



Video Transcript: Ask Me Anything: Adolescent Friendly Support Services (Kristen)

Kristen (00:00): I'm most proud of the fact that we are going to reach youth that nobody else has reached before in our state of Texas, the South Texas Youth, and we are really going to be very inclusive with regard to our Mexican immigrant population and be able to provide things in a bilingual manner so that we can really engage the parents and guardians of our youth as well.

Ask Me Anything: Adolescent Friendly Support Services. Hi, I'm Kristen Plastino from UT Teen Health at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, and today I'm going to let RHNTC ask me anything about adolescent friendly support services.

Speaker 1 (00:46): How do you understand what young people want and need?

Kristen (00:50): Well, at UT Teen Health, we have many avenues to collect what youth want and need. First is our Youth Leadership Council, or our YLC. That council right now surrounds San Antonio with 90 members from north, south, east, and west. We, through those meetings, teach leadership skills and get feedback from our youth, not only on how to do adolescent friendly services, but what evidence-based programs truly speak to them. Oh, and one other thing that I think is really, really cool that we do. We have something called Mentors in Medicine. These are our medical students at the UT Health Science Center at San Antonio that have engaged with us at UT Teen Health, and they come to our Youth Leadership Council meetings and really mentor those that are interested in doing something in science. Even if they don't want to do something in science, just better understanding what could come next in college, or some of our medical students have done trades before, and so they're able to talk to our youth about that. And so really trying to mentor our youth, and while doing that, we get to hear feedback from them on what they want in future events and programs.

Speaker 1 (02:00): What was one moment in the last year that you are most proud of related to building a network of partners who provide adolescent friendly services?

Kristen (02:09): Our network of partners now includes juvenile justice and foster care agencies. I think that those agencies are often overlooked, and we think we can find most of these kids in schools. However, many have dropped out or are transitioning into adulthood and really need our services.

Speaker 1 (02:28): What is the first impression you want young people to have when they walk into an adolescent friendly space?

Kristen (02:34): Acceptance. I want them to be able to walk in the front door of any clinic and be able to feel that they belong there, and that they will be listened to, and it will be confidential.

Speaker 1 (02:45): What is your favorite part of helping youth and families advocate for adolescent friendly care?

Kristen (02:50): My favorite part is really letting families and youth see what a clinic does and how it functions behind those double doors. Once they can see how it works, I think they're able to advocate to have youth come and receive their clinical services. We'll often have meetings at the clinics to allow those youth and their families to get a clinic tour to talk to a nurse from the clinic, and often they'll get to talk to either a doctor or a nurse practitioner so that they can see who they would meet, who that friendly voice would be. Also, we let them approach the front desk and see what it's like to stand there.

Kristen (03:28): And what I mean by that is, do they feel it's confidential or quiet enough for them to tell what's going on? And they'll give us feedback so that we can adjust the way our clinics are based on their feedback.

Speaker 1 (03:41): What is your favorite part of helping youth and families access and navigate adolescent friendly care?

Kristen (03:47): My favorite part is seeing families and youth get what they came for. What I mean by that is that if they came in for sexually transmitted infection screening, that is what they get. If the family comes in because perhaps they're concerned that their daughter is sexually active and needs contraception, they're able to receive that in a very friendly manner that educates as well as supports that family connection with that youth.

Speaker 1 (04:13): What tips do you have for other projects looking to build or expand their network of partners?

Kristen (04:20): Really keep an open mind. I mean, we need to go in with an idea of an agenda, but throw all your ready, written agendas in the trash because you need to listen. Once you listen to those partners and follow up on everything that you talk about, you will gain their trust and be able to move forward. I find that going in with an open mind allows us to just know that in that time we're spending with that partner, we're just there to listen. However, where I see many organizations fail is when there are opportunities for you to follow up on "I will email you. I will connect you. Let me check into that for you." And those organizations don't follow up with that. So it is important for prompt follow-up to be able to gain that trust and move forward. This video was created by the Reproductive Health National Training Center, RHNTC.