

Teen Clinic Corner



She's pacing—back and forth, scared to ask. She knows how important this is. Mom won't understand, so she wouldn't dream of bringing the issue to the family dinner table. Nasty double standards say that she shouldn't even be here. Her friends told her that Variety Care was a safe place. Experience tells the female patient to remain cautious. This is Oklahoma and well... she's just a girl. Who really cares about her opinion on these matters? But, there's something about the receptionist eyeing her. The care team hero is nice, friendly, and has a pleasant and welcoming tone. Slowly, the patient begins to let her guard down. It makes the girl's next question an easy one to escape her mouth: "May I please have a Teen Clinic bag?"

Variety Care provides an important entry point for community members to access care. Teen Clinic services are at the forefront of empowering youth in Oklahoma County with medically-accurate sexual health education and accessible support services.

Unfortunately, these types of scenarios play out in waiting rooms across the nation. Teens are sometimes afraid to ask for help or rely upon the ill-fated advice from their peers.

Little by little, one bag at a time, Teen Clinic staff members are working to change perceptions, challenge stigmas, and welcome a flood of questions from teenagers.

"This is about more than a small sack filled with male and female contraceptive items," a TC team member said. "These small packages guide teens towards medically-accurate sexual health information that greatly combats the myths shared across their school yards and lunch tables."

The interaction doesn't have to end at supplying the bag. Did you know that Teen Clinic provides after-school clinics twice a month at Variety Care for youth ages 13-19? We also teach medically accurate, evidence based sexual health curricula in OKCPS schools, and offer a 24/7 text hotline for teens to ask sexual health questions. If you have any questions about our services, please contact us at teenclinic@varietycare.org or ext. 3007.

