

Group provides women with information on pregnancy



Funds boost Joy Fussell, left, and Julie Bryant, co-directors of The Willow Tree charity

Charity cash for the Willow Tree

Let's make it happen

£10,000 GIVEAWAY

EVENING POST



A CHARITY which helps women in need of support after losing a child is to receive funding from the Let's Make It Happen £10,000 fund.

The Willow Tree, which was set up last year to provide information and support on pregnancy, abortion and adoption to women and their families, will receive £390 from the prize fund set aside by the *Evening Post* and Combined Insurance.

The money will help train two volunteers who will go in to schools around Bristol in an attempt to inform youngsters about the choices they have to make in life.

Joy Fussell, a project leader with the Willow Tree, said the money would make a huge difference in the fight to reduce the number of

by OLIVIER VERGNAULT

teenage pregnancies in the UK. She said: "Young people today are confronted with many challenges and pressures.

"The UK has the highest rate of teenage pregnancy in Europe, with Bristol at the top of this unwanted league table.

"Latest figures for Bristol show that there were 348 conceptions in young women under the age of 18.

"We would like to see the work of our Crisis Pregnancy Centre develop in a way that will impact on young people by challenging attitudes and values, and give them knowledge and skills that will enable them to make healthy choices."

The Willow Tree, which has 17

counsellors, is hoping to open a room at the St Nicholas Family Centre in Abbots Woods, Yate, in September.

Counsellors will be able to talk to women in crisis in strict confidence and provide information on a range of important subjects.

Mrs Fussell said: "We want to see women and their partners provided with accurate information, to have time and support so that they can make informed choices rather than decisions based on fear, panic and manipulation.

"As part of our work in the community, we wish to train and equip two youth workers to work in local schools, colleges and youth groups to present a new dynamic and multimedia approach called Evaluate.

"It is a relevant and interactive presentation that will empower young people to make informed choices and acquire the necessary life skills."

Under the Let's Make It Happen Great £10,000 Community Giveaway, a share of the cash will be given to individuals, groups and charities which help to benefit the community.

Clive Robinson, managing director of Combined Insurance, said: "We're delighted that the Community Awards have had such an immediate impact on the local community in Bristol.

"We're looking forward to seeing the dreams of other winners being realised in the coming months."

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