, and/or Skills were required to carry out the Project:**

To work with this population a social worker must be educated in all 15 Strategies of Dropout Prevention, since they work with parenting student and pregnant students, who will need increased academic, social and emotional support to complete school. Professional development is a major factor in working with students of different race, ethnicity, religion and culture.

### **What were the actual, results, and achievements of the Project?**

The results of the program showed that for the school year of 2016-17; 82.4% of the 176 eligible students graduated and that 96.1% of the non-graduating students continued their education.

**What and how the outcomes are/were related to school completion, dropout prevention, and/or graduation rates.**

The Adolescent Pregnancy Program has had a very positive effect on the students they served. This program allowed the student to recover attendance, promote to the next grade and graduate.

- 90.2% of the lost days recovered.
- 82.4% of the seniors graduated.
- 96.1% of the non-seniors re-enrolled.
- 80.2% of middle school participants (core subjects) had an average passing rate.

**What is the current status of the Project?**

The program is still active and on each campus the number of pregnant teenagers vary.

**As a NDPS certification program participant, what was your role or involvement with project?**

I work with those students who have severe attendance issues. I collaborate with the Project Reach staff to address the specific needs of pregnant and parenting students. This collaboration includes referrals, access to parenting resources and follow-up contacts.

**What were the lessons learned from the project?**

- Being prepared through our education and professional development is a significant asset in helping those who are still learning and have struggles that overwhelm them.
- There is a need for programs such as Project Reach so that students have the opportunity to be successful.

**Advise for Dropout Prevention Practitioners about the Project:**

It is essential to have all the facts about a program before referring students to the program, know what it has to offer and what the people are like who are involved. See how you can help the student to get the best help they need to graduate. I believe that in order for us to be successful in helping these students, we must understand all aspects of their lives not just what is going on at school.