Take care of yourself, your health and your community

BY JESSICA ESTRADA
CONTRIBUTING COLUMNIST

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Taking care of your health should be a year-round effort, but this month, as we mark National Minority Health Month, we hope you'll use this opportunity to take care of yourself, your health and your community. While we've made some progress in moving toward better health outcomes for people of color, we've still got a long way to go. We must continue working with our communities to transform our world from one divided by disparities to a world united by health equity.

For example, although pregnancy rates among all racial/ethnic groups have declined since their peak in 1991, significant disparities in unintended teen pregnancy rates exist. The teen pregnancy rate among non-Hispanic African American and Latina girls ages 15 to 19 is more than twice as high as the pregnancy rate among non-Hispanic white girls ages 15 to 19. Here in Multnomah County, the most alarming disparities in teen birth rates are among American Indians/Alaskan Natives, Blacks/African Americans and Latinas.

Across the United States, many people of color are deeply impacted by the overwhelming lack of access to health care and health education services, yet they have some of the greatest needs for preventive health care.

Planned Parenthood believes that all people and their families deserve the highest quality of care no matter who they are and where they live – no matter what. We are committed to working in communities to break down barriers many face in accessing health care and information. We fight to ensure all people get the confidential, affordable health care they need, regardless of one's race, income, geography, citizenship status or gender identity. We offer expert resources, accurate information and compassionate counseling; we replace fear with facts, and misinformation with education.

We know that we can improve the healthcare outcomes of every person and every family in our community, regardless of race or ethnicity, when we work together. That's why Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette is proud to offer translation services in our health centers, in our call centers and in our education and outreach programs.

As the national and regional experts in sexual and reproductive health care and education, we provide safe, nonjudgmental, inclusive and trauma-informed educational programs to young people and communities. Together with our partners, our committed staff works diligently to enhance the well-being of our communities and future generations. Our community and school-based programming supports young people as they grow, and helps them plan healthy futures as they learn to make positive contributions in their own communities. These programs strengthen their ability to respond to development challenges in effective ways, and provide the motivation needed to apply knowledge and skills in their real-life decision making, particularly as it relates to sexual health.

In Multnomah County, the recently launched Adolescents and Communities Together Project brings together community organizations to implement evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs for populations at greatest need. Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette, Native American Youth and Family Center, Self Enhancement Inc., Latino Network, Boys and Girls Clubs of Portland Metropolitan Area, Multnomah County Health Department and schools will equip young people with the knowledge and the tools needed to make healthy choices about their sexual wellbeing; to be comfortable talking about sexuality with partners, families and peers; and to actualize full engagement as responsible citizens.

Planned Parenthood staff work diligently with community partners in similar educational and engagement projects in communities across the Portland metropolitan area, Marion County and Central Oregon.

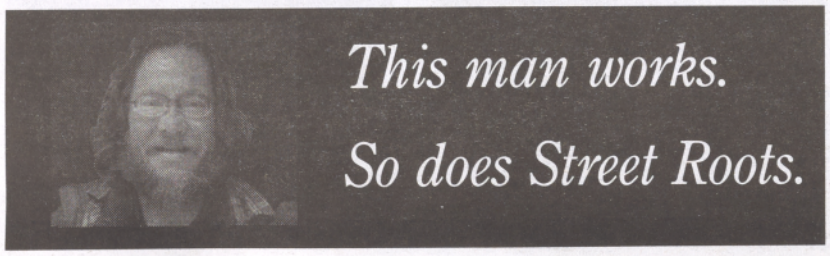
Every year, Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette provides lifesaving cancer screenings, birth control, testing and treatment for STDs, breast health services and Pap tests to more than 55,000 women, men and young people in Oregon and Southwest Washington. We also provide accurate, nonjudgmental sexual health education and information to nearly 14,000 people. We are committed to helping all communities get the healthcare services and information they need to stay healthy, and our doors are open to everyone.

We hope you take the time in April to check in with your loved ones about their health – and then join us as we work to improve healthcare outcomes for all – a commitment we stand by every day of the year. We know that when people are truly cared for, they make their lives, their families and their communities better and healthier.

Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette is the largest nonprofit provider of sexual and reproductive health care and youth education programs in Oregon and Southwest Washington. For more information visit PPCW.org.

people's FOOD CO-OP
FARMERS' MARKET
WEDNESDAYS 2-7PM

UP TO $5 MATCH WITH EBT CARD
We're passionate about helping our community access healthy food that they can trust. By shopping at our market, you'll get extra food dollars while supporting local farmers and community.
3029 SE 21st Ave. btwn Powell & Division



CareOregon
goMobile team

OHP Navigation Clinics

CareOregon and our partners make Oregon Health Plan navigation easy!
We offer help with:
• Medicaid medical, dental and mental health appointments
• Medicare eligibility for disabled and elderly adults

Find us at these locations:

Belmont Library
1038 Cesar Chavez Blvd
April 21 ..... 12 p.m.-2 p.m.

Bud Clark Commons
665 NW Hoyt Avenue
April 13 ..... 8 a.m.-10 a.m.
April 27 ..... 8 a.m.-10 a.m.

City Team Portland
526 SE Grand Avenue
April 20 ..... 8 a.m.-10 a.m.

Clackamas County Transition Center
2223 Kaen Road
Oregon City
April 05 ..... 1 p.m.-3 p.m.
April 20 ..... 1 p.m.-3 p.m.

Portland Rescue Mission
111 W Burnside
April 07 ..... 8 a.m.-10 a.m.
April 14 ..... 8 a.m.-10 a.m.
April 21 ..... 8 a.m.-10 a.m.
April 28 ..... 8 a.m.-10 a.m.

Union Gospel Mission
3 SW 3rd Avenue
April 19 ..... 2 p.m.-4 p.m.
April 26 ..... 2 p.m.-4 p.m.