

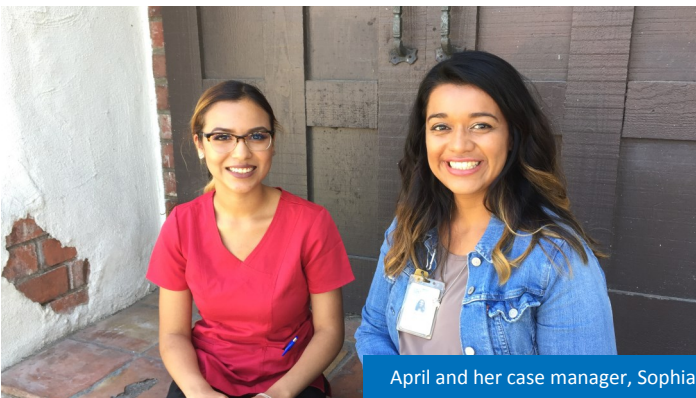
# Meet April

## STORIES FROM THE adolescent family life program

### Teen Mom Gains Confidence and Breaks Out of Her Shell

April was shy and hesitant to reach out for help. When she first met Sophia, her case manager from [Ventura County's Adolescent Family Life Program \(AFLP\)](#), she couldn't even look her in the eye. AFLP serves expectant and parenting youth and Sophia was there to provide in-home support for April twice a month following the birth of April's baby. Although April knew she needed guidance and someone to talk to, she was hesitant at first because no one had ever asked her if she needed help before.

With Sophia's support and encouragement, and the tools she provided along the way, April is now a confident young woman who is surprising herself by asking questions, taking on new challenges and achieving goals she never thought she could. She's also surprising her case manager, Sophia: "She's not the same person anymore, from when we started to now ... how she developed, how she advocates for herself."



April and her case manager, Sophia

Developing a caring case manager-youth relationship was essential to bringing April out of her shell. When Sophia began sharing information about herself, April could relate to her and began to see her case manager as a trusted adult with whom she could confide. Together, they worked to define April's strengths, goals and how to access resources April needed for her and her daughter.

One resource in particular changed April's trajectory for the better. Sophia connected April to a regional occupation program (ROP) that provides technical training for a variety of positions in the medical field. Pharmacy tech instantly struck a chord with

### Ventura County, California



April is a pharmacy technician at a local Ventura pharmacy.

April and she worked collaboratively with Sophia to figure out how to make the goal of becoming a pharmacy technician a reality. But there was a problem: low enrollment numbers threatened to cancel the class. To ensure she could participate in the program, April – at the request of her principal – became a program ambassador at her school. As a program ambassador, April needed to talk in front of her peers about the technical training classes. Though nervous at first about this leadership role, April had worked too hard to have the training program go away – and fortunately, for April – it didn't.

"When I got into the pharmacy tech program I realized there is no break, you can't slack off," and that's where Sophia's advice to April about planning her day and getting herself organized kicked in. She bought a planner and scheduled her days. To balance work, high school and her pharmacy tech program, April would spend mornings with her daughter and do homework at naptime. When her daughter got older, she wanted to be just like mom, so she would draw, using pen and paper, as April studied. This provided April the time she needed to be a great mom and a successful student.

After completing the pharmacy tech program, April secured employment at a local pharmacy. She is not fearful talking to customers and interacting with her coworkers. The confidence she has gained from AFLP is tremendous and now, April's life is so much more than she could have imagined. She has a great job, she is providing for her daughter and she hopes to soon move into an apartment of her own. As an AFLP graduate, April knows she has the tools she needs to thrive beyond the program.

# Meet the Adolescent Family Life Program

The Adolescent Family Life Program (AFLP) is a strengths-based case management program with integrated life planning. The program supports pregnant and parenting youth in building resilience strengths and skills to thrive. Case managers meet one-on-one with youth to establish a caring relationship, identify the youth's needs, and offer support accessing services, setting goals and building skills to manage life's challenges and plan for the future.

**PROGRAM GOALS:** Improve pregnancy planning and spacing and increase educational and vocational attainment, access to and utilization of needed services, and social and emotional support.

**WHO WE SERVE:** Expectant and parenting youth up to age 19 who have custody of their child or are co-parenting.

**SERVICE DELIVERY:** Services are provided by county health departments, hospitals and community-based organizations.



## Adolescent Childbearing in California

In 2015, over 24,000 California children were born to mothers aged 15-19.<sup>4</sup> The California adolescent birth rate (ABR) declined to a record low 17.6 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19 – a 61 percent decline from the 2000 rate. Despite this success, the number of youth, families and communities impacted by early childbearing remains high.

California birth rates vary greatly by race, ethnicity, age, geography and other factors. For example:

- Latinas make up nearly three out of four adolescent births in California.<sup>4</sup> In 2016-17, 73 percent of youth in AFLP were Latinas.
- The county with the highest adolescent birth rate (ABR) —Del Norte— has a rate 6.4 times greater than the county with the lowest ABR—Marin.<sup>4</sup>

*In recognition of the variations in birth rates across the state, CDPH/MCAH developed the [California Adolescent Sexual Health Needs Index \(CASHNI\)](#) to target programs to areas in the state with the greatest need. AFLP operates through 19 local agencies in high need counties across the state.*

### Data Sources:

1. 2016-17 data from the Adolescent Family Life Program, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Division, California Department of Public Health.
2. Postpartum contraceptive use among adolescent mothers in seven states. *J Adolesc Health*. 2013 Mar;52(3):278-83. doi: 10.1016/j.jadohealth.2012.05.004. Epub 2012 Jun 23.
3. CDC (MMWR) Vital Signs: Repeat Births Among Teens — United States, 2007–2010, April 5, 2013 / 62(13);249-255.
4. Adolescent Births in California, 2000-2015. California Department of Public Health, Center for Family Health, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Division, Epidemiology, Assessment, and Program Development Branch. November 2017.

AFLP Storytelling—Volume 1.2

## A Focus on Positive Youth Development (PYD)

All youth have strengths. All youth benefit from high expectations and supportive relationships. All youth are capable of making meaningful contributions in their lives, families and communities. The AFLP PYD program turns these values into meaningful activities for the youth to explore their strengths, values, resources, needs and vision for their life so that during and after the program they can:

- develop strengths and call on them to navigate life's challenges;
- build healthy and supportive connections with the important people in their lives;
- identify and work toward personal goals that will lead to healthier, happier lives for them and their children.

**84%** of AFLP participants are in school, graduated or received a diploma<sup>1</sup>

## Increased use of highly-effective, long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs):

- 37% for adolescents receiving AFLP services.<sup>1</sup>
- 12%-22% for adolescent mothers nationally.<sup>2,3</sup>

*This publication was made possible by Grant Number SP1AH000048-01-00 from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Adolescent Health and the Health Resources and Services Administration Title V MCH Block Grant. Contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Department of Health and Human Services, Human Resources and Service Administration or the Office of Adolescent Health.*

Maternal, Child and  
Adolescent Health  
Division  
[cdph.ca.gov/aflp](http://cdph.ca.gov/aflp)

