

# Teen Sexual Health Education Programs: *How Data Can Inform Action in Rural Communities*

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# Presentation Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to explain:

1. How Teen PEP seeks to address the factors contributing to teen pregnancy rate disparities in rural communities
2. Three data collection methods that can be used to assess program strengths and challenges
3. Three ways in which program data can inform program improvements and enhancements.

# Center for Supportive Schools (CSS)

The Center for Supportive Schools (CSS, formerly Princeton Center for Leadership Training) has a 35-year history of partnering with K-12 schools throughout the United States to train and mobilize students to be lifelong leaders who make schools better for themselves, their peers, and younger students. As a result, schools become safer, more supportive, engaging, and inspiring and students become:

- *strongly connected* through caring relationships with adults and one another; and
- *highly capable* of using the leadership, academic, social, and emotional skills that are proven to result in school and life success.

# HiTOPS, Inc.

HiTOPS implements a model of education, health services and support designed to reduce adolescent risk behaviors and promote positive youth development. HiTOPS targets adolescents (ages 11-26) for age-appropriate health education in schools, juvenile justice centers, community organizations, and social service agencies across New Jersey, and within the only licensed ambulatory care facility exclusively for adolescents in New Jersey.

Our mission is to promote adolescent health and well-being and we envision a world in which youth have the resources they need to live healthy, responsible, and empowered lives.



# Teen PEP: A Snapshot

- The Teen Prevention Education Program (Teen PEP) is:
  - a school-based, sexual health, peer-to-peer education model
  - utilizes well-trained junior/senior students to provide medically accurate and skills-based education to younger students (usually freshmen)
- Teen PEP's purpose is to provide teens with the knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviors to avoid unintended pregnancy, HIV, and other STIs.
- Developed in 1999 and currently implemented in approximately 50 NJ schools and 12 NC schools



# Teen PEP In Action



# Core Workshop Topics



- *Let's Wait Awhile:* Postponing Sexual Involvement
- *Later, Baby:* Preventing Unintended Pregnancy
- *Don't Pass it On:* Other Sexually Transmitted Infections
- *Break the Silence:* HIV/AIDS Prevention
- *Sex on the Rocks:* The Role of Alcohol and Other Drugs on Sexual Decision-Making
- *Talk to Me:* A Family Night Event (9<sup>th</sup> graders and their parents)



# Why Peer Education?



- Can have a positive impact on health outcomes for peer educators and the recipients of the peer education
- Provides youth with an opportunity to be involved in a leadership role in their schools and communities
- Peer educators may be perceived as more credible than adults
- Peer educators can help shift social and group norms toward health promoting behavior
- Learning and attitudes are reinforced on an on-going, informal basis
- Cost-effective; increases the number of youth that can be reached



# Think/Pair/Share

*What has been your experience with peer education programs? What other benefits have you observed?*

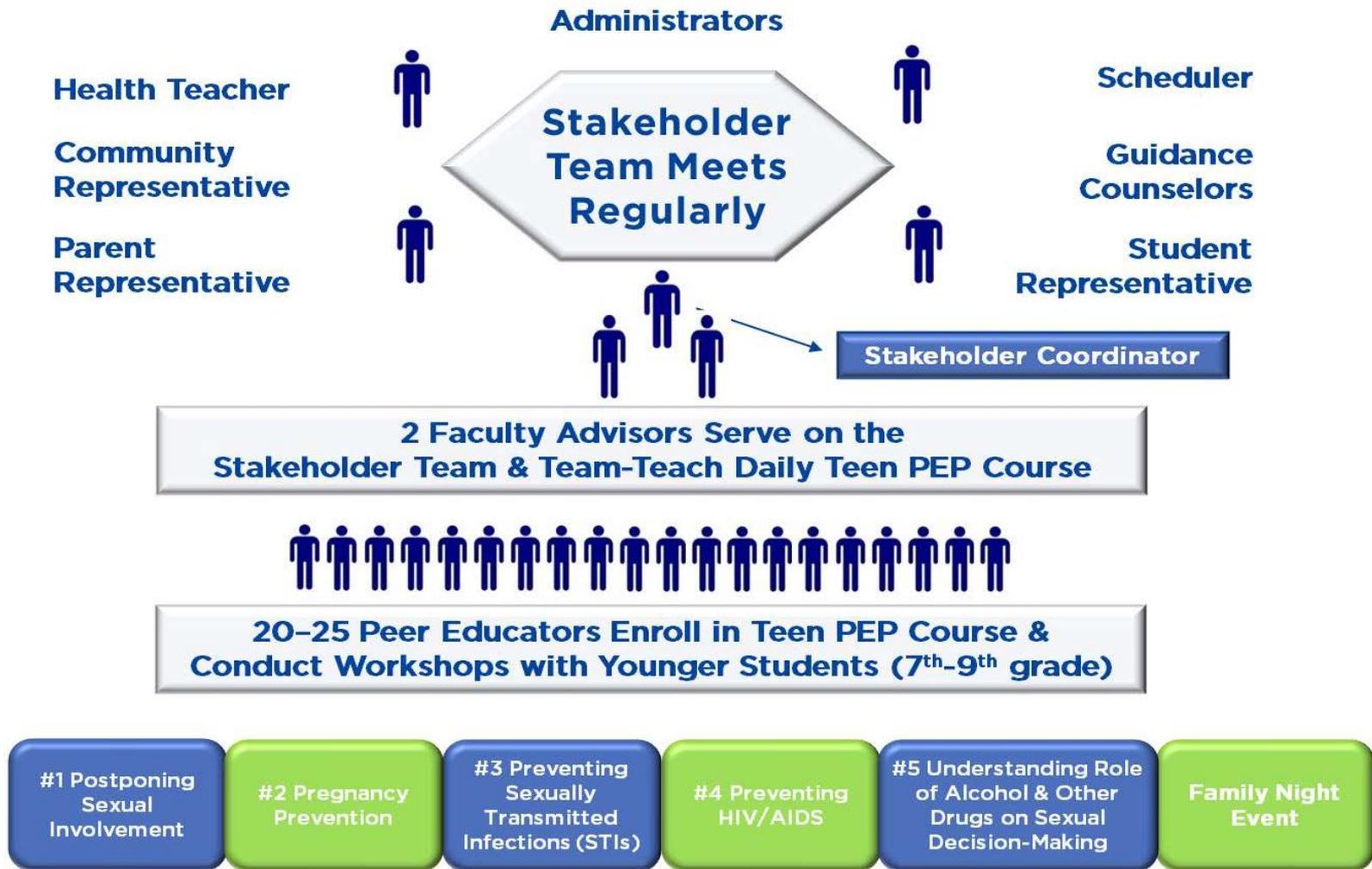
*What are some of the greatest challenges with this approach?*

# Core Elements of the Teen PEP Model



1. **Stakeholder team**
2. **2-3 adult advisors** participate in 7-days of training to prepare them for their role
3. A cohort of 20-25 junior/senior students are selected to become **peer educators**
4. **Daily credit bearing Teen PEP leadership course** facilitated by the adult advisors using a 10-unit structured curriculum
5. **Five 90-minute interactive workshops** to 9<sup>th</sup> grade students
6. **Family Night event** designed to improve parent-teen communication

# Teen PEP Structure



# Fidelity Monitoring & Program Evaluation



Teen PEP staff-members provide participating schools with customized **technical assistance (TA)** to support program implementation.

Staff members serve as consultants and coaches with the goal of:

- Building the capacity of the stakeholder team to problem-solve existing challenges, anticipate program obstacles, and plan for long-term sustainability
- Observing program implementation (classroom and workshop) to ensure quality and fidelity to the model

# Implementation Data



Implementation data is collected via:

1. Demographic student survey
2. Impact tracking tool/program implementation form
3. Attendance
  - Advisors take attendance at each workshop
4. Workshop evaluation forms
  - Participants complete after each workshop
5. Technical Assistance observation rating forms
  - Each classroom, workshop preparation, or workshop observation
6. Focus groups with peer educators, workshop participants, and parents
7. End-of-program perceived impact survey

# Impact Tracking Tool



- Is Teen PEP being offered as a daily semester-long credit-bearing course?
- How many peer educators are enrolled in Teen PEP?
- When was the peer educator retreat held?
- Which workshops did your Teen PEP group complete so far this year?
- Please indicate the Course Curriculum units you've completed so far this year.
- When was your last Stakeholder Team meeting held?

# TA Observation Forms: Classroom



- Organizational Elements
- Individual Facilitation Skills
- Co-facilitation Skills
- Activity-based Model
- Positive Student Interaction
- Student Engagement
- Content Knowledge
- Overall Impression

# How Implementation Data Inform Action



- Provides evidence to set required program milestones
  - Feasibility of completing five 90-minute sessions
  - Feasibility of obtaining critical mass of 9<sup>th</sup> grader participants at Family Night workshops
- Highlights program challenges and topics to be addressed in a stakeholder team meeting
- Triggers technical assistance and modifications to course pacing

# Impact Data



- Examines the extent to which the participant outcomes you hope to achieve are being met.
- Impact data collected via:
  - Pre-program survey, 6-month follow-up, 18 month-follow-up
  - School records

# Data Scenarios



For the data presented to your group, respond to the following:

1. What is the data showing? Areas of strength? Areas for improvement?
2. What are the implications? What should a program developer consider doing in light of the data?
3. What are some possible limitations of the data?
4. What information is not available, but might be helpful in determining next steps?

# Focus Group & Workshop Evaluation

# Student Sample:



## Focus Groups

- 23 9<sup>th</sup> grade participants from 2 schools that were implementing Teen PEP for the 1<sup>st</sup> time; participants attended at least 4 of the 5 workshops

## Post-Workshop Evaluation

- 321 9<sup>th</sup> grade participants across the same two schools completed post-workshop evaluation forms

# Data: Focus Groups



Of all the content covered by the Teen PEP workshops, the activities focusing on negotiation and refusal tactics were the one content area that was *not* positively received by everyone. Participants in both focus groups were remarkably confident about their ability to resist peer pressure and consequently felt that they did not need to work on these skills as much. A few participants felt the problem with the refusal and negotiation activities was that they were not realistic and difficult to relate to. One student remarked that refusal isn't as easy as the activities make it seem while another student commented that, "*They [the negotiation and refusal activities] were too structured—it's not always like that.*"

# Data: Workshop Evaluation



- **Refusal and Negotiation Skills** – Percent of Students Who Responded with Correct Answer

REFUSAL SKILLS	SCHOOL	
	School A	School B
Step 1: Say “No”	94%	77%
Step 2: Take the Offensive	27%	13%
Step 3: Get Out of It	81%	9%
<b>Average Percent Correct</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>33%</b>
NEGOTIATION SKILLS		
Step 1: Clarify	81%	24%
Step 2: Offer an Alternative	59%	17%
Step 3: Compromise	77%	43%
<b>Average Percent Correct</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>28%</b>

# Small Group Report Out

# How Data Informed Action



- In addition to student data, experience during advisor training illustrated that the Negotiation and Refusal Skills was too complicated.
- We streamlined the activity and combined the negotiation and refusal skills into one set.
  - Say no
  - Say how you feel
  - Compromise or walk away

# Focus Group & Classroom Observation

# Data Sample



## Focus Groups

- *Workshop Participants:* 13 9<sup>th</sup> grade students from 1 school implementing Teen PEP for the 1<sup>st</sup> time
- *Peer Educators:* 12 students from 1 school implementing Teen PEP for the 1<sup>st</sup> time

## Classroom Observations

- Multiple observations to Teen PEP classrooms

# Data: Workshop Participant Focus Group



Many participants noted that the peer educators were not always prepared or engaged in what they were doing, and this negatively impacted participants' experience. According to one respondent, *“We’d have understood it more if they were less bored. Some didn’t seem to know what they were talking about—just reading from a paper.”*

# Data: Peer Educator Focus Group



- *“There’s some wasted time in class—it bothers me that sometimes the faculty advisors haven’t read the packet beforehand. Sometimes maybe they’re supposed to let us decide [what to do] but at other times, they are just unprepared.”*
- *“A lot of times [our faculty advisor] didn’t know what we were supposed to do and nevertheless was often pushing us to do something the wrong way even though it was written down...”*

# Data: Classroom and Workshop Observations



- Advisors spend a significant portion of workshop preparation time going over skits
- The way advisors prepare peer educators for small group activities varies greatly
- Advisors had different interpretations of the directions for how to prepare peer educators
- Pairs of peer educators facilitate small group activities simultaneously, however, groups often facilitate the steps of activities differently

# Small Group Report Out

# How Data Informed Action



- Added technical assistance visits to the school where this was a concern
  - Worked intensively with program advisors to address this issue
- We modified the process used to train advisors
  - Reconfigured the way we recommend preparing for small group facilitation

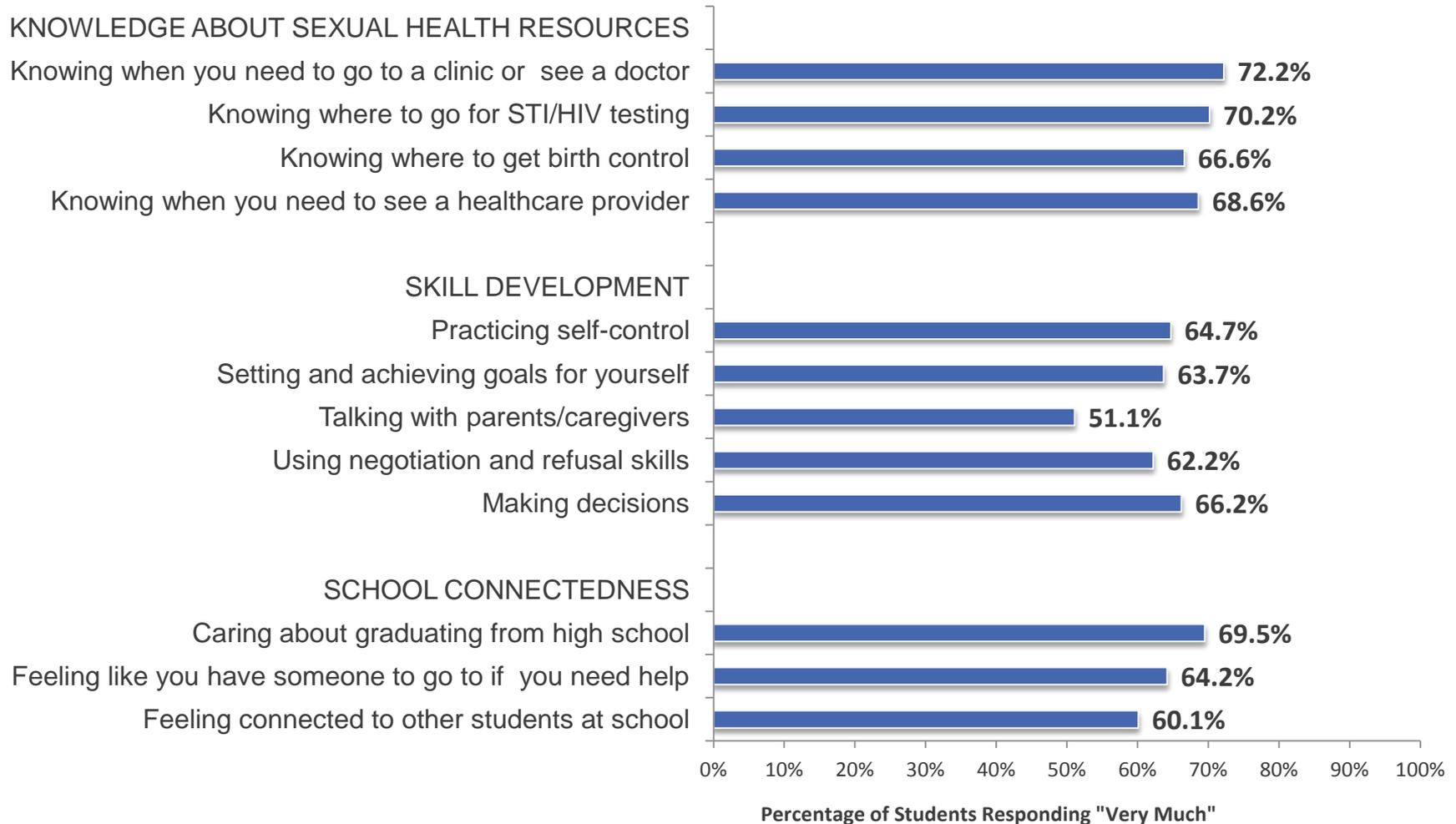
# End of Year Feedback Survey

# Student Sample

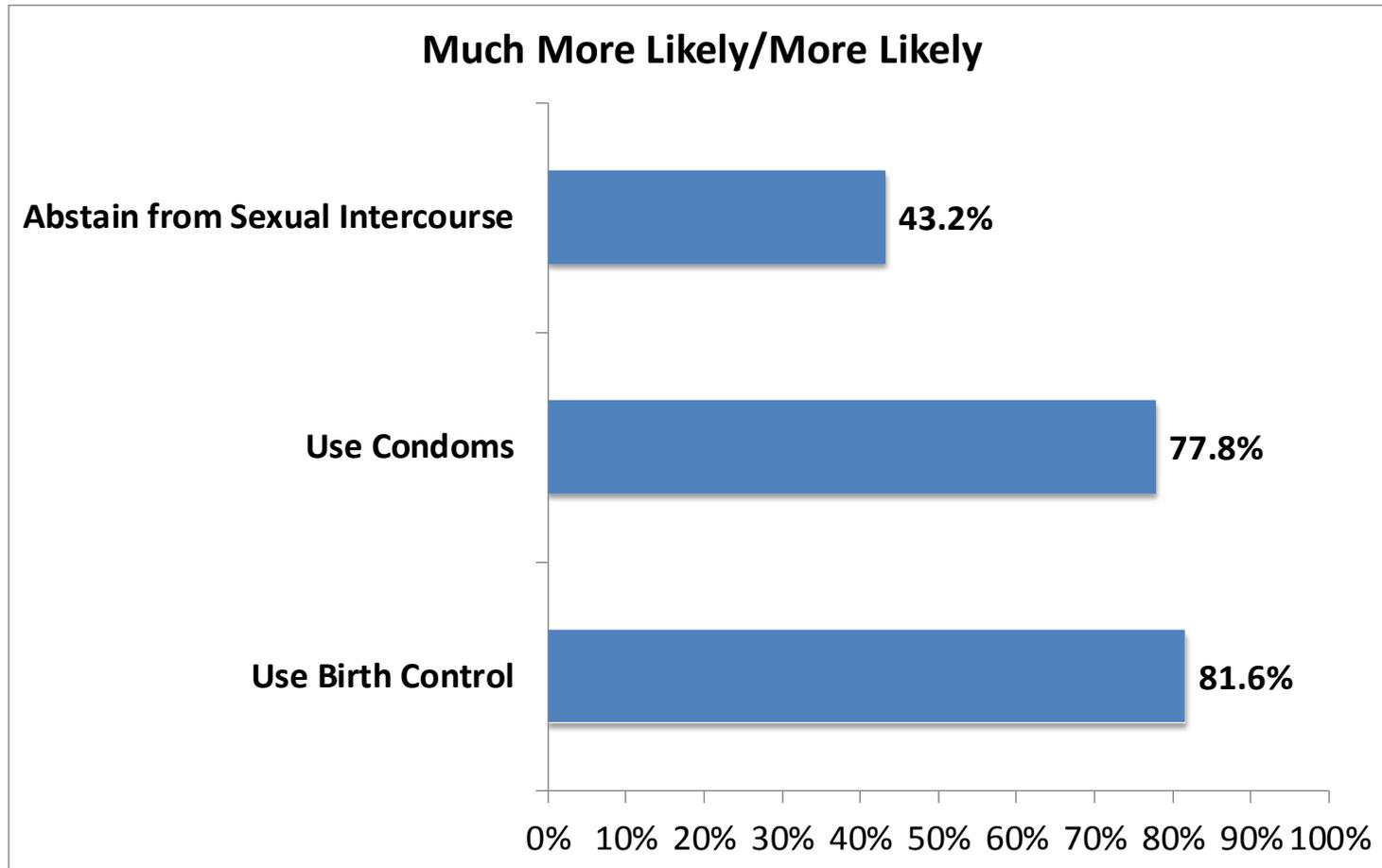


- 1,010 students from 4 NC Teen PEP schools in their first year of implementation
- 46% were females; 54% males
- Average age = 15 years, 0 months
- Ethnicity of participants: 16% Hispanic/Latino
- Race of participants:
  - 46% White
  - 27% Black/African American
  - 12% Multiple Races
  - 5% American Indian/Alaskan Native
  - 3% Asian or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

# Data: End-of-Year Feedback from Workshop Participants



# Benefits of a Peer Education Approach



# Small Group Report Out

# How Data Informed Action



- We shared data with current and potential partner schools
- We continue to strategize for how to increase parent/teen communication
  - Added a parent/teen homework assignment
  - Additional effort to increase attendance at Family Night
  - Social media messages encouraging students to “start the conversation today”
- We are now able to share with potential new school partners that participants report improved school connectedness and increased motivation to graduate

# Data to Inform Action: Recommendations



- Assess what data are already being collected and the purpose served. Think beyond what's required for funders and identify how collecting data can benefit your organization/program
  - What happens to the data collected?
  - In what ways is data shared?
- Assess how you currently make programmatic decisions. What information is used? What information might be helpful to have?

# Data to Inform Action: Recommendations



- Collect some combination of both implementation and impact data
  - Implementation data will tell you what's happening
  - Impact data will demonstrate the impact of your efforts
- Start simple
  - Outcome data can be collected from end-of program surveys as opposed to more sophisticated evaluation designs
- Make use of students or volunteers who can enter data and perform simple calculations

# Reflections

*What is something  
you've heard or thought  
about today that will  
stay with you?*

# Questions?

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# Resources

Teen PEP Website

<http://www.teenpep.org>

Center for Supportive Schools

<http://www.supportiveschools.org>

HiTOPS

<http://www.hitops.org>



*Thank you!*