NJ Department of Health and Senior Services has funded the NJ PREP (Personal Responsibility Education Program) Kean University project. Dr. Consuelo Bonillas, Assistant Professor of Health Education in the Department of Physical Education, Recreation and Health at Kean University will serve as the project director. This program proposes to replicate the evidence-based program model, Reducing the Risk – Building Skills to Prevent Pregnancy, STD and HIV (RTR), to reduce the rate of pregnancy and STDs among 600 high school teens (between the ages of 14-18) in 3

During the 5-year funding period, at least 3,000 youth will participate in this program. Four part-time community health educators (2 per city; one female and one male Kean undergraduate students who ideally graduated from that high school) will be hired to co-facilitate the lessons with the high school health teachers. During years 2-5, additional high school health teachers from each high school will be trained on the curriculum as well as Kean undergraduate students whose major is physical education/health and hope to become high school health teachers in New Jersey.

According to Child Trends (2011), in 2008, New Jersey ranked fifth in the United States for the lowest teen (20 years old and under) births at 7,077 and with a rate of 24.5 per 1,000 women. Even though New Jersey’s teen births is low, our teen pregnancies is not. For example, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC, 2011) has identified that of the 26,667 abortions that occurred in New Jersey in 2007 (the most recent year available), around 15 percent (or 4,000) were to women 19 years old and younger.

Kean University requested specific data on teen births by zip code to New Jersey’s Center for Health Statistics. In order to help make an impact on the teen birth rates, we intend to reach an area in each city that has reported the highest teen births. Mr. Darrin Goldman provided a spreadsheet that included the zip codes for Newark and Jersey City.

Kean University also requested specific data on STDs among teens by zip code to New Jersey’s Department of Health and Senior Services – STD Program. Newark ranked first in the state for the highest births to women between the ages of 10-24, as well as to women between the ages of 10-19. In 2007, Newark reported 697 teen births. Jersey City ranked third in the state for the highest births to women between the ages of 10-24. In 2007, Jersey City reported 349 teen births.