



## **NEWS**

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**For Immediate Release**

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### **Saint Luke's Teen Clinic receives grant from March of Dimes**

*Funds continue support for program that encourages healthier pregnancies in at-risk population*

*KANSAS CITY, Mo.* – Efforts to improve the health and well-being of more area teen mothers and their babies will continue, thanks to a \$19,880 grant recently awarded to Saint Luke's Hospital by the March of Dimes Foundation. The new grant builds on work funded last year by the March of Dimes toward establishing a group support and care model within Saint Luke's Teen Clinic.

The Teen Clinic, offered through Saint Luke's Community Service Clinic since 2003, has provided essential services to more than 500 pregnant teens to ensure a healthy delivery, reduce the number of repeat teen pregnancies, and provide a support system to encourage patients to complete their high school educations. In addition to routine obstetrics care, the Teen Clinic offers family-centered education, life skills training, and holistic care.

The grant helps sustain a CenteringPregnancy® model of group prenatal care at the Teen Clinic, addressing the unique developmental, social, and cultural aspects of adolescent pregnancy. This year, continued funding will help expand staff to include bilingual/Spanish speaking care providers, allow the center to complete the CenteringPregnancy certification process, and provide Spanish educational materials.

Many teens, especially those from urban areas, live in communities with limited opportunities, poverty, violence, and lack of support, according to Jodi Faustlin, director of Saint Luke's Community Service Clinics.

The CenteringPregnancy model presents isolated pregnant teens with an opportunity to connect with others in their situation. Each prenatal visit would include a planned group session to learn, discuss, and support each other, and take a more proactive role in their health care.

The State of Missouri classifies teen pregnancies as high-risk because they are more likely to deliver pre-term, raising the probability of a host of medical complications for the baby. Pregnant teens are also at risk for many pregnancy-induced conditions such as hypertension, anemia, and poor nutrition.

“Programs that help young women discover their inner strength create environments for empowerment, and a support system made up of their peers may help adolescents to achieve goals and parent successfully,” Faustlin said. “We’re grateful to the March of Dimes for their continued support of our ongoing work to address the needs of this unique, at-risk population.”

*Saint Luke's Health System consists of 11 area hospitals and many primary care practices, and provides a range of inpatient, outpatient, and home care services. Founded as a faith-based, not-for-profit organization, our mission includes a commitment to the highest levels of excellence in health care and the advancement of medical research and education. The health system is an aligned organization in which the physicians and hospitals assume responsibility for enhancing the physical, mental, and spiritual health of people in the metropolitan Kansas City area and the surrounding region.*

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