

Teen STAR News

September 2006



Teen STAR Program, 8514 Bradmoor Drive, Bethesda, MD 20817-3810, USA
Phone 301-897-9323, Fax 301-571-5267, hannaklaus@earthlink.net, www.teenstarprogram.org

5th International Teen STAR Congress Report



Our fifth International Teen STAR meeting took place in Moedling, near Vienna, August 24-29, 2006. Helga Sebernik carried the bulk of the organizing. Elisabeth Pesahl and Kaethy von Daeniken helped to plan the schedules. August 24 and 28 were "work days" reserved for program decisions, while more general talks and reports were offered August 25-6, Saturday and Sunday, with simultaneous translations into German and English, ably done by Monika Haas, a graduate of the International Theological Institute in Gaming.

The Committees charged with the tasks surfaced in Samobor reported their outcomes and the group made the following decisions:

1. International Teen STAR logo. The Korean logo developed by Sr. Marie Jean Bae will be our international logo, but country programs may retain their own in addition.

2. Teacher training. A final exam – written, oral and practical will be given at the end of the practicum. A certificate will be given on successful completion of the practicum and exams, certification is good for three years, needs to be renewed with continuing education, i.e. attendance at teachers' meetings, congresses.

3. Models of Certificates for students and teachers as well as outlines for each of the above exams were shared by Helga's committee and can be obtained from her (info@teenstar.at).

Mary Lou Bryant offered a somewhat simplified version for **final appraisal of a teacher**. It included the teacher's goals, a grid for classroom observations which included items of needed qualities for successful teaching, lesson plans, and a form for student feed-back. Available from hannaklaus@earthlink.net.

Ladislav shared his explanation of condom use, comparing it to trying to play football while holding an umbrella. "The game gets worse and worse, and in the end you get wet anyway..." – He also had some simple ways of teaching the need for abstinence in marriage. If a man can't wait, how can his wife trust him when she's pregnant or has just had a baby? – Also the difference in the taste of a glass of water taken randomly, or after a day of working in the field? [If the audience does not laugh, he asks "should I say wine?"] [You have to know Lacek, a thoroughly good natured, joyful man with a delightful sense of humor, who is like a pied piper with his students.]

Elisabeth Pesahl, drawing on her skill as a Montessori teacher, demonstrated her color coordinated cards for teaching the menstrual cycle. She and Helga also used different colored cloths and plants to illustrate the fertility cycle.

Petro Husak (Lviv, Ukraine) stressed the need to make students aware that life is a gift, that they could not choose their parents, who are God's gift to them and the obviously indicated grateful response, together with the necessary understanding that we are stewards of our body, not owners. Manipulation of one's fertility can lead not only to personal non-fertility, but to demographic death of a nation.

Christian Théry (France) has begun a successful Teen STAR ministry to seminarians and priests.

Scientific reports were presented by Drs. **Elisabetta Meier-Vismara** (Swiss) experience with adolescent development. **Pilar Vigil** presented her two recent studies from Chile on the support of primary and secondary abstinence, and

on the reduction of teen pregnancies (Cabezón and Vigil, JAH Jan. 2005, and Vigil et al. J. Ped. Adol. Gynec. June 2005, both on the Science Page of the web site). Dr. Vigil stressed again the need to diagnose and treat androgen-excess syndromes, especially PCOD (polycystic disease of the ovary), in order to prevent the insulin resistant state which accompanies androgen excess, from producing diabetes mellitus Type II.

Szymon Grzelak, newly minted Ph.D., presented his work which has been published in Polish: *Profilaktyka Ryzykownych Zachowan seksualnych Mlodziezy*. [Grzelak, S. (2006). *Prevention of Youth Sexual Risk Behavior. Current State of Research in the World and in Poland*. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar.]

The book reviews successful approaches to reduction of HIV/AIDS (via abstinence and partner fidelity) the limited success of condoms, where small reductions in transmission are balanced by increased risk taking as the men think they are totally protected by condoms. He then detailed his **two and three year follow-up study on Teen STAR**. The gains reported by Year 2 are sustained in Year 3, which was done only in Poland, while the control group showed an increase in pregnancies and STI's.

Bishop Klaus Kueng of St. Poelten, Austria addressed the group on Education for Love in the Family. **Bishop Andreas Laun** spoke on the Theology of the Body. The Bishops offered Mass on Saturday and Sunday, respectively.

A delightful evening Saturday began with a short Mozart recital, followed by skits performed by each country delegation. The Austrians were the most numerous:



Austrian team presentation

Hanna Klaus was asked to speak on the **Charism of Teen STAR**. Briefly, Teen STAR goes beyond the current dichotomy of sexuality education programs which divide between "abstinence-only" and comprehensive sexuality education programs which place abstinence and contraception on a line relationship.

Teen STAR uses the experience of the body's fertility sign(s) to place a **high value** on possessing the power of **sexuality and fertility**, and to **situate fertility centrally within sexuality**. All aspects of sexuality – physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual – need to be **balanced** in order to become an **integrated person** and make free choices.

Teen STAR **involves parents integrally**, examines not only **attitudes but behavior** and reports program effect on both. It is a **developmental** curriculum which **asks many questions** while **giving few answers**. Rather, it helps the student find their own answers which, hopefully, should correspond with their deepest values. Teen STAR

1 is the basic human curriculum, while Teen STAR 2 includes religious objectives. Both curricula teach the basic human values of love and relationships, the need for trust before one can give oneself fully to another, which in turn requires a permanent commitment, usually called marriage!

* * *

It may be hard to "top" the effort made by Teen STAR Austria to welcome, transport, care for all the participants, still we need to think about 2008. No decision has been made, but it is good to remember that Teen STAR has a slot at World Youth Day in Sydney.

* * *

We want to acknowledge, with thanks, the support of Our Sunday Visitor Institute of the travel and housing for some of our overseas delegates.

Of Interest

Jonathan Zenilman reports from a clinic at Johns Hopkins University that reported **receptive oral sexual behavior** has increased from 25% among males and females in 1990 to a current 75-80%. A *Financial Times* Interview [August 26, 2006] asks "Are US teens switching to oral sex, perceiving the HIV/STD odds from it are safer than for intercourse? Economics suggests that when the price of penetrative sex rises, teens would seek substitutes. CDC reports that the proportion of US teen virgins has increased 15 percent since the early 1990s, and among those who are having sex, there is a trend toward contraceptives that also protect against STDs: Contraceptive pill use declined by one-fifth, and condom use rose by more than one-third.

Researchers put the theory to a test in a study of states that have enacted abortion notification laws, in which teens who become pregnant must get their parent's permission to receive an abortion. Would rational teens engage in less risky sex, relative to adults, in states with abortion notification laws?

When states enact notification laws, gonorrhea rates in the teenage and adult populations diverge, according to researchers Thomas Stratmann and Jonathan Klick. This suggests that teens cut back on unprotected sex as abortion

services become more difficult to access, and that one of the most serious consequences of an unwanted pregnancy is perceived to be that parents will find it out.

* * *

United Kingdom: "Teenagers 'Using Condoms Wrongly'", BBC News (08.09.06). Many sexually active English teens do not use condoms properly, according to Roger Ingham and colleagues at University of Southampton's Center for Public Health Research.

Of almost 1,400 teens ages 16-18 surveyed by researchers, about half had had sex. On the most recent occasion, 373 had used a condom, but 6 percent had put the condom on too late and 6 percent removed it too early. A subset of 100 teens kept a journal of their sexual activity over six months. 332 of 714 use episodes were without condoms. But among the 74 teens who said they had used a condom, 31 percent reported it had been unrolled after penetration, and 10% removed it too early at least once.

Reasons to use a condom included to avoid pregnancy or "making a mess" and to prolong sex. The most frequent reasons for not using a condom were to improve intimacy and sexual

stimulation, because other contraception was being used, or because they were overexcited. Few cited STD prevention as a reason they used a condom.

Open communication with their mothers in their early teen years were more likely to use condoms correctly. [One wonders what the communication consisted of. Ed.] The report, "How, Not Just If, Condoms Are Used: The Timing of Condom Application and Removal During Vaginal Sex Among Young People in England," was published Aug. 10 ahead of print in *Sexually Transmitted Infections Online*: 2006:doi:10.1136/sti.2006.021410, <http://sti.bmjournals.com/cgi/rapidpdf/sti.2006.021410v1>

Gardasil, the vaccine against the 4 strains of HPV which are associated with 70% of cervical cancer has already received insurance coverage in several states, and has been made mandatory in Michigan from ages 9-13, unless parents opt out. Since HPV is transmitted sexually, it is a preventable via behavior. But if a virgin female marries an infected non-virgin male, she may still contract the infection, and later on, cervical cancer. No one knows how long the anti-HPV titer will last, as the studies are only 4 years old, neither has anyone offered a vaccine against the remaining 30% of cancer-causing HPV strains. Nor has anyone suggested vaccinating the males.

* * *

Teen STAR Programs reporting, 2004-6

Country	N teachers trained	N teachers active	N sites/groups	N students
Austria	200	30	20	700+
Burkina Faso	14+	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Chile	500/yr	250-300	100	12,000/yr
Croatia	450	50	40	2485
Ethiopia	22	4	13	396
France	11 workshops	70	31	825
Gabon		1	1	!
Germany	3	3	1	N.A.
Italy (Suedtirol)	47	5	10 info evenings to date	
Italy (Naples)	N.A.			
Kazakhstan		1	1	N.A.
Korea	692	76	41	1004
Spain	330	N.A.	4 cities	N.A.
Switzerland	24	2	3	N.A.
Slovakia	-	2	6	65
Uganda	300	60	N.A.	950+
USA	12	6	5	345
Zimbabwe	N.A.	N.A.	69	1299

Vienna Congress 2006 Photo Gallery

Photos: Jerko Malinar, http://cross-press.net/Docu/GLAUBE/World/2006.06.26-27_TeenStar



African team



Pilar Vigil, Chile



Bishop Andreas Laun



Hanna Klaus, USA



Sr. Marie Jean Bae with South Koreans



Elisabetta Meier, Switzerland



...from Südtirol (Italy)



Guitar playing Kristina Pavlovic with Croatians



Bishop Klaus Küng



Mary Lou Briant, USA



Szymon Grzelak, Poland



Sr. Barbara, Kazakhstan



Hans & Käthy von Däniken, Switzerland



North American team singing



Helga Sebernik, Austria