

EVALUATION ABSTRACT: THE EVALUATION OF WISE GUYS, MALE RESPONSIBILITY CURRICULUM IN IREDELL-STATESVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA

Grantee

Grantee Name: Children's Home Society of North Carolina
Project Lead: Rick Brown
Email address: rbrown@chsnc.org

Evaluator

Evaluator's Organization: Abt Associates
Evaluator Lead: Donna Elliston
Email address: Donna_Elliston@abtassoc.com

Intervention Name

Wise Guys Male Responsibility Curriculum (Wise Guys)

Intervention Description

Wise Guys is a male-focused sexuality education curriculum delivered through 45-minute sessions, once a week for 10 to 12 weeks. The weekly session topics are reproductive anatomy and pregnancy, values, fatherhood, goal-setting, decision making, communication, healthy relationships, intimate partner violence, human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), contraception, and abstinence. Individual lessons employ a variety of methods including games and quizzes, role plays, small-group projects, guided discussion, brainstorming, and ranking exercises. Intervention activities are based on the body of research concerning male cognitive development and socialization issues. The program will be delivered specifically to males enrolled in grades 9 to 11 at high schools in Iredell-Statesville Schools and neighboring districts, facilitated by a Children's Home Society health educator and supported by an Iredell-Statesville Schools site coordinator. These staff receive ongoing staff development as prescribed by the intervention plan.

Comparison Condition

Business as usual

Comparison Condition Description

Youth in the comparison group will not receive any portion of Wise Guys; however, youth in both the comparison and the intervention groups receive the "Making Responsible Life Choices" (MRLC) curriculum from Iredell-Statesville Schools to fulfill the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's comprehensive sexual health education requirement. Physical education and health education teachers deliver the program as part of the required physical education class to all 9th graders. MRLC is a modified form of the fourth edition of the "Making Proud Choices!" curriculum, consisting of seven one-hour sessions on abstinence and reducing the risk of STDs and pregnancy.

Behavioral Outcomes

Condom use, sexual initiation, contraceptive use, unprotected vaginal or penile sex, frequency of sex, and number of sexual partners. Data will be collected on these outcomes, but not analyzed due to the shortened project period.

Non-behavioral Outcomes

Intention for condom use, intention to delay sexual initiation, and intention for contraceptive use. Data will be collected on these outcomes, but not analyzed due to the shortened project period.

Sample and Setting

This evaluation will take place in school during a free period, in six high schools of Iredell County and neighboring counties in North Carolina. Male students in 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades in the five study schools will be recruited to participate in the evaluation. To be eligible for the study, participants have to be enrolled in the 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade; have parental consent; and provide assent. The evaluation plans to enroll 600 youth.

Research Design and Data Collection

The research design is an individual randomized controlled trial. At the beginning of each semester for four semesters, male youth in the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades will be recruited to participate in the evaluation. Interested male youth will be asked for assent and will receive parental consent forms to take home to their parents or guardians for review and signature. After signed assent and parental consent forms are returned, students will receive a baseline survey during an in-school session before the start of the intervention. After baseline surveys are complete, the evaluation team will assign youth to the Wise Guys intervention group or the comparison group using R-data analysis software.

Youth in both the intervention and comparison groups will receive a baseline survey and an immediate post-intervention survey. The evaluation team will conduct in-person web-based surveys primarily via REDCap for both survey points, complemented with pencil-and-paper surveys to mitigate for any unanticipated issues with electronic data collection (such as connectivity issues). If youth are not in school for the follow-up surveys, the program staff will contact youth via telephone or email to complete a web-based survey. Because the evaluation team only receives de-identified data, the program staff will provide student ID numbers matched to student emails indicating where web-based surveys should be sent. The study will produce an implementation evaluation that describes program fidelity, attendance, dosage, quality, and the broader context. After each session, the facilitators will complete an attendance log and a fidelity log. The evaluation team will randomly select 10 percent of all sessions to conduct a quality and fidelity observation.

Schedule/Timeline

Sample enrollment and baseline data collection began in September 2016 and ends in February 2018. The immediate post-intervention follow-up data collection began in November 2016 ends in May 2018.