Citywide “iknowUshould2” Campaign Takes Aim at One of the Greatest Health Threats for Young Philadelphians: Sexually Transmitted Infections

Philadelphia – A new movement has Philadelphia teens urging their peers who are sexually active to take control of their health by getting routine screenings for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). In addition to increasing awareness of the importance of testing, the “I Know U Should 2” campaign is intended to improve teens’ access to sexual health information and lessen some of the fears and barriers surrounding STI testing.

“Today in Philadelphia, many teenagers have sexually transmitted infections - as many as 5 times the national average for some conditions. The most common are chlamydia, gonorrhea, herpes and HIV,” said Marne Castillo Med, PhD, Project Director for the Connect to Protect program at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP). “In order to change the tide, we need to remove some of the fears and social concerns that surround getting tested. That takes a lot of trust, which is why it’s so crucial that this remain a peer-led initiative.”

Beginning today, SEPTA ads, T-shirts, wristbands, radio spots, community events, and a host of social media featuring real Philadelphia teenagers will pepper the city and drive teens to the website “iknowUshould2.com,” where visitors will find simple, truthful information about STIs, why it’s essential to “know” about an infection, and how and where to get tested.

“To promote real and positive health outcomes, this campaign offers more than information and education regarding sexually transmitted infections and testing options. A key component of the ‘I Know U Should 2’ campaign is its hotline that can direct callers, when needed, to convenient nearby facilities for medical follow-up and care,” said Philadelphia Health Commissioner Donald F. Schwarz, MD, MPH.

The hotline (877-98-IKNOW) is managed by Concern for Health Options: Information, Care, and Education (CHOICE) so that callers can receive accurate information and education regarding sexually transmitted infections and testing options.

The movement, launched by The Children's Hospital of Phiadelphia also relies heavily on social media to both spread the message and foster honest, respectful conversation among peers, with some moderation and advice from trained health workers when needed. Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Instragram, and Pinterest will all host “iknowUshould2” channels and are designed to be mobile.

“This campaign was designed to meet a specific public health crisis in our community. It represents an exciting partnership for us with the teens that helped create it and a number of key stakeholders through Philadelphia,

including Radio One," said Peter Grollman CHOP's Vice President of Government Affairs, Community Relations & Advocacy. "Our shared goal is to empower teens with an action oriented message. We believe "I Know U Should 2" will inspire them to lead the charge towards a healthier Philadelphia in a sustainable and measurable way."

"Radio One stations Hot 107.9, 100.3 WRNB, and Praise 103.9 are all excited to help create and promote the marketing of 'I Know U Should 2'. Sexually transmitted diseases pose a serious threat to all, because, left untreated some diseases can result in a loss of life. For so many 13-to-17 year olds, seeking parental advice is not always easy. 'I know. Ushould2' strives to create a peer-to-peer awareness and call-to-action for needed treatment and teen counseling. We are committed to the concept and applaud CHOP for its leadership in yet another critically important health area for youth," said E. Steven Collins, director of Urban Marketing and External Relations for Radio One, Inc.

For more information about "I know U should 2," visit www.iknowUshould2.com.

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