

NWX-OS-OGC-RKVL

Moderator: Jaclyn Ruiz
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12:30 pm CT

Coordinator: Thank you. Just want to inform all participants that today's call is being recorded. If you have any objections you may disconnect at this time. You may now begin your conference.

Woman: Thank you. Today we'll be interviewing Christina Donald 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 by the technical assistance project for use with OAH grant programs to provide additional guidance on selecting, planning and implementing an evidence-based program for teen pregnancy prevention. This Webinar should not be used on its own, but as a complement to various other resources available online.

Additional resources are identified later in this PowerPoint presentation. Please note that inclusion on the HHS TPP Evidence Review does not imply endorsement from OAH and program selection is up to grantees. As I mentioned, today we're interviewing Donald - Christina Donald is the Senior director for Wyman National Network Partner Services.

She has worked with Wyman since early 2000. During her time there she has held several team manager positions and supervised many of Wyman's local programs. She has served as a master training instructor since 2001 and in that capacity has trained a multitude of (views) for professionals in the TOP approach across the nation. In her current role she was responsible for leading the team that trains and supports Wyman's national partners to provide the Teen Outreach Program with fidelity and quality standards. Welcome Christina.

Christina Donald: Thank you.

Woman: So can you please briefly describe the program TOP?

Christina Donald: Sure. Absolutely. So Wyman's Teen Outreach Program is our nine-month program where we work to help young people achieve three programmatic goals. Those three goals are healthy behaviors, life skills, and sense of purpose.

This program is really geared towards teens who are in - they are grades 6 through 12. Some of the core components are the positive adult guidance and support. We have an implementation ready curriculum that is known as Changing Scenes and community service learning is also one of the core components to the program.

TOP is typically delivered during 90-minute sessions where a facilitator leads teens through group discussions utilizing the Changing Scenes curriculum and/or their community service learning experiences. Teens are expected to acquire a minimum of 20 hours of service learning and we work to maintain ratios of around 25 teens for each trained facilitator within the program.

Woman: Van you expand a little bit - actually I have one follow-up question. I just want to make sure I heard correctly. You said it's 90-minute sessions?

Christina Donald: Sixty-minutes. So approximately one hour. So typically, usually the length of a class period for those who are implemented school or up to about 60 minutes in other settings.

Woman: Oh okay. Thank you for that clarification. And are there any technology requirements to go deliver the program?

Christina Donald: So we do have a pre and post survey that we implement with the teens in the program and that's done electronically typically. So there is a need for Internet access. We do however, maintain a process for completing those surveys via paper if our partners do not have access to the Internet.

Woman: Okay great. Can you talk a little bit about your previous evaluation results?

Christina Donald: Sure. Absolutely. So TOP has two major evaluations, studies that were conducted. The first one was in 1997 by Dr. (Joseph Allen) and team.

This one was really geared towards the teens who were participating at that time. They were in the grades 9 through 12, both males and females, but largely African-American. That - the results of that evaluation study demonstrated that the teens who completed the nine-month program, at the

end of that program they showed a 42% lower risk of school suspension, a 39% lower risk of course failure and a 41% lower risk of pregnancy.

Then we have our second major evaluation study that was conducted in 2001 again with Dr. (Allen) and this time also with Susan Silverberg. And that again was largely grades 9 through 12 -- both male and female -- but this time the study was more racially and ethnically diverse. The results came in again for teens who completed the nine-month program and all the core components including that minimum of 20 hours of service.

At the end of nine months they finished demonstrated a 42% lower risk of school suspension, 60% lower risk of course failure and a 43% lower risk of pregnancy.

Woman: Could you expand a little bit upon the findings in terms of for any follow-up studies done three months or six months post the intervention?

Christina Donald: Mm-hmm. So during the path of those studies there was not any follow-up done for post intervention. So these results are specific to the very end of that nine month program cycle.

Woman: Okay. Thank you for that clarification.

Christina Donald: Sure.

Woman: And can you expand a little bit about the population that the intervention was evaluated with and also what recommendations TOP may have for other populations of the intervention could be appropriate for?

Christina Donald: Sure. So the populations -- that for the latest findings in 2001 -- was really a diverse group of teens. So these were teens from a variety of different socioeconomic circumstances, a variety of different racial backgrounds. Again in the high school grades, so grades 9 through 12. There were African-American, Latino-American, males and females. So just really a real diverse group.

And so what we're finding even now as we continue to engage in implementing the program is that really the program is successful for teens from a variety of different backgrounds. But those in particular that show some of those already engaging in some of those higher-risk activities or risk behaviors that the outcomes are even more outstanding for those teens.

Woman: Sounds good. And it seems here on the slide that you also referenced - because I know that you said that it worked on a nice ethnically diverse population in the second study -- that you sort of added tribal and other immigrant populations that may be in the community.

Christina Donald: Yes. Absolutely. And so kind of we have partners who are implementing TOP again in a very diverse way across various populations here. And so we do have partners who are showing great success with teens who are from different backgrounds -- in both open and rural and then also in tribal settings. We have a partner that implements TOPS on the reservation in fact.

Woman: And how about the settings in which the program is being implemented? Can you expand upon not only the evaluated setting that the intervention was studied in but also other recommendations for other settings that the program, may be implemented in?

Christina Donald: Sure. For that 2001 study the settings again vary. So they evaluate teams who were receiving TOPS both in school and after school as well as in community event settings. Currently we have over 60 partners across the nation and again the studies vary.

So we have partners who implement in school, after school, again community event settings. But we also have partners who are implementing TOP within juvenile justice systems such as at detention centers. We have partners who are implementing TOP in the foster care system -- so both in residential foster care and just in other community areas where they're focusing on teens who are in the foster care system. And so we're finding that TOP is able to really work within all of those settings quite fluidly.

Woman: And this is going to lead nicely into our discussion about adaptations. While adaptations require OH prior approval and at a times approval by a developer it can be helpful for organizations to get a sense for previous adaptations that have been successfully implemented. Can you please provide some examples of the types of adaptations that are allowable?

Christina Donald: Sure. So typically we allow adaptations based off of the teen need. Not necessarily based off of the need of the adults or the systems or the structure. And so what we find is that when our partners are implementing TOP in settings such as the juvenile justice and foster care settings, the time of day that they actually have access to the teens varies.

And so in many of those settings it's usually a four to six-month stretch and so we've allowed for some adaptation around that nine-month dose based off the need of the teens. And so what we require for partners that are interested in adapting the core components of the program is that they apply for that. There is a process where they would apply for the adaptation. They of course would

first need approval from their funder and then those applications are reviewed by our Senior Vice President of Knowledge Management who then works with that potential partner to make the determination as to whether or not the adaptation would be allowed.

So we are seeing currently now some strong outcomes. Again just preliminary with some of our partners with strong outcome of the success of TOP in those settings with those sort of shortened but intensified dosage. So if they're shortening that nine-month period typically then they will meet more frequently so that they're still able to achieve the 20 hours of community service learning as well as engage the teens in the core curriculum which is the Changing Scenes curriculum.

Woman: If a grantee is thinking about implementing TOPs and is questioning whether they'll be able to implement it in nine months and considering if it's appropriate to shorten the time frame for implementation would it be wise for them to contact Wyman before even going through sort of the formal process?

Christina Donald: Absolutely. We are more than willing and will be happy to discuss that process with anyone and just field those questions. Because we know that, you know, when you're thinking about that there's a lot of questions that come up regarding the setting and (unintelligible) just looks like for the team. So people should absolutely feel free to reach out to us directly.

Woman: Thank you, Christina. Can you describe any staffing recommendations you have for implementations as well as any training opportunities that are provided?

Christina Donald: Sure. And so here on the site we have staffing considerations that we put out as recommended, particularly around that level of work experience with a

Bachelor's degree and a minimum of one-year experience of working with teens.

Our core consideration for the program with staff and it's really more around that ratio. We want to make sure that there is no more than a 1 to 25 ratio as far as trained facilitator to teen ratio. The training that we offer, once a partner joins our network they typically send a representative to our master training which is called the training of trainers. That is a five-day training where the trainers learn - really take - are able to take a really in-depth look at Wyman's Teen Outreach Program, really understand the core components, the evidence, the evaluation and then the success to implementing that program with teens.

Then they are also prepared to train others. So they participate in a five-day training and then they go back to their organization and they train their facilitators so those folks who are responsible for directly implementing the program with the teens in the TOP approach. And so that training of facilitators is a 2-1/2 day training.

And so again facilitators are immersed the Changing Scenes curriculum and understanding how community service learning is really integrated into the program and just really understanding their role and their part that they play in the success of the program.

Woman: Can I just - I have a follow-up question. So I know Wyman does the training of the trainers. If an organization wants also from their facilitators to Wyman is that something Wyman can do?

Christina Donald: Yes. Great follow-up question. Absolutely. Some of our partners do prefer that we train their facilitators. And so it typically looks like a (unintelligible) and we still require that there is at least one trainer on staff at the organization

so that they could support with technical assistance and just really that good look quality of implementation so that they understand what's really expected of the facilitators.

But then they also can send facilitators here to participate in that first part of the training which is that 2-1/2 day training literally focused on the facilitation of the program.

Woman: Okay thank you. Can you describe any implementation challenges that you're aware of and if possible any strategies that you've known organizations to use to overcome those challenges?

Christina Donald: Sure. One of the most common - and I should back up and just say real quickly that we also maintain a very close working relationship with each of our partners. So once they're done with that training they are assigned a Partner Services Representative who is responsible for ensuring that all of their technical assistance needs are met.

And so one of the things that we typically get questions around or really requests around and for technical assistance is just this communications (unintelligible) communications and by and across all levels of a partner's network.

So depending on the setting and the environment that a partner is implementing TOP in there could be a variety of challenges just with getting everyone brought in to, you know, a nine-month program where they, you know, are engaging teens in usually offsite community service oriented experiences that sort of (thing).

And so we really counsel our partners to start very early in the process to make sure that you have plans to meet with all your key stakeholders (unintelligible) specific to the population that you're working with, you know.

If you're going into a school system you want to make sure that not only the superintendent and principals are on board and they fully understand all the elements and components of the program, but you want to make sure that their teachers understand all the elements and the components and the importance of the program and how it really can help support them with their academic goals and success with the team.

(Assignments) in a community setting. If you're in an after school setting and there are other programs that are occurring at the same time or as a part of that program you want to make sure that everyone who really is a part of that after school program understands what TOP is and what it will look like and why teens are going offsite for service activities, that sort of thing. And so we typically have been trying to helping our partners develop those tools and understanding how to start with that process.

Woman: Thank you. Can you talk a little bit about any recent or planned revisions to the program?

Christina Donald: Sure. So the curriculum itself goes through a review annually for medical accuracy. We've also just recently -- in conjunction with one of our partners -- revised or translated the curriculum into a Spanish language version.

We are currently in the process of making some revisions just so that we have a stronger focus on the LGBTQ youth and inclusivity of that population. And then we are in the process right now of updating to ensure and maintain clinical rep- ref- I can't say that word today.

Woman: I completely hear you. I just want to sort of note for any grantee that's listening that just like adaptation approval there is a protocol for medical accuracy review in OAH. And if you have any questions about that, please make sure to contact your (unintelligible) officer for additional information.

So on Slide 12 you'll find some additional resources on TOP and 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. Christina any final words?

Christina Donald: No I would just encourage all of you if you have any questions please feel free to reach out to Wyman directly. We will be more than happy to support you and assist you as you explore whether or not to implement Wyman's teen outreach program.

Woman: Thank you for that. And we definitely encourage our grantees to look at the resources available online and if there are any questions reach out to the Wyman Center to make sure that their questions are answered.

They're the ones who developed this program. They're the ones who assist with this program so they would be a wealth of knowledge obviously about the program. So thank you again so much Christina for taking time today to put this information together and present it to our grantees. I know they'll find this information incredibly helpful.

Christina Donald: Of course and thank you for making us a part of this and allowing this resource to be made available to the potential grantees. Thank you.

Woman: Our pleasure. Operator can you please end the recording at this time?

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