



August 21, 2017

Dear Friends,

The city name Philadelphia combines the Greek words for friendship/love (φιλία or philía) and brother (αδερφος or adelphos), resulting in the welcoming nickname: the City of Brotherly Love and Sisterly Affection. And with that bit of etymology, I'm thrilled to share that CSS is significantly expanding its work in Philadelphia by partnering with four Philadelphia high schools to help develop students into leaders by implementing [Peer Group Connection](#). This has been made possible by a three-year \$439,500 grant from the William Penn Foundation. Oh, and it was William Penn himself who coined Philadelphia as the name for this historic city in the late 17th-century.

A recently completed federally-funded evaluation of CSS's [Teen Prevention Education Program \(Teen PEP\)](#) was [published](#) in the peer-reviewed Journal of School Health. Testimony to the power of peer education, the evaluation suggests that Teen PEP can be important for teaching students information and skills to promote sexual health. Developed in 1995, Teen PEP is implemented through a collaboration of CSS, HiTOPS, Inc., and, when implemented in New Jersey, the New Jersey Department of Health.

Particularly in the wake of this just-released study, CSS joins many other organizations across the country in expressing our profound disappointment that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the same federal agency that funded that above study, [will pull more than \\$200 million in funding](#) for teen pregnancy prevention programs and research nationwide. Over 80 grantees, including CSS, will be forced to prematurely end valuable studies in progress unless funding is restored or other funding can be found. CSS and many other of these grantees are conducting rigorous program evaluations to add to the evidence-base of what works to prevent teen pregnancy. Perhaps most importantly, hundreds of thousands of young people across the nation will stop receiving quality pregnancy prevention programming. While the Trump administration, and not Congress, eliminated the funding, the most likely route to restored funding is for Congress to see a groundswell of support for continued funding for these programs (TPPP and Title X). Please [email or call your Senators](#) and [your Representatives](#).

In case federal funding is not restored, CSS is actively seeking funding partners to support the completion of a rigorous evaluation of the effectiveness of our high school-based, peer mentoring model Peer Group Connection in reducing teen pregnancy among youth in high need communities across North Carolina (rural communities) and NYC (urban communities).

Two of my colleagues have recently been acknowledged for the amazing work they are doing in our New York City Community Schools:

- [Read about](#) how Taryn Cheeks, Community School Director at Brooklyn Community Arts and Media High School, has spearheaded new initiatives to "push, celebrate and honor attendance" in a public way, including a partnership with KiINVOLVED.
- [Check out](#) Altagracia Montilla, Community School Director at Frederick Douglass Academy III, at the recent Student Success Network (SSN) Expo! Altagracia engaged in a fellowship with SSN this year focused on continuous improvement. Watch the video to learn more about SSN and the recent expo celebrating the work of all of the fellows.

Warmest wishes,

Daniel F. Oscar  
CEO

P.S. Please check out [open positions](#). And, as always, if you'd like additional information about anything you've read, simply hit reply and let me know. I look forward to hearing from you.