

NWX-OS-OGC-RKVL

Moderator: Jaclyn Ruiz

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2:00 pm CT

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. Today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time. Thank you, ma'am. You may begin.

Woman: Thank you. Today we'll be interviewing Ms. Jennifer Hart as part of our developer interview series. The Office of Adolescent Health will be hosting a series of interviews with developers of those programs identified by the Department of Health and Human Services Teen Pregnancy Prevention Evidence Review as having shown effectiveness in reducing teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, or sexual risk behaviors.

The goal of these interviews is to ask developers some of the most frequently asked questions by OAH grantees. The Webinar series was developed as a technical assistance product for use with OAH grant programs to provide additional guidance on selecting, planning, and implementing evidence-based programs for teen pregnancy prevention. This Webinar should not be used on its own but as a compliment to various other resources available online. Additional resources are identified later in the PowerPoint presentation.

Please note that inclusion on the HHS TTP evidence review does not indicate HHS or OAH endorsement of a program model.

As I mentioned, today we're interviewing Ms. Jennifer Hart. She is a bilingual public health professional with over 15 years of experience in health issues specific to gender and sexuality as well as sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Jennifer is the director of youth and professional education at Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts where she is responsible for leading the national expansion of Get Real Comprehensive Sex Education Networks, including the Get Real Teacher and Training Institute.

Jennifer's career in education has focused on the stigmatized issues of abortion and HIV/AIDS, teen pregnancy, sexual and gender based violence, and sexual identity and rights both domestically and internationally.

Welcome, Jennifer.

Jennifer Hart: Thank you.

Woman: Can you please briefly describe your program Get Real?

Jennifer Hart: Sure. Get Real Comprehensive Sex Education Networks is an evidence-based, medically accurate, age appropriate, inclusive, comprehensive sexuality education curriculum for middle school students in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade. It's a school-based program evaluated in a largely urban setting with a diverse student population and it's suitable for all teens, regardless of their race; ethnicity; urban, suburban, or rural setting; sexual experience; sexual orientation; or gender identity.

Get Real uses the social-emotional learning approach to teach five social-emotional learning skills. These skills are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and decision-making. We really feel that if young people are better able to negotiate relationships, then they'll be that much more likely to be able to negotiate sexual relationships.

Get Real believes that parents and other caring adults are the primary sexuality educators of their children. While teachers reinforce universal values of health, safety, and access to information, teachers encourage students to go back to their parents and other caring adults for information regarding their community, their family, and personal values about sexuality.

Get Real is taught over 27 lessons. It's nine months per grade and it seeks to delay sexual debut and increased correct and consistent use of protection methods when young people become sexually active. Get Real uses a combination of lecture, group activities, and role plays to deliver the content.

Most importantly, Get Real engages parents and other caring adults through take-home family letters and activities included with each and every lesson. Parent letters and activities are available in multiple languages.

The curriculum also includes resources for linking students to youth-friendly health services. The Get Real curriculum package comes with scenario cards, wall signs and posters, and technology is not required to deliver the curriculum. PPLM has partnered with ETR, a leading national publisher of science-based health promotion curricula and materials, to bring Get Real to schools and afterschool settings across the country.

Woman: Thank you, Jen. That's a lot of information you just shared. I know you mentioned that there's take-home family activities and that they're available in multiple languages. Do you know what languages they're available in, just to share with our grantees?

Jennifer Hart: Oh gosh, there's a whole list of them.

Woman: Okay, so they could go onto your Web site and check that out?

Jennifer Hart: Yes, absolutely -- the basic French, Spanish, Chinese. There's - it's like eighteen or twenty languages that it's been translated into. So - and folks can find that on Getrealeducation.org.

Woman: Okay, awesome. And just so everybody knows, that link is on the PowerPoint presentation in case they need to access it.

Can you talk a little bit about the previous evaluation results?

Jennifer Hart: Sure. Get Real, when taught with fidelity, exposes each student to twenty-seven lessons, as I mentioned -- nine lessons in each of the middle school grades of sixth, seventh, and eighth. And as evidenced in the formative evaluation that we did where each student received a dose of only one year of the program, positive effects on knowledge were obtained.

And similarly, in the impact evaluation, outcomes were seen despite some youth who weren't able to attend all the lessons. So at the end of eighth grade, we saw that 16% fewer boys and 15% fewer girls had sex compared to their peers who did not take Get Real. Additionally, Get Real is one of only a few middle school programs that reduces risky sexual behavior for both boys and girls.

And for boys, in particular, this is really cool. Family involvement showed an added effect on delaying sex. So boys who completed the Get Real take-home activities in sixth grade were more likely to delay sex in the eighth grade than boys who did not complete those activities. And we feel like this statistic highlights the promising long term effects of Get Real.

Woman: Thanks. And you mentioned a lot already about where this program was evaluated with - and I just sort of want to clarify. So the population that it was evaluated with -- were they culturally diverse?

Jennifer Hart: Yes. So Get Real so far has been selected by nearly 200 students in Massachusetts, Ohio, New York, Rhode Island, and Texas. It was evaluated in an urban area with a student population that was 52% female, with 53% of the students who identified as black, 28% white, and 33% Hispanic.

Further evaluation has yet to be conducted, of course, to examine Get Real's effect on subgroups; however anecdotal evidence from teachers in the classroom tells us that Get Real is particularly welcoming for LGBTQ students.

Woman: I'm just going to skip over the target population because it seems as if it's all-inclusive.

Jennifer Hart: Yes.

Woman: I will ask to go - if you could just expand upon a little bit the evaluated settings and maybe any other settings that you think the program may be applicable for.

Jennifer Hart: Sure. Get Real's best suited, really, for in-school classrooms, whether they're public, private, or charter school classrooms. But we've also seen success in implementation with fidelity in afterschool settings as well.

Woman: So while adaptations require OAH prior approval, it can be helpful for organizations to get a sense of previous adaptations that have been successfully implemented. Can you expand on any of these adaptations?

Jennifer Hart: Sure. So PPLM understands the unique needs of school systems, administrators, teachers, parents, and students; and offers options for adapting lessons to meet some of these needs through Get Real's adaptation guidelines. These adaptations are categorized in three ways -- green light, yellow light, and red light adaptations.

Green light adaptations are minor adjustments that can be made while still implementing the program with fidelity. These adaptations don't impact the core components of the program and are encouraged when they're necessary to improve effectiveness of the curriculum with its audience of young people. OAH, as you know and as some of our listeners may know, considers green light adaptations to be minor adaptations and are allowed.

Yellow light adaptations should be implemented with caution and only if absolutely necessary. These adaptations may or may not change fidelity and program outcomes depending on the situation in which they're implemented.

And lastly, red light adaptations significantly change the core components, the content, or the delivery of the curriculum, and should not be implemented. OAH considers yellow and red light adaptations to be major adaptations and are discouraged.

As it relates to Get Real, the green and yellow light adaptations for Get Real include implementing Get Real in an out-of-school environment, staggering the grades, incorporating relevant technology and media references, or substituting the condom lineup or the video for the condom demonstration.

Red light adaptations that just are not allowed include eliminating information on condoms and other forms of birth control, including their associated activities -- eliminating role plays and eliminating parent involvement.

And folks can find more information on these and other green, yellow, and red light adaptations for Get Real on our adaptation guidelines, which can be found on ETR's Get Real Web site. And they can also feel free to contact OAH directly to talk through these and any other adaptations that may not be in the guidelines. We really want to be able to work with educators as much as possible so that young people can participate in Get Real.

Woman: Thank you, Jen. And I'm probably going to throw a little wrench in this, but I know you mentioned that afterschool community-based programs were potential settings, at least in the last slide, where the program can be implemented. But I know on this slide you said it's a yellow light.

So if somebody's listening to this and they haven't been - they're not a grantee just yet, they're thinking about applying, or maybe applying in the future, is this something they can call you guys up and talk through before making that decision?

Jennifer Hart: Sure, absolutely. Some of the considerations around afterschool settings or community-based programs really isn't around youth retention. The school setting provides the classroom everyday on a regular basis, every week on a regular basis. But the community-based programs can feel out of fluctuation

of youth coming in and out. So that's why it's a yellow light. We just want to make sure that the group is going to remain cohesive throughout the nine weeks of lessons.

Woman: Thank you for that information. Can you describe any staffing recommendations you have for the program?

Jennifer Hart: Yes, and the staffing and the training considerations is where Get Real is unique. So this is really important information for folks to consider.

Of course, Get Real is taught by people who can connect with youth. Many times we see math, P.E, science, health, or English teachers -- even school social workers or guidance counselors -- who find themselves in our training. And we welcome anyone who's interested in the sexuality education of young people.

PPLM believes very strongly that the completion of effective research-based training through ETR's distributive learning process is the key to educators being able to implement Get Real with fidelity, which then maximizes the impact for the young people who participate in the program.

Because of this, each curriculum purchase is bundled with training. Educators planning to implement Get Real are required to attend training through the Get Real Training of the Educator process, or TOE process. The TOE process consist of a self-paced online course of approximately ten to twelve hours followed by a two-day in-person training, and then two twenty-minute follow-up sessions.

The Get Real TOE process trains teachers to implement the curriculum, ensuring that they're familiar with the program content and have the necessary

knowledge and skills to become confident and comfortable teaching skills-based comprehensive sexuality education to middle school students.

Teachers who complete the training are eligible for continuing education credits, and the teacher's guide for each grade was created to provide teachers with additional facts, ways to address potential challenges, strategies for engaging students, and useful resources. And there's also ongoing support through an online community, updated materials, and additional resources that's also available.

It's important to note that Get Real's curriculum is always bundled with training and it's not sold by itself. Additionally, the online course cannot be completed on its own without the two-day in-person training. All participants must complete the entire Training of the Educator process in order to teach Get Real.

Then we have our Get Real Training of the Trainer process, or TOT process, which is a five-day, in-person training. TOT participants must have completed a Get Real Training of the Educator process prior to attending a training of the trainer.

With inclusion of Get Real on the Health and Human Service list we know that some organizations will be interested in having staff trained as trainers in Get Real in order to train the educators implementing Get Real as part of their funded project. Trainers who complete the Get Real Training of the Trainer process will be given permission to deliver the Get Real Training of the Educator process to the partners in their funded program or affiliate area. And this will be defined further by a Get Real training TOT non-competitive agreement.

Training considerations that folks need to keep in mind include remembering, again, that the curriculum is bundled with the Training of the Educator process. The cost for the TOE and curriculum is \$1400 per participant, not including travel and accommodations. The Get Real TOE process is offered regionally and onsite. So if a group has ten or more educators needing to get trained, we can come to you. And if not, if you don't have ten educators, then you'll look for a TOE in a region near you.

The TOT is \$3200 per participant, and just remember that the Get Real Training of the Educator is a prerequisite for the Training of the Trainer. And more information, of course, on getting registered for a Get Real training can be found on ETR's Web site at the link provided on the slide.

Woman: Thank you. Can you describe some of the implementation challenges that you're aware of and any possible strategies to overcome those challenges?

Jennifer Hart: Sure, that's a great question. So PPLM will work with organizations experiencing challenges to help identify the most effective ways to successfully implement Get Real. Some schools, for example, don't have a traditional sixth, seventh, or eighth grade structure. And some schools have forty-five minute classes versus others that have a ninety-minute block class structure.

Some schools we've seen have been able to offer the sixth grade lessons in seventh grade, the seventh grade lessons in eighth grade, and the eighth grade lessons in ninth grade. In schools with a ninety-minute block class structure, two forty-five minute lessons can be taught back to back with fidelity if necessary.

Some additional challenges schools or organizations face are teacher turnover and the need for ongoing training. One recommendation we have for folks is to send one of their representatives from their school organization to a Get Real Training of the Trainer. The caveat there is, again, to remember that that representative must have been through a Get Real Training of the Educator process and ideally would have taught the curriculum.

Also, folks can take advantage of our technical assistance follow-up sessions or purchase a technical assistance package. Get Real's Web site, in addition -- Getrealeducation.org -- offers ongoing teacher only access to digital lesson plans, student workbook activities, frequently asked questions with answers, parent letters, and family activities translated in those multiple languages that we referred to earlier, videos of lessons taught with fidelity, and a whole host of carefully selected resources in the teacher's resources section of the site.

And educators can also find support from each other on our Web site in the discussion forum, and get the latest information and news from the Get Real blogs.

Woman: Thank you for that. Can you discuss any recent or planned revisions to the program?

Jennifer Hart: Sure. So as you can see from the slide, PPLM recently revised the Get Real curriculum following our impact evaluation in 2013 in preparation for distribution of the curriculum through our publishing partner ETR. Our future plans include reviewing the curriculum for medical accuracy every three years, and we'll do this in-house at PPLM.

Additionally, Get Real teachers of course have ongoing access to the latest information on changes and information about sexual health, and the Get Real curriculum via Getrealeducation.org.

Woman: Thank you. I just want to note that while PPLM has their own medical accuracy review process, that is not the same as the OAH medical accuracy process. So the grantees will still have to submit their documents to OAH for medical accuracy review. I just wanted to point that out, so thank you.

On slide thirteen you'll find some additional information on Get Real - the resources I had mentioned earlier. You'll see the access to the implementation report, the link to the Get Real Web site, as well as the link to ETR's Web site for the Get Real program.

And then on slide fourteen, you'll find references for the evaluation studies that were mentioned earlier as well.

We hope that these resources in conjunction with today's Webinar will provide a comprehensive understanding of this evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention program and will assist you in making not only an informed decision on which evidence-based program to select for your community, but how to best prepare for and implement this program.

Jennifer, do you have any final words?

Jennifer Hart: No. I just want to thank you for the opportunity, and PPLM is so excited to be included on the HHS list of evidence-based programs. So we're thankful for this opportunity. Thank you.

Woman: Thank you. And I just also want to mention - very last slide does have your contact information in case anybody wants to reach out and have additional questions that weren't addressed today.

Thank you so much.

Jennifer Hart: Thank you.

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