

# Develop an Elevator Pitch to Engage Caregivers



Parents and other caregivers have a significant influence on how youth think and make decisions about sex. Therefore, it's recommended that Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) programs make a strong effort to engage participants' caregivers in order to maximize program impact. An effective way to engage caregivers is to have a one-on-one conversation with them.

This job aid is intended to support TPP program staff in developing an elevator pitch they can use in conversations with caregivers. An elevator pitch is a brief speech that you can deliver in 30 seconds or less—about the duration of an elevator ride. The purpose of this elevator pitch is to share information that will compel caregivers to engage in the program, and to understand the barriers to their involvement.

## Craft and deliver your pitch

To develop your elevator pitch for caregivers, write a response to each of the prompts below. Aim to keep your talking points concise.

1. Describe how your program helps people in your community.

*Example: Teens in our community are experiencing greater rates of teen birth than in neighboring communities, putting them at a disadvantage for completing high school. Our program, TPP Time, teaches teens comprehensive, age-appropriate information about sexual health and supports access to teen-friendly reproductive health services.*

2. Share the aspects of your program that make it unique.

*Example: We are the only local program that provides both in-person sexual health education and a texting platform through which teens can ask questions about sexual health privately and at their convenience.*

3. Explain the benefits of caregiver involvement.

*Example: Most teens name their parents as the biggest influence in their decisions about sex. Also, research shows that teens who have frequent conversations with their parents about sex and related topics are more likely to delay sex until they're older and are more likely to use birth control when they do become sexually active.*

4. **Be specific about what caregiver engagement means for your program.**

*Example: The success of our program relies on parents and caregivers like you having open conversations with your teens about the topics we address in our program, like what intimacy means to you. We're happy to share resources with you that can help you have these conversations.*

5. **Invite caregivers to share their barriers to involvement.**

*Example: We understand there are many factors that might make it difficult for caregivers to talk with their teens about the topics we address in our program, and we want to do whatever we can to make it easier for you. What, if anything, keeps you from having these conversations?*

## Take action to facilitate engagement

Keep in mind that delivering your elevator pitch is only the first step in increasing caregiver engagement. Once you understand the barriers to their involvement, it's important to identify ways to address those barriers, whenever possible. Also, even if you can't remove a caregiver's barrier altogether, you can still demonstrate that you heard them and that you're available to support their involvement.

Finally, distribute the elevator pitch to all program staff to help ensure they send a consistent message about the value of your program and how caregiver involvement makes a difference.