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Friday, 27 February 2009 15:24

Since the 1980s, the Employment Action Center has been providing employment services to the Twin Cities. In 1986, the city of Minneapolis began funding EAC's Minneapolis youth program.

The Youth and Young Parent Programs provide services to young people in Hennepin and Ramsey County.

The EAC has eight programs that focus on needs ranging from academic and career development to guidance in creating a successful family.

One of the programs that has strengthened the community and displayed tremendous dedication to the youth is Bright Futures. This program is for mothers or mothers- to- be ages 16-19 that are striving and willing to learn more about being a parent and graduating from school. Annette Brown, Program Director of Bright Futures, has been with the program for eight years since the beginning of Bright Futures development. "Since 2000, Bright Futures has been providing services to teenage mothers or mothers to be," said Brown.

Bright futures receive referrals from Minneapolis Public Schools for girls who have dropped out of school or who intend on dropping out. "A lot of girls quit school because they do not have the proper maternity attire or have issues with hygiene because they cannot afford certain products," explained Brown.

The program assists 120 girls a year with parenting classes, career development, preventive pregnancy plans, community resources and so much more. “We weave the prevention of repeat pregnancy into every topic that we discuss with the girls which include healthy diets, use of alcohol, STD, budgeting and personal safety, ”said Brown. The case managers explain to the young ladies how a second child can affect everything from your budget to the delay of getting a better education.

The program has been very successful with the percentage of repeat pregnancies. In the last two years, only two girls have had a repeat pregnancy.

Bright Futures has a staff of three case workers and wonderful volunteers. The young girls build a trusting relationship with their case managers. The case managers devote a lot of time with the girls. Brown explains, “Sometimes the case managers do a lot of traveling, even spending several hours to make sure the girls receive the services they need.”

Bright Futures and all of the EAC Youth and Young Parent programs give young people the opportunity to provide for their families and obtain an education and a flourishing career.

“Society believes that they are failures. I do not believe that just because you have a child at a young age doesn’t mean you cannot make it and be successful in life,” said Brown.

For more information on the EAC's Youth and Young Parent Programs please call 612-752-8800 or visit www.eac-mn.org/YYP/YYP-home