

May 2020 Webinar

# **Scaling Up a Large Program in Rural Areas**

Presenter:

**Jill Gwilt, THINK Director**

Mission West Virginia, Inc.

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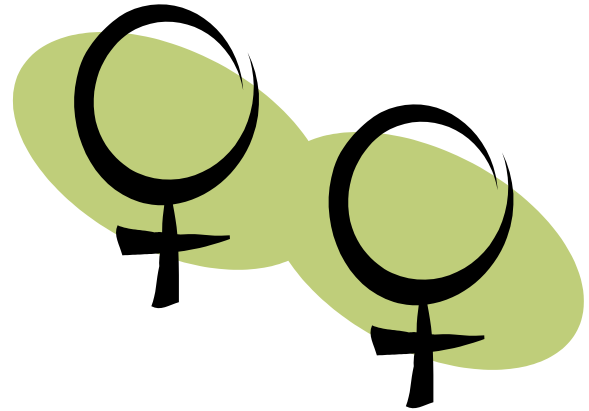
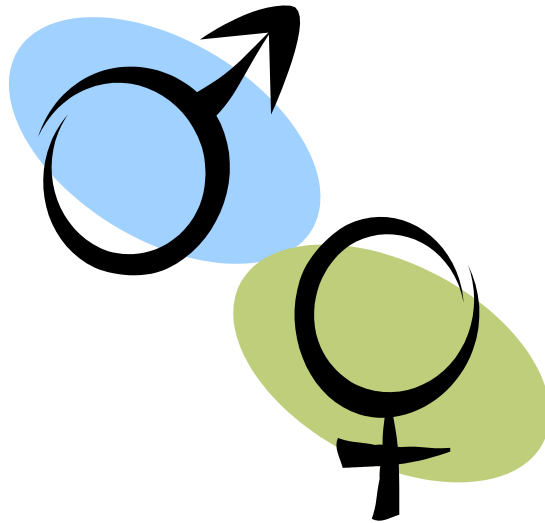
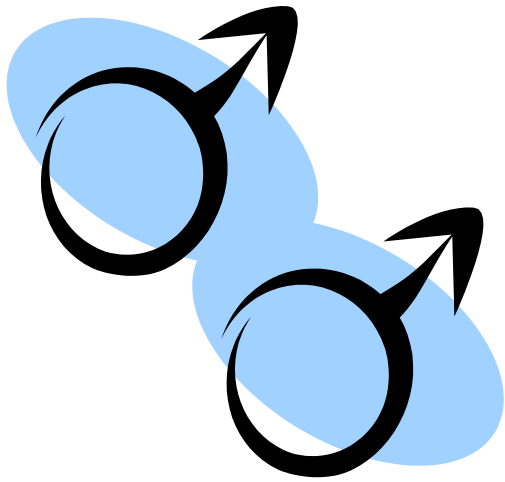
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# Mission West Virginia THINK Program

Scaling Up a Large Program in Rural Areas

Jill Gwilt, THINK Director



# Introduction

- Mission West Virginia has been operational for 22 years providing services to family and youth in West Virginia.
- The THINK Program (Teaching Health Instead of Nagging Kids) has been providing youth programming for 12 years.

# Community and Organizational Context

THINK TPP Project focuses on middle school and high school students in 15 high-need counties.

There were three main factors that contributed to the communities readiness for bringing the evidence based programming to scale:

- Community characteristics and need
- Existing resources
- Specific capacity of project partners



# Community Characteristics

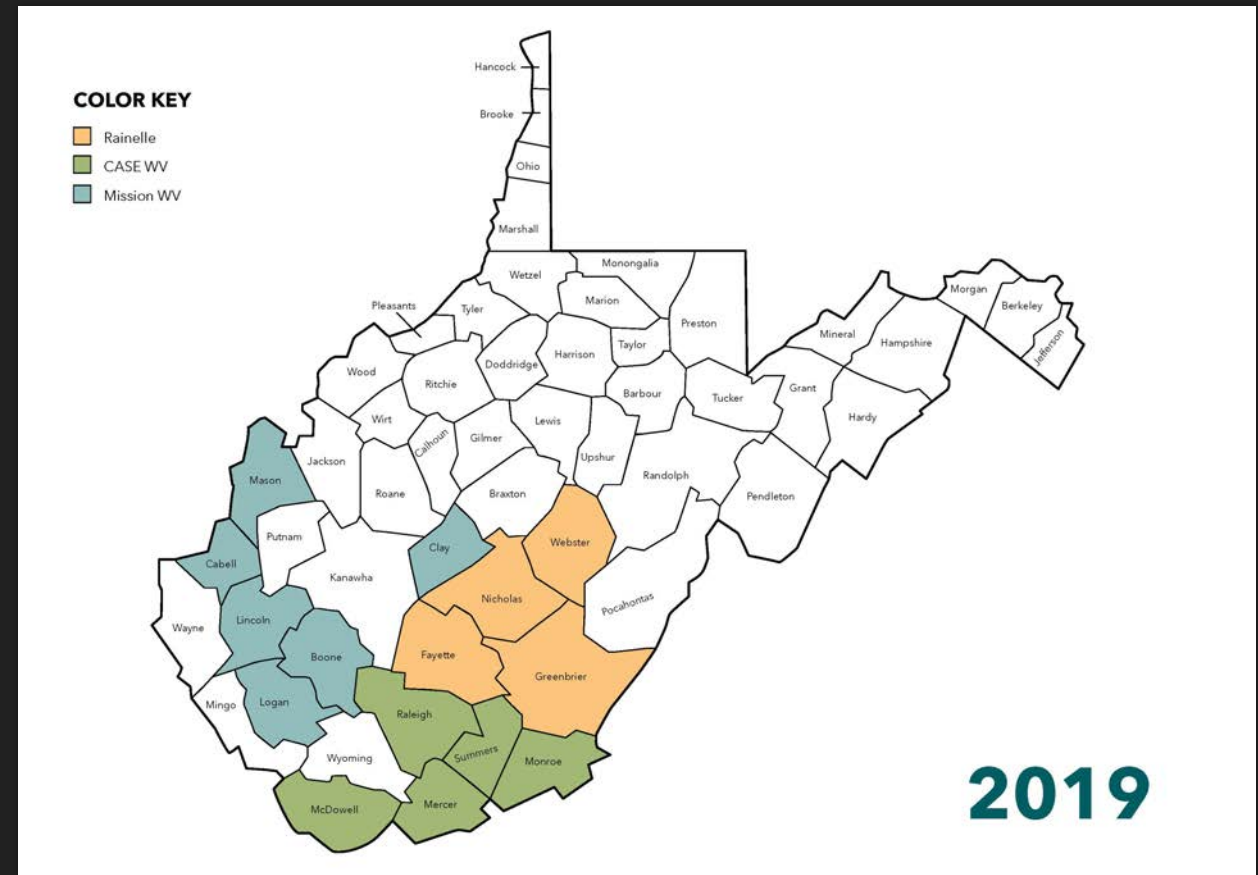
- All rural communities.
- Majority of population is white.
- High poverty rates.
- 8<sup>th</sup> highest teen birth rate in 2015.
- Program is broken up into 3 regions.





# Community Characteristics

- Region 1 (CASE): Raleigh, Summers, Monroe, Mercer, McDowell (TBR 54.5)
- Region 2 (MWV): Mason, Cabell, Lincoln, Boone, Logan, Clay (TBR 51.3)
- Region 3 (RMC): Webster, Nicholas, Fayette, Greenbrier (TBR 47.2)





# Existing Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programs

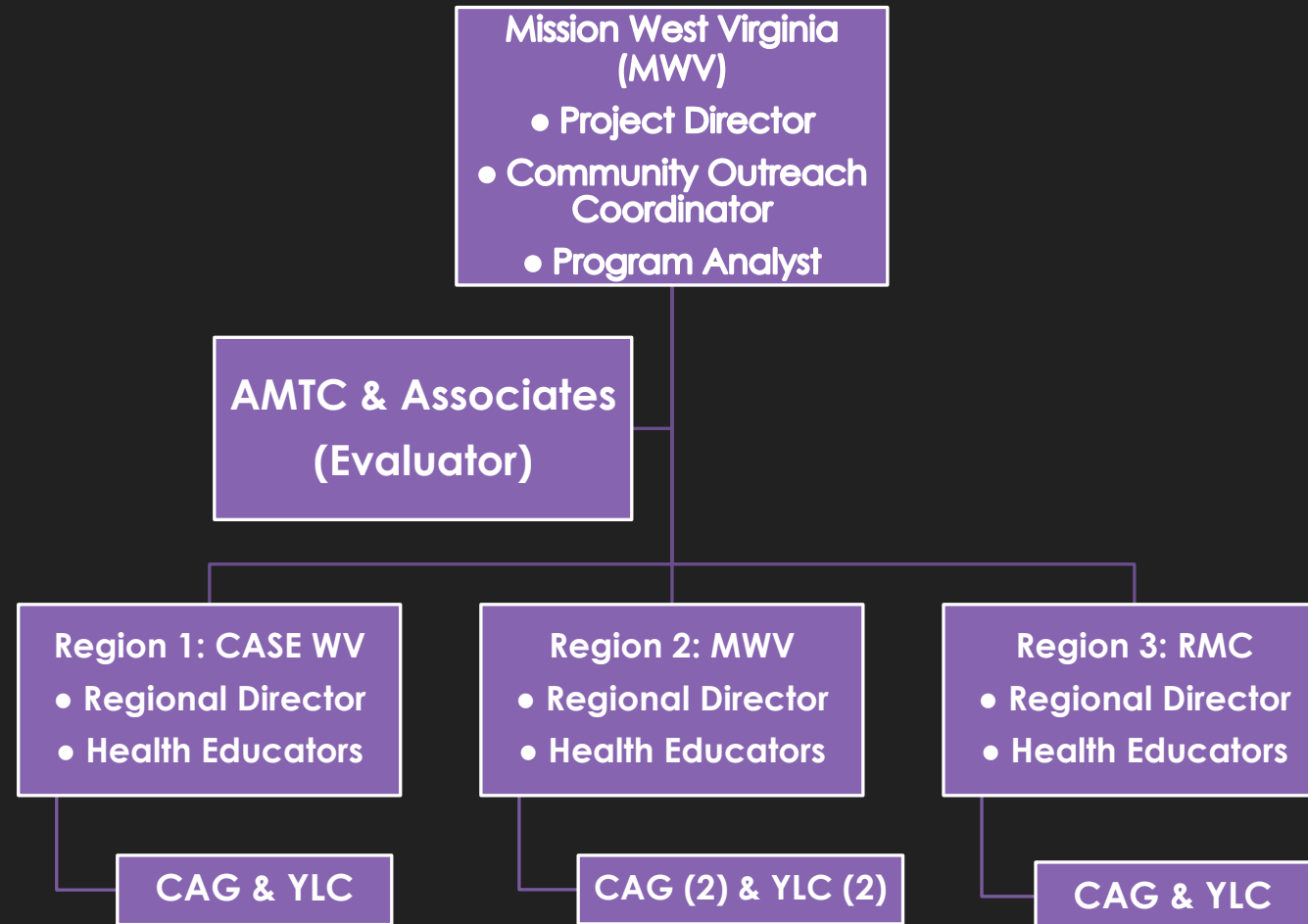
- Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Initiative (APPI)
- School-Based Health Centers (SBHS)/Title X Clinics
- Sexual Risk Avoidance Education (SRAE)

# THINK TPP Implementation Partners

- Mission West Virginia (MWV)
- Community Action of South Eastern West Virginia (CASE)
- Rainelle Medical Center (RMC)



# TPP Organizational Chart



# Coordinating Grant Activities

## How did we coordinate grant activities across 3 regions?

- Annual meetings with all THINK TPP staff.
- Quarterly leadership meetings.
- A centralized performance measurement system.
- A statewide CAG.
- Trusted partnerships.





# Four Key Elements of TPP Scale-Up Projects

1. Evidence-based programs
2. Community mobilization
3. Linkages and referrals to youth-friendly health care and other services
4. Safe and supportive environments



# TPP Project Structure

- Mission West Virginia – Grantee
  - Rainelle Medical Center – Sub-awardee
  - Community Action of South Eastern WV – Sub-awardee
- Leadership to Prevent Teen Pregnancy Taskforce – statewide CAG
  - 4 community CAGs
  - 4 community YLCs
- Love Notes Curriculum – delivered to high school aged youth
- Draw the Line/Respect the Line Curricula – delivered to middle school aged youth
- Referrals to youth friendly clinics

# Community Advisory Group (CAG)

A group of 5 to 15 members that are leaders and key stakeholders in the target community and are actively involved in implementing or delivering programming and services for youth, as well as those that set and enforce policies that can impact youth. CAG members are those individuals who are empowered to make decisions on planning, implementation, and evaluation of program strategies on behalf of their organizations.

- Assist and advise in the assessment, planning, design, implementation and evaluation of the overall TPP program
- Attend and participate in all CAG meetings
- Participate in project trainings as appropriate
- Work collaboratively with other CAG members and the grantee
- Work collaboratively with the YLC to coordinate an effective community mobilization effort



# Youth Leadership Council

The YLC is a group of students who provide direct links to youth in the community being served for engaging, educating, and building youth support for the project. The YLC is also critical for ensuring that programs and strategies for implementation are relevant and a good fit for the needs of the community. The YLC also serves as a group of youth activists who do more than simply provide advice to the initiative.

- The YLC connects the project directly to the young people the project hopes to reach.
- The YLC links the project to other youth in the community who have the status and ability to influence even more youth to access the project's programs and services.
- As the "eyes and ears" within the youth community, the YLC provides the Grantee and the Community Advisory Group (CAG) with valuable youth feedback to improve the quality and reach of project services and programs.



# Evidence-Based Programming

## Choosing EBPs to Reach Multiple Youth

- Evidence-Based Programs
- CAGs
- YLCs
- THINK Conference



## Achieving Scale by Coordinating with Other Grant Programs

- State Funding (PREP, TITLE V)
- Federal Funding (SRAE)
- What does “bringing programs to scale” mean to you?

## Integrating EBPs into School Systems

- Communication
- Trusted partnerships
- Community contribution

## Comprehensive Approach to Continuous Quality Improvement

- Pre/Post Surveys
- Teacher Feedback Forms
- Site Satisfaction Survey
- Observations



# Mobilizing the Community

## Four Approaches

1. Utilize grant and state level infrastructure.
2. Leverage existing community advisory groups.
3. Become a trusted resource.
4. Using existing groups to motivate youth to serve as YLCs.



# Infrastructure to Support Community Mobilization

- Utilizing a Community Outreach Coordinator
- Statewide Taskforce

*"We were always a part of the community coalitions, but having the time and the resources to actually be as involved as we are now, we were not.... But now that there's a designated position, then I'm able to go out and do more."*

- Community Outreach Coordinator





## Pre-Existing Advisory Groups

*"It's easier to piggy back on another group than forming one from the ground up. We brought some other people in this time – board of education, social workers, mental health workers, etc. It seemed like the perfect fit. "*

- Regional Coordinator

In Greenbrier, the CAG is a long-standing community coalition called the Impact Youth Coalition, a sub-committee of the county's Family Resource Network. This coalition focuses on broad issues that affect youth. They organize teen expos with workshops and motivational speakers on health-related topics and fun activities. The Regional Coordinator recruited new members for the purposes of TPP.

# Becoming a Trusted Resource

## CAG Strategies to Address Needs:

- Increase community involvement in and acceptance of the teen pregnancy prevention program
- Increase partnerships to fulfill community needs
- Provide opportunities for fun and educational activities for teens and parents
- Increase parent participation in the project

## Teen Expos/Community Outreach Activities

Three of the four partners used “Teen Expos” as a key strategy to raise awareness and provide a fun and educational activity for youth. Using pooled resources from several community groups, the CAGs and YLCs jointly planned these one-day informational events with input from the YLCs driving the types of workshop topics offered. Other events included pool parties, dances, clothing drives, school sponsored family events, safe graduation night activities, summer camps, information tables at athletic events, and health and community fairs.

# Joining Forces with Motivated Youth Leadership Groups

- Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD)
- Student Advisory Council (SAC)
- In-School YLCs (Lunch N' Learn)



## Promising Youth-Adult Partnership Model

- The SAC in one of county's high schools, worked with the CAG to create a video campaign for dropout prevention.

*"The campaign is call Together We Can. And we're kind of saying that it takes a whole community to work with our youth to help them succeed. Like if you're the store owner or the store clerk and this kid comes in and he looks all sad and stuff, you can talk to him about it. Or you're the parent of a child; it's your responsibility and it's the teacher's responsibility – it's everyone's responsibility."*

- SAC/YLC Member



# Linkages and Referrals to Youth Friendly Health Care Services

## Leveraging a System for Assessing Providers for Youth-Friendliness

- Title X Family Planning Program
  - Quality Assurance Monitoring Team
  - Assessments: atmosphere and attitude of the clinics, the exam room, birth control counseling, payment, and confidentiality.



# Title X Youth Friendly Clinic Assessment

## **Areas covered by the Quality Assessment Tool:**

- ❖ Is the environment welcoming? How are the teens greeted and by whom?
- ❖ What is the atmosphere and overall attitude of the clinic?
- ❖ Check-in process: What is asked? What responses do they give to questions teens are likely to ask, and are the responses accommodating?
- ❖ Exam rooms: Does the provider account for the developmental level of the teen when explaining information and services? Is the décor relatable for youth?
- ❖ Birth control counseling: Is the information comprehensive? If the teen is pregnant, is she provided all the options without judgement?
- ❖ Payment, billing, confidentiality: Do they use a sliding scale? Does the teen understand the confidentiality process? If the teen marks “confidential” are there systems in place to ensure that this is followed (e.g. no calls home, no EOBs sent home)?

# Connecting Students to Youth-Friendly Service Providers

- Referral assessments
  - Reproductive health care
  - Primary health care
  - Mental health care
  - Vocational training
  - Workforce development
  - Intimate partner violence
  - Healthy relationship education
- Referral guides
- Coordination with school counselors and teachers
- Potential challenges





# Safe and Supportive Environments

- Inclusivity
- Trauma-Informed
- Three main strategies
  - Set the tone
  - Warning signs
  - Be aware of students histories
- Challenges

*I've been really cognizant now of talking about sexually transmitted diseases. Because if these kids already have one, I don't want to shame them or make them feel like there's anything wrong with them...that if you already have one that you're going to live with for the rest of your life, I try to let them know they're still going to be able to have relationships with people and live long healthy lives with treatment.*

- Educator

*It's so easy to get frustrated when you have a kid acting out, but usually there's a reason, and...I think knowing that helps you in regards to being more sensitive to dealing with it.*

- Educator

# Summary and Lesson Learned

- Statewide coordination among multiple funding streams facilitated full saturation of communities with EBPs.
- Incorporating teen pregnancy prevention into existing related community coalitions was a promising model for THINK TPP.
- Community mobilization efforts focused on making teen pregnancy prevention part of local community-building efforts.
- THINK TPP built on existing infrastructure and community assets to enhance linkages and referrals.



# Questions?

**Contact Information**

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# **Second Wednesday Webinar**

June 10, 2020

## **Fatherhood—Building Self-Sufficient and Resilient Families**

### **Presenters:**

**Kimberly Kent**, Exec. Director, The Ohio Commission on Fatherhood

**Avis Files**, Director of Family Support Services: Brothers United  
Fatherhood Program, Pathway Inc.