What's Love Got to Do With It?: Impact of a Relationship Based TPP Intervention, Love Notes, on Pregnancy and Behavior

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While teen pregnancy rates have been dropping over the last 25 years, the rate of some groups remain high:

- African American Youth
- Hispanic/Latino Youth
- Foster Youth
- LGBTQ Youth
Teen Pregnancy Rates

• In 2010 the Kentucky teen pregnancy rate was 62 per 1,000.
• The rate of teen pregnancies among non-Hispanic Black teens in Kentucky was 84 per 1,000.
• We don’t have statistics for Louisville Metro.
• According to a 2008 survey, 35% of Kentucky teen pregnancies were intended.
• In 2009 focus groups in 11 communities, 9 (including Louisville) indicated that teen pregnancy was the #1 problem facing youth today.
Teen Birth Rates in Kentucky and Louisville

- Kentucky is the 44th worst state for teenage births with a teen birth rate of 39.5 per 1,000 births.
- National teen birth rate is 26.5 per 1,000 births (National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, 2015).
- Louisville teenage birth rate among African Americans is 90.7 per 1,000 and is three times higher than among Caucasian teens whose rate is 33.6 per 1,000 (LMPHW, 2012).
- 250 girls attend the two TAPP Schools in Louisville.
- 17% of births were to teens experiencing a repeat pregnancy (Annie Casey Foundation, 2013).
STIs Among Teens

• 5% of adolescents and young adults (<20 years of age) in Kentucky were reported as HIV positive in 2013 (KDPH & CDC, 2013).

• In Kentucky, the 20-24 year age group has the highest rate of Gonorrhea and Chlamydia infections followed by the 15-19 year age group (CDC, 2012).

• From 2007 to 2011, individuals less than 25 years of age accounted for more than half of all Gonorrhea and Chlamydial infections reported in the Louisville Metro area (LMPHW, 2012).
## Kentucky Risky Sexual Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kentucky</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ever participated in sexual intercourse</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently sexually active</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had sexual intercourse with four or more sexual partners</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not use a condom the last time they had sex</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Predictors of Risky Sex

• ACE Study found that adults with 2 experiences of childhood trauma (e.g., exposure to child physical, sexual and emotional abuse, neglect, abandonment, witnessing domestic violence, divorce, parental imprisonment, parental addiction, parental mental health) were twice as likely to engage in risky sexual behavior and experience a teen pregnancy.

• Adults with 4 or more experiences of childhood trauma were three times as likely to engage in risky sexual behavior and 65% more likely to experience a teen pregnancy.
Disconnected youth are particularly likely to have these additional issues complicate the situation:

- Falling prey to predators
  - Partners that are much older-some of whom are adults
  - Partners that are controlling and/or violent (dating violence)
  - Partners that coerce youth to have sex (sexual assault)
  - Sex traffickers who groom youth and enlist in the sex trade
- Having multiple partners
- Non-use of condoms and birth control
Typical TPP Interventions

• In 2010, OAH created a list of 28 effective interventions (Mathematica, 2010)
• The list expanded to 35 programs by 2015
What is missing in typical TPP Interventions?

- Addressing youth desire for romantic relationships (e.g. What are building blocks to a healthy relationship? What are the components of love?)
- How to choose a partner who is a good match by first understanding yourself and what you want and need (e.g. personality, values, life vision for career, family, romantic partner) and then engaging in techniques to help assess potential relationship partners.
- Educating youth about ways that make people feel close to one another (e.g. 6 types of intimacy).
What is missing in typical TPP Interventions?

- Addressing factors that make youth feel disconnected and how to overcome them (e.g. family baggage, poverty)
- Addressing youth long term goal of being in a committed relationship including marriage (e.g. what makes a healthy relationship last including good match, communication skills, positive conflict management skills)
What is missing in typical TPP Interventions?

- How to expect respect and set high expectations for partner behavior.
- How to detect early warning signs (e.g. red flags) that a potential relationship partner is unsafe in any way, violent, controlling, abusive, will break your heart, or a predator.
- How to detect all types of dating violence and how to safely get out of a relationship that shows signs of control, abuse, or violence.
What is missing in typical TPP Interventions?

- How to pace relationships, draw the line and not be pushed or coerced to do anything the youth doesn’t want to do, particularly sexually.

- The role of brain chemistry and hormones as well as other chemicals such as alcohol and drugs on impairing ability to judge a partner’s character, maturity, traits, interests. Ideas for waiting on making decisions that can impact one’s life until natural chemicals have subsided.

- How to break up so that both partners are safe physically and emotionally
What is missing in typical TPP Interventions?

• Understanding of what babies and children really want and need to be safe and healthy and to thrive in life
Louisville OAH Randomized Controlled Trial Study

- Recruited youth with these inclusion criterion: Unmarried youth ages 14 to 19 who
  - Had never been pregnant or impregnated anyone
  - Could participate verbally in English
  - Had no cognitive impairment that precluded giving assent or informed
- From September 2011 to March 2014, 109 clusters (39 RtR, 39 LN, and 31 POW) were offered at the 39 CHAMPS camps, which included:
- Enrolled 1,448 youth
CHAMPS! CAMPS

CAMP AGENDA

Day 1

- Registration: 8-8:45 a.m.
- Pretest/Survey: ~9:00 a.m.
- Training: 10:00-5:30 p.m.

Day 2

- Registration: 8-8:45 a.m.
- Training: 9:00-4:30 p.m.
- Posttest/Survey: ~4:30 p.m.
Love Notes educates participants about healthy relationships, including issues of decision-making, communication and conflict resolution, and overall safety, including the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease (Pearson, 2011, Pearson EBP Version, 2016).

511 Youth Randomly Assigned to Love Notes
Reducing the Risk: Building Skills to Prevent Pregnancy, STD and HIV (RtR) was developed by Richard Barth, MSW, Ph.D. in California. The training manual is in its 5th Edition and was last published in 2011.
422 Youth Randomly Assigned to The Power of We Control Condition

- Created and implemented by the Network Center for Community Change (NC3)
- Focuses on Community Building
- How to find community assets
- How to work together to address community problems
Sample

- 62% Females
- Mean age 15.7 years
- 82% Recipients of Free or Reduced Lunch
- 88% Black (African or African American)
- 10% Caucasian
- 4.3% Hispanic
Types of Youth Participants

- 74.7% Exclusively Urban (not refugee or in Out of Home Care)
- 9.3% Refugee
- 16.6% LGBTQ
- 15.5% Currently in OOHC
- 21.1% Ever in OOHC
## Kentucky Risky Sexual Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kentucky</th>
<th>CHAMPS Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ever participated in sexual intercourse</td>
<td>Ever participated in sexual intercourse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently sexually active</td>
<td>Currently sexually active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had sexual intercourse with four or more sexual partners</td>
<td>Had sexual intercourse with four or more sexual partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not use a condom the last time they had sex</td>
<td>Did not use a condom the last time they had sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had first intercourse age 13 or younger</td>
<td>Had first intercourse age 13 or younger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Setting

- 23 community based organizations serving youth in West and South Louisville
  - 2 Community Schools
  - 3 CBOs serving Refugees
  - 3 Government and CBOs serving Foster Youth
  - 7 CBO Youth Focused Community Centers
  - 8 Neighborhood Place sites (where 3-6 governmental agencies co-locate services)
Location of CHAMPS Participants' Place of Residence with Louisville Metro Zip Codes Displayed
Youth who were randomly assigned to the LN intervention group:

- **Engaged in sex less** (ever and in the last 3 months) than participants in the Power of We (POW) control condition six months after the conclusion of the program.
- **Used condoms more often** than participants in the POW control condition six months after the conclusion of the program.
- **Used other forms of birth control more** often than participants in the POW control condition six months after the conclusion of the program.
- **Had fewer sexual partners** at six months after the program, compared with POW control participants.
- Were **less likely to get pregnant or impregnate someone** than participants in the POW control condition at six months after the conclusion of the program.
- Cumulatively across 12 months had **44% fewer pregnancies** than those in POW (or Reducing the Risk).
Visualization of Pregnancies

Number of Pregnancies Per 1000

- Love Notes
- POW
- RTR

Preg per 1000
• *Love Notes* is partially derived from the Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (Markman, Stanley & Blumberg, 2010). The Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program is a relationship marriage education program listed as an evidence-based practice by SAMHSA and OFA.

• Studies have found that IPV is related to sexual risk taking, inconsistent condom use, partner non-monogamy and unplanned pregnancy (Coker, 2007).

• As noted, a focus on this destructive dynamic is not emphasized in most teen pregnancy prevention interventions.

• Studies have found *Love Notes*:
  – Lowered verbal aggression (Adler-Baeder, Kerpelman, Higginbotham, Schramm & Paulk, 2007)
Why Did Love Notes Work?

*Love Notes* aims to:

1. Educate youth about how to form, assess and maintain healthy relationships with best partners for them
2. How to break up from relationships that are not a good match or are violent
3. Focus on planning, impulse control, following the success sequence
4. Focus on reducing teen dating violence
5. Focus on reducing risky sexual behavior to help prevent pregnancy, disease transmission, and a broken heart
6. Improve the odds the youth will reach life goals for self-sufficiency and having a committed relationship/marriage
7. Improve the odds the youth will form a stable foundation for raising children.
Love Notes Theory of Change

- **Theory of Planned Behavior**: Increasing use of behavioral intentions can lead to behavioral change.
  - Enhance knowledge and beliefs that shape attitudes
  - Change perceptions about what constitutes appropriate expectations and behaviors in relationships
  - Enhance skills in communication, conflict management, assessing, planning, decision making, and exercising self control
  - Having youth write down intentions, share them with peers at the sessions and share them with a trusted adult in their lives
• **Cognitive Behavioral Theory** - How youth think about situations can affect their feelings and actions.
  
  – Youth think about family baggage and past relationship history
  
  – Youth assess past and current romantic relationships in light of the information they are learning
Love Notes Theory of Change

- **Empathy Model of Altruism** - *Through the Eyes of a Child* seeks to help youth think about the impact of their relationship decisions, timing of pregnancy, etc. on their current (if already a pregnant or parenting teen) or future (if not already pregnant or parenting) child through the perspective of a child.
Johnson’s Multidimensional Model of Intimate Partner Violence

- Violence is common in relationships but important to know origin of the violence to reach all audiences.
  - Situational Violence
  - Coercive Control Violence

- Both can be dangerous, especially for girls and women
Love Notes Delivery

- Red: Take Charge, Determined Leader
- Orange: Productive, Level-headed, Gets things done
- Yellow: Precise, Accurate, Loves Details
- Green: Values Fairness, Big Picture Focus, Respectful
- Blue: Loving, Kind, Caring
- Purple: Inspiring, Adventurous, Loves to have fun

[Image of a colorful art project with hearts and craft materials]
ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES: STAFFING

• Staff were highly experienced with youth in the three target areas:
  – Urban Youth
  – Immigrant Youth
  – Foster Youth

• Staff assisted with recruitment, implementation and retention of youth
ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES: YOUTH FOCUS GROUPS

- Four focus groups during planning and prior to implementation
  - Incentives
  - Food and Snack Preferences
  - How to structure the sessions in regard to whether to include both girls and boys in the same classes and timing (on Saturdays)
  - What may have been lacking in regards to the curriculum
  - How to make the curriculum more engaging
• Branding is **KEY**!!!
• Other Youth Incentives
  – Gift Cards (i.e. McDonald’s/Subway)
  – Drawstring Backpacks
  – CHAMPS! T-shirt
  – Water Bottles
  – Sunglasses
  – Headphones
  – USB Car/Wall Adapters
SOCIAL MEDIA

*** LIKE US ON FACEBOOK!!!! ***


***FOLLOW US ON TWITTER ***
@UofL_CHAMPS

• The Operations Team worked tirelessly to improve the logistics of each CHAMPS! camp so youth would have a positive experience.
BUT THE TEAM STILL PERSEVERED . . .

IT WAS THE GOOD THE BAD AND THE UGLY . . .
THERE IS NO “I” IN TEAM!

• CHAMPS! became a community project
  – Full and Part-time staff
  – Facilitators
  – Parents/Guardians
  – Youth
  – Community Partners
  – Countless Kent School Students & Volunteers
The Mayor’s Endorsement Did Help! Some 😊