



Nettie McCrory
....Program director

Teens Participating In Innovative Pregnancy Prevention Program

By Audrey C. Lodato
Post Staff Writer

Teenage residents of two Charlotte housing projects are participants in an innovative pregnancy prevention program called "Teens N' Touch."

Began two and a half years ago under the auspices of the Urban League, the program has taken a turn in direction over the past six months with a director, Nettie McCrory.

"Previously, it was a pregnancy program," McCrory explains. "We've turned it into a pregnancy prevention program."

"Teens N' Touch works with youth, both girls and boys, ages 12-15, who live in Earle Village and Boulevard Homes. The goals of the program are to prevent initial pregnancy and keep the youngsters in school. For those who drop out of school, we see if we can immediately get them into a GED program," McCrory says.

The program works on an eight-week cycle with 15 students at a time at each housing project. Students attend after regular school hours, from about 4-7 p.m. "We teach them health education and career orientation planning," the director reports.

Under health education come such topics as self-esteem, decision-making, communications, male-female relationships, birth control, etc. Career orientation involves instruction in how to interview for a job and how to keep a job once the student finds one.

There are also seminars put on by staff members and other community agencies.

Once students leave the concentrated program, they continue to participate in the tutorial program, where volunteers from the community and interns from UNC-Charlotte "try to augment what the school system does in terms of academic course work."

Youngsters are recruited by Teens N' Touch, as well as re-

Willie Nowlin

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Carolina Mutual agent decided it was time for me to buy insurance. I'm glad to be a part of that heritage."

Gantt also thanked the crowd of mostly blacks for coming together to support him in the recent mayoral race.

Also attending the reception were Benjamin Ruffin, vice president and special assistant to president Kennedy; Malvin Moore III, NCM public relations director; George Stevens, NCM Regional Agency Director; Walter Twitty, retired manager of NCM's Charlotte district; Dr. Mildred Baxter Davis, a Third Ward community leader and member of the N.C. Soil and Water Conservation Commission; Robert Davis, a Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools principal and long-time member of the Mecklenburg County Democratic Party; Kathleen Crosby, area superintendent for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools; Sarah Stevenson, a member of the Mecklenburg County Board of Education; Charlie Dannelly, a Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools principal and member of the Charlotte City Council; Kelly Alexander Jr., president of the N.C. Conference of Branches of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and member of the NAACP board of directors; and N.C. Sen. Mel Watt, D-Mecklenburg.

A highlight of Sunday's reception was a presentation by NCM sales agent J. J. Crawford, who told Kennedy and Nowlin that his Asheville-based group of agents sold \$204 in new business last week. The average weekly amount in new business for a Charlotte district sales group is between \$50-\$100.

The Remarried Family Or Stepfamily?

By Loretta Manage
Post Managing Editor

Looking at reruns of "The Brady Bunch" most people would get the idea that when a man and a woman who both had children from a previous marriage married each other, everything ran smoothly, with the exception of an occasional disagreement.

"Not so," says Chris Boone, president of the local chapter of the Stepfamily Association of America, Inc. and a stepmother.

"That's one of the biggest myths that people have of families that include children from other relationships." According to Mrs. Boone it is more the exception than the rule that a family that falls under the heading of remarried family or stepfamily operates under the same conditions that a nuclear family (two natural parents and their offspring) does.

Agreeing with that statement, Irv Eddlestein of United Family Services added, "People are under the false impression that the stepfamily is similar to the normal family, but it's not. The issues are different and so are the concerns."

While other myths have zeroed in on the stepfamily including the one that began with the fairytale, "Cinderella" of the wicked stepmother, it is not myth that the stepfamily or remarried family is growing larger everyday. Statistics show that by 1990, the number of stepfamilies and single parent households will be greater than the number of traditional families. Presently, one out of every five children live with a stepparent and 3.36 million women have become stepmothers in the last five years.

"These unions bring with them people who have no formal guidelines to follow as how stepfamilies are to behave. Stepfamilies have to find their own way," cited Mrs. Boone.

One organization that is trying to reduce the anxieties of stepfamilies as well as be a source of information for them is Stepfamily Association of America. Founded by Emily and John Visser, the organization provides educational material, acts as a central clearing house as well as lobbying force in Congress.

According to Mrs. Boone, the national organization has already succeeded in establishing a "Stepparent's day" in certain states. "They have also struck an agreement with a national greeting card company to begin making stepparent cards."

In forming the local chapter of Stepfamily Association, Mrs. Boone remarked that she felt it would be a good idea if others who were experiencing similar problems could come together under a forum of support. "Right now we're a small group. There are still a lot of stepparents who are in the closet and are afraid to admit that they don't have a perfect home life. What they're trying to do is to live under guidelines that society has handed out and even though it's not working, they're not ready to admit to that."

"There are a lot of unrealistic expectations that go into a remarried family," began Eddlestein. "Some of these expectations are spoken as well as unspoken. The most common one would have to be

that everybody will automatically love one another. Most of the time the people don't even know each other." Adding to that, Mrs. Boone stated, "It takes years before there is a strong sense of family formed in this new family unit. For my family it took about four years. What I found were that the first couple of years were the most difficult, but as time went on things got easier."

Perhaps the strongest concerns that Eddlestein and Mrs. Boone voiced were that the stepparent try not to replace the biological parent and that they try not to act as if the other members of the extended family don't exist.

"A stepparent shouldn't have to act like the parent that's no longer there," cited Eddlestein.

"It's a disaster when a stepparent tries to replace the natural parent, regardless if that parent is living or dead. We're not biological parents so we shouldn't have to act or feel like one," reinforced Mrs. Boone.

"A stepparent shouldn't try to dismiss her or his mate's children. Even if they're not living with you, you're still a stepparent, nor can you dismiss the influence of the non-custodial parent. None of these concerns have to be looked upon as negatives, but they need to be addressed."

One piece of advice that Mrs. Boone gives is that stepparents should stop concentrating on what they are not and concentrate on the things that are, only then, she surmises, can a stepparent work towards a positive relationship.

Four Seminars

The possibilities for managing P.M.S. are looking good.

WomanReach and Community Health Association will sponsor the first of a series of seminars Monday, December 2, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Community Health Association offices. The topic: "Premenstrual Syndrome: Interpersonal Relationships," will be presented and discussed by Linda Combs-Shepherd and Alice Van Gelder. Women and men are encouraged to attend all four seminars.

WomanReach is a United Way agency. The facilities are handicapped accessible and services are freely given and freely received.

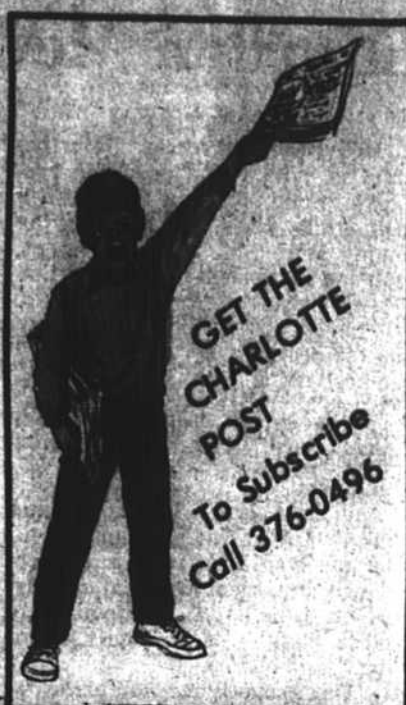
For more information and to register, call a WomanReach peer counselor, Monday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at 334-3614.

Yolanda Gettys

Army Private Yolanda Gettys, daughter of Roosevelt and Dorothy Gettys of 4429 Ridgeley Drive, Charlotte, has completed basic training at Fort McClellan, Ala.

During the training, students received instruction in drill and ceremonies, weapons, map reading, tactics, military courtesy, military justice, first aid, and Army history and traditions.

She is a 1985 graduate of Harding High School, Charlotte.



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