

The first **STARSS** group held at Pregnant and Parenting Teens Program (PPTP) had four participants; three pregnant young women, and one of their partners. To give the room more of a “celebration feel”, and to distinguish it from other groups held at the PPTP, we decorated the room in black and gold with a stars motif, and served drinks and goldfish crackers. As participants arrived, they picked out a gift bag. Each contained a tangle, play dough, sugar free gum, a toothbrush, a magnetic **STARSS** photo frame, and a **STARSS** stress squeezie. The bags also included a “Mom’s Matter” leaflet (downloaded from the AWARE website) and the October **I’m a STAR!** newsletter for moms. We began by going around the circle sharing our names and something about what happened during the week. To begin the group, I read an excerpt from “The Velveteen Rabbit” where the Rabbit asks the Skin Horse what it means to be real, and the Skin Horse explains that “real” is something that happens when you are loved by someone so much that you become “loose in the joints and your hair rubs off”. We discussed how this relates to them as parents, and they talked about what being “real” means to them.

Next we discussed goal setting. Going around the group again, we discussed goals they have set in the past, what worked, and what didn’t. Everyone had tried at some point to quit smoking; one woman had successfully quit cigarettes cold turkey when she found out that she was pregnant, but was still looking to reduce her marijuana use; another had essentially quit, but came with her partner for information on healthy environments. At this point we turned to **Worksheet 1** from **The Guide to STARSS Strategies**, and went through some ideas for long term goals. Everyone wrote down their short and long term goals in their **I’m a STAR! Journal**.

The “**What Works**” **Handout** was given to everyone in the group, and we talked about how, when baby is born, going outside to smoke is best and when that is impossible, by smoking in a room with the door closed and having a fan blow smoke out an open window.

From here, the group made signs to place in their home encouraging others not to smoke there. Even though most of the group smokes, it was exciting and encouraging to hear them talk about how they would not let others smoke near the baby.