



Something To Talk About

Educate Yourself: Don't Become Another Statistic

When something is ranked as number one, is it automatically thought of as the best? Many don't know that Colleton County has the fourth highest teen pregnancy rate in the state of South Carolina. This was the purpose of the Healthy Choices for Teens Seminar: to educate teenagers about problems they will face and to lower our ranking.

The seminar was led by chairperson Lillie Singleton. Bonne

Johnson, Chief Executive of Colleton Medical Center, spoke about teen pregnancy. One of the most disturbing statistics she shared was that one million girls of ages 15 to 19 give birth in the US each year, and 80 percent of unmarried teen mothers end up in poverty.

The highlight of the workshop was the WHS Teen Parent Forum. This portion of the seminar included parents talking about the hardships of having children at a young age.

Another speaker, Ashley McClendon, who is a teenage father said, "I hope it helped everyone who was there because I don't want anyone to end up the same situation that I'm in."

Hostess of the True Love Waits workshop, Vicki Brown said, "The workshop was worthwhile because everybody got information that could prevent a serious mistake."

Mrs. Singleton said, "Teen years should be spent enjoying life. Healthy choices help increase chances for an enjoyable life now and in the future."

-Margaret Dresher



Tanya Marie Bluto was seventeen years old when she gave birth to her daughter, Taylor Marie Bluto on January 24, 1997.

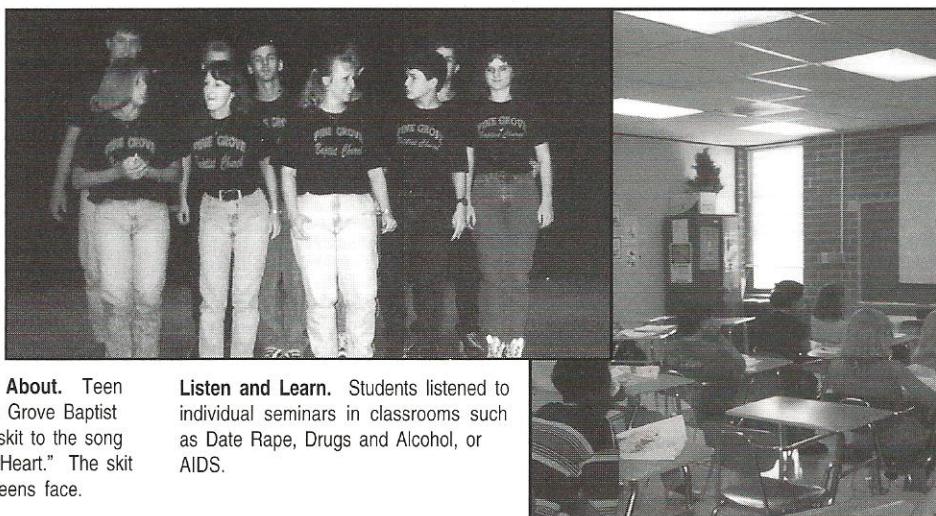
Tanya had made many sacrifices to take care of her child, such as not going to parties every weekend and being able to leave to go somewhere on the spur of the moment. If she had it to do all over again she would have educated herself more on different types of birth control.

She got a lot of help from her family and friends taking care of Taylor. Her biggest help came from her mother, whom she could not have done without.

Tanya believed that some teenagers don't take pregnancy as seriously as they should. She offered this advice to teenagers about pregnancy, "If you are going to be sexually active, you need to look at all forms of birth control and live up to your responsibilities."

Tanya's future plans included attending the College of Charleston after she became financially stable and giving her daughter the best life she can with her situation.

-Margaret Dresher and Christy Edwins



Something to Sing About. Teen members of the Pine Grove Baptist Church performed a skit to the song "Total Eclipse of the Heart." The skit illustrated problems teens face.

Listen and Learn. Students listened to individual seminars in classrooms such as Date Rape, Drugs and Alcohol, or AIDS.