



Wells United Methodist Church

## This Week at Wells

Feb. 13, 2018

### WellsFest

Teen Pregnancy Prevention Group Selected as WellsFest Beneficiary



Dana Larkin, executive director of Growing Up Knowing,  
and Charles Williams, chair of the WellsFest Beneficiary Committee.

**Growing Up Knowing: Mississippi Campaign for Teen Pregnancy Prevention is the beneficiary of WellsFest 2018.**

The local nonprofit partners with community and faith-based organizations to help promote healthy sex education discussions between parents and their children. Effective education and building a foundation of trust can help prevent teen pregnancy and risky sexual behavior. The group helps kids with developing assertive communication, problem-solving, and decision-making skills that help them resist peer pressure.

Charles Williams, chair of the WellsFest Beneficiary Committee, made the announcement on Sunday, saying the group is about "educating and giving information to the community about making good choices."

Dana Larkin, executive director, said the group is the only one in the state that engages both parents and children with the goal of getting parents and kids to talk to one another about sex and behavior. They work with 12 families at a time with sessions designed to inform and facilitate them to talk with one another.

"Our mission is to support health and sexual decisions through parent, family and community partnerships," she said.

Dana thanked Wells and said she felt close to the congregation because of Wells' past joint programs with Temple Beth Israel, where she worships, and the fact that she and her husband always attended WellsFest with their young children. She said being the WellsFest beneficiary would help bring attention to the group's work.

"I cannot tell you how much we appreciate this gift and your trust in us," she said. "You really are going to put us on the map."

WellsFest is in its 35th year and has raised more than \$1.4 million to support local nonprofits. Last year's WellsFest benefitted Methodist Children's Homes, raising \$70,000 for a project to help young people transition to independence. All net proceeds go to the beneficiary. WellsFest is Sept. 29.

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