

# CAPP and PREP Referrals

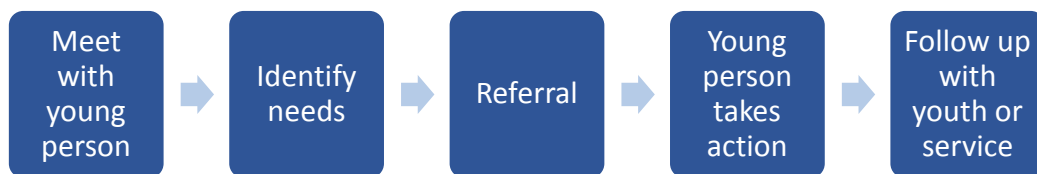
## Referrals to Reproductive and Sexual Health Care Providers

For the CAPP (Component 1) and PREP initiatives we define these referrals as follows:

Referral describes a process of assisting young people in obtaining sexual health services. This process usually occurs in a one-on-one meeting with a young person who expresses the need or desire to access reproductive and sexual health care services.

A referral is not the act of providing young people with information about reproductive health services by disseminating pamphlets, palm cards, etc. about local services. Typically, this information is disseminated in group settings during or after EBP sessions. Although this activity is recommended, it is not considered a referral.

Only referrals that meet the definition above should be tracked on the biannual reports.



## Referral Process

The referral process can be initiated by a young person seeking assistance or by an educator noticing a young person's need. The referral process includes the following steps:

- **Build rapport:** Creating an environment of trust and comfort is critical for the referral process. Using communication strategies such as open-ended questions, active listening, and affirmations and validations will help build rapport with the young person. Young people are looking for adults to talk to who are non-judgmental, approachable, informed, and respectful.
- **Ensure confidentiality and consent:** Adolescents are extremely concerned about privacy and confidentiality. This is often the main reason they do not seek out medical care. Therefore it is very important to inform them about confidentiality laws and limitations, as well as their right to consent to services, so that they will feel comfortable disclosing sensitive information.
- **Identify the young person's needs:** Engaging the young person in an informal conversation will be sufficient to identify the need. Building rapport is an important first step. The young person needs to feel comfortable and accepted before they feel secure enough to express their needs.
- **Select appropriate services and providers:** Prior to meeting with young people, it is helpful to create a referral guide that lists all the available services and providers with detailed descriptions (see below). With this detailed information about services and providers at hand, solicit the young person's input and jointly determine which service and provider would be a

good fit for them. Issues to consider are past experiences, preferences, location, transportation, and costs.

- **Make the referral:** Effective referrals involve assisting young people in scheduling appointments as well as providing information about the service and what they can expect. A verbal “walk-through” of the visit may ease the young person’s anxieties. An effective referral also includes documentation of the referral and whether the youth followed through with the appointment. Generally, it is helpful to strategize with the youth what steps they need to take to actually get to the appointment.

One strategy is known as a “warm” referral. A warm referral involves the trusted adult making the first contact with the agency either in person or by phone. Acting on behalf of the young person, the adult explains the need or reason for the appointment. This process also enables the adult to provide the youth with the name of a contact person at the organization, which will increase the student’s comfort level and make it more likely that the youth keeps the appointment.

- **Follow up after the referral:** To ensure that the young person has obtained the services they need, it is important to track whether or not they followed through with the referral. There are a couple of ways to make that happen.
  - Set up a time to check in with the youth after the appointment in person or via phone.
  - Ask the young person if they are comfortable signing a release of information (see below) so that you can follow up with the organization they were referred to.

### Creating a Referral Guide

Create a referral guide that lists sexual health care providers in the community. It could be as simple as a collection of organizational pamphlets or brochures, as long as important information is available:

- Health care provider name, phone number, and address
- Access information (location, transportation options, access considerations)
- General services (age range served, types of services, services for special populations)
- Reproductive and sexual health services (pregnancy and STD/HIV testing, contraception, condom availability, STD treatment, HPV vaccine, etc.)
- Cost of services (and availability of/eligibility for free services)
- Additional information (websites, minor’s rights)

Source:

Connections for Student Success: Developing a Referral System for Sexual Health Services  
<http://www.connectionsforstudentsuccess.org/index.php/referral-kit-download>

### Referrals to Community Service Providers

For the CAPP (Component 2) and PREP initiatives we define these referrals as follows:

Referral is the process of assisting young people to meet their physical, social, emotional, educational, and developmental needs by connecting them to community services (such as referral types listed in bi-

annual report). This process usually occurs in a one-on-one meeting. Note that providing general information about existing community services using brochures, etc. is not a referral.

The referral process includes the steps described above.

### Community Services Referral Guide

CAPP and PREP organizations may have developed a network of referral agencies they have collaborated with over the years. If this network is able to address most of the needs identified by young people during programming, the referral guide would be comprised of information about these agencies. Creating linkages and having a designated contact person who could advocate for the young person internally within each agency will make the referral process much smoother.

The referral guide could also be based on existing community resource guides generated by county departments or human services coalitions. Or information about available community services can be found online; see, for example, 211CNY (<https://211cny.com/>).

“Linkages” are collaborative relationships between organizations. These relationships promote information exchange and service delivery.

### Sharing information with the Referral Agency

Health care providers, educational institutions, and human service organizations keep client or consumer information confidential. For the referral agency to be able to follow up directly with an organization to find out if the young person has received services, the young person needs to give consent prior to the appointment. Typically, this involves a formal written referral and release of information signed by the young person. The release of information must clearly outline what information will be shared for what purpose. Agencies, generally, have developed policies and procedures for this. It is highly recommended that agency guidance be followed in this matter.

### Referral Tracking Form

A simple referral tracking form to facilitate the documentation of referrals and follow-up is available on the ACT for Youth website.