

Free concert Sunday to promote abstinence

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The Lowcountry Crisis Pregnancy Center will put a little hip-hop in its abstinence message Sunday with a free concert by recording artist Lakita Garth.

The 30-year-old abstinence advocate, along with local artists Gap, Pecooliar and Martin Paulk, will entertain area youths at the North Charleston Performing Arts Center Sunday. But they plan to spread some serious information as well.

Two local agencies, Youth Empowered for Service Council and Heritage Community Services, are helping the center organize the event. All three agencies have a similar goal - to encourage young people to avoid risky behavior, such as violence, drugs, alcohol and sex outside of marriage.

"We need this now. This is an immediate message," said Carol Musselman, state program assistant for the pregnancy center. "The kids in this area have got to learn how to respect each other's bodies."

And Garth is the best person to deliver the message, said Roslin Fields, who founded and directs the YES Council.

"She speaks out very boldly. She gives the empowerment message with her show," Fields said.

Garth is a former Miss Black America-California and runner-up to Miss Black America.

Musselman said youth sex education programs focus on the importance of condoms and how to prevent sexually transmitted diseases. But youths don't hear enough about abstinence, she said.

"That's our goal, to let them know that there is another possibility."

Fields said the concert will target middle-school and high-school students, and it may not be suitable for younger children.

"The parents should use their own discretion," Fields said. "But she will be talking about matters that do involve sex."