

# HEALTH ISSUES AND PRIORITIES

## **STD Prevention (Youth):**

### **Facts:**

- A teenager in the U.S. contracts a STD about every 13 seconds.
- Teens have the highest rates of STDs among all sexually active people.
- Each year 3 million or one out of every 8 is infected with a STD.
- The incidence of AIDS and HIV infections are increasing among adolescents.
- As a result of certain societal factors, (runaway, homeless, rejected by family, incarcerated, dropouts, race, young women, youth in small town and rural communities) some adolescents are at a higher risk of STD.
- National survey data shows that 16 percent of 14-19 year olds reported four or more sexual partners.

### **Weakley County Estimates**

- Based on the ratio of 1:8, approximately 200 Weakley County high school students contracted a STD in 1996.
- There are a total of 61 cases of Chlamydia and 1 case of Syphilis in Weakley County in 1996.
- During the three-year period of 1993-1995 Weakley County averaged 3 cases of Syphilis.

## **After-school Programs:**

- 29% of juvenile offences occurs on school days between the hours of 3:00 p.m. (when young people begin to get out of school) - - and 8:00 pm.
- These are the hours when children are more likely to engage in at-risk behaviors and are more vulnerable to the dangers that still exist in too many neighborhoods and communities.

Children, families and communities benefit in measurable ways from high quality after school programs. By providing after-school programs, we give children safe, engaging environments that motivate and inspire learning outside of the regular school day. Effective programs combine academic, enrichment, cultural, and recreational activities to guide learning and engage children and youth in wholesome activities.

### **Potential benefits of an Afterschool Program:**

- *Decrease Juvenile Crime/Vandalism.*
- *Decrease risky behaviors, such as drug, alcohol and tobacco use.*
- *Improve grades/academic performance*
- *Develop appropriate social skills.*
- *Improve self-confidence.*
- *Improve school attendance and reduce dropout rates.*
- *Improve behavior/handle conflicts in more socially acceptable ways.*
- *Establish positive relationships with peers and authority figures.*