

Arkansas Public Higher Education Unplanned Pregnancy Report

Academic Year 2016-17



Academic Affairs

December 2017

Arkansas Department of Higher Education
423 Main Street, Suite 400 Little Rock, AR 72201

Under Act 943 of 2015 the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board (AHECB) was directed to develop an action plan to address unplanned pregnancies on college campuses among young adults. The Department of Higher Education (ADHE) has worked with colleges and universities to develop their individual plans for compliance with the requirements of this legislation. ADHE collected the plans and the subsequent implementation report on campus activities. Campuses were encouraged to individualize their approach to this addressing this statewide problem, but each college and university was given a template by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education to use if they wished to mirror the AHECB plan.

Act 943 also requires that the Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board to report on the status of the action plans by all public two and four-year colleges and universities annually to the Chairs of the Senate and House Committees on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor and to the Chairs of the Senate and House Education Committees.

The action plans of these public colleges and universities must address the following:

1. Incorporation of unplanned pregnancy prevention information for students into student orientation and student advisors' unit plan on school campuses.
2. Integrate information that is recognized as medically accurate by the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists about the prevention of unplanned pregnancy into academic courses if and when appropriate, including without limitation abstinence education.
3. Identification of opportunities to raise awareness and provide resources about the prevention of unplanned pregnancies across the student population.
4. Identify opportunities for current students to reach out to younger teens to serve as mentors or role models of successful behaviors and healthy choices, including opportunities for outreach during summer vacation or during traditional after-school hours for grades kindergarten through twelve (K-12).
5. Identify private or federal grants available to address the prevention of unplanned pregnancy and promote student success, including any partnerships necessary to compete for such grants.
6. Collaboration with the Department of Health or federally qualified health centers to promote access to care.
7. Identify child care, transportation, financial aid and other challenges specific to existing single parents.
8. Identify a method to measure effectiveness.

9. Identify other topics or issues relating to the prevention and reduction of unplanned pregnancies among older teens.

The Arkansas Department of Higher Education participated in a number of activities at the campus level aimed at educating their student populations on the topic of preventing unplanned pregnancy. ADHE collected action plans for 2016-2017 in early summer 2017 and can report after review of the documents and interviews with college and university representatives that all schools have developed action plans to address unplanned pregnancy among young adults in college.

While the challenge of preventing unplanned pregnancy in college will undoubtedly remain, Act 943 has directed a more proactive approach to addressing the issue on college campuses. The hope is that students will increase their knowledge of the tools and services available to them and thus increase their likelihood of completing college, without the interruption that an unplanned pregnancy typically brings. ADHE will continue to work with campuses as needed in the coming years toward success in this arena and a consequent greater student success.