

"J. L. age 18, raised her hand in the classroom of pregnant and recent teen mothers to speak out about her experience in the Hermana Program, "I encourage you to listen, this is a good program. I learned a lot about protecting myself from HIV/AIDS...and now I regularly use condoms. I tell my boyfriend no condom – no sex."

J. L. was a pregnant 16 year old attending the Wilshire Teen Mothers Program when she first heard about the Hermana Project, she didn't complete the course, instead she was arrested on drug charges and sent to Juvenile Hall. There she voluntarily enrolled in the Hermana Project. She had never talked with anyone about condoms and was especially interested in learning the proper steps to condom use and becoming more assertive in her relationships - protecting herself from STD's, HIV and another unplanned pregnancy. This time she completed the 7-week program. She was released after giving birth and returned to the teen mothers program. It was there more than a year later that she ran into her previous Hermana instructor. J.L. was now a young mother practicing safe sex and grateful to the program for educating her on the methods of transmission and the risky behaviors that put her at high-risk for HIV infection. Courageously speaking out, her testimony sent a strong message to the new participants."