

Money issues forcing cuts to Planned Parenthood

By Kathryn Reed



Planned Parenthood has cutback its services to the Tahoe-Truckee area. Gone are the programs at the California Conservation Corps in Meyers and at Sierra High School in Truckee.

“Because of budget constraints and issues with the entire state we are restructuring,” said Alison Gaulden, spokeswoman for Planned Parenthood in Reno.

In South Lake Tahoe, services offered twice a week at Tahoe Youth & Family Services will remain, as will the regular visits to Mount Tallac High.

Gaulden said Sierra High students could access the nearby public health clinic.

Sierra High counselor who is also the school district’s intervention counselor said the Nevada County clinic is open Wednesdays form 1-4pm and requires a car to get there from campus.

“It’s a huge loss to us,” counselor Debi Spohr said of Planned Parenthood’s departure. “Not only do we have the asterisk students here, we have the teen parenting program.”

She worries about the incidents of repeat pregnancies without easy access to birth control. Planned Parenthood was on the Sierra campus twice a month.

“I think we need to go lower with educating kids, not getting

rid of it," Spohr said. An eighth-grader in her district gave birth this month.

Planned Parenthood hopes the expansion of its Tahoe City site into a full-fledged center will help the area. Right now services are offered less than 20 hours there.

"With more hours, we'll have the ability to do the full spectrum of service. Right now a lot of what we do is consultations," Gaulden said. "We will be able to do full annual exams, and the full gamut of reproductive health care."

This includes breast and cervical cancer screenings, pap and pelvic exams, sexually transmitted disease testing, pregnancy testing and counseling.

"Two-thirds of our students are from the Kings Beach area. It's so hard for them to get to Tahoe City," Spohr said.

But Gaulden said at some point decisions are based on dollars, not client needs.