ABSTRACT

Delaware youth report high levels of involvement in sexual activity and unintended pregnancies, which contribute to a high statewide infant mortality rate. In response, our team plans to implement a mixed-methods study to evaluate an evidence-based, interactive curriculum, Wise Guys, designed to promote healthy relationships and sexual behavior in young men, ages 14-17. Two pilot studies were conducted with local Wise Guys groups suggesting positive changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. These empirically based interventions revealed significant weaknesses in quantitative data collection with teens and challenges to accessing authentic teen perceptions via survey methods. In an effort to address such challenges, the current study will include focus groups to delineate teens' thoughts on the most salient aspects of Wise Guys, which, in turn, will be used to develop a stakeholder-informed survey instrument. The survey will be administered via REDCap, a computer-based medium. Additional focus groups, member checks, and a video journaling component with content analysis will provide rich data to be interpreted with survey findings on the value of Wise Guys. Community engagement in the research process, tool development, web-based data collection, focus groups, video journaling methods, and data analysis will provide the infrastructure for future prevention and intervention research, as well as help to improve future evaluation efforts. This poster highlights the previous local pilot studies and their limitations, and the proposed mixed-methods study design. Health promotion programs specific for teens can only be accurately evaluated through developmentally appropriate, technology-based, engaging, and valid methods of evaluation. This research pilots the involvement of youth and use of youth perceptions to determine the effectiveness of the Wise Guys program and the feasibility of mixed methods approaches as means to evaluate teen programming.

INTRODUCTION: WISE GUYS

The Wise Guys: Male Responsibility Curriculum is designed to prevent adolescent pregnancy by reaching adolescent males. The program acknowledges young males as "whole" individuals with a variety of needs and desires. Participatory lessons and activities focus on assisting them to ask themselves the questions: Who am I?, Where am I going?, How do I get there?

• Myself
• Personal and family values
• Communication and masculinity
• Sexuality
• Parenthood

Wise Guys groups are implemented across the state of Delaware by the Alliance for Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention, which is funded by the Delaware Department of Public Health with administrative oversight by Christiana Care Health System’s Department of Family and Community Medicine. Groups are held in a variety of settings, from high schools and community organizations to summer camps and in the faith-based community.

PREDVIOUS WISE GUYS STUDIES

STUDY #1

Wise Guys was effective in generating more realistic (lower, negative) attitudes on:

Parenting experience (cumulative scale) - The financial impacts of teen pregnancy and tangible interventions (money subscale); the impact on day-to-day life (life in general subscale).

STUDY #2

Improvements in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors “going in the right direction”

Some items demonstrated statistical significance

Significant changes in some areas of attitude scale-friends and cumulative score

Most significant changes:

1. How often do you talk to your parents about sex?
2. How often do you talk to your parents about people you date or girls you like?
3. Positive feedback about program “Can’t we keep on going?”

STUDY #1 RESULTS

Wise Guys was effective in generating more realistic (lower, negative) attitudes on:

Parenting experience (cumulative scale) - The financial impacts of teen pregnancy and tangible interventions (money subscale); the impact on day-to-day life (life in general subscale).

STUDY #2 RESULTS

Improvements in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors “going in the right direction”

Some items demonstrated statistical significance

Significant changes in some areas of attitude scale-friends and cumulative score

Most significant changes:

1. How often do you talk to your parents about sex?
2. How often do you talk to your parents about people you date or girls you like?
3. Positive feedback about program “Can’t we keep on going?”

CURRENT STUDY

Mixed-methods study includes:

• Focus groups (rich data)
• Youth Advisory Group
• Involving youth in the research process
• Community participatory research
• Youth-informed survey
• Computer-based surveys (REDCap)

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