



SUPPORTING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Program Type: Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education.

Agency and Location: UBA/Montefiore Medical Center, Bronx, New York.

Population Served: Low-income families and couples who are raising or expecting children.

Program Description: Montefiore Medical Center’s Supporting Healthy Relationships (SHR) program, located in the Bronx, delivers healthy-marriage services for married couples and services on healthy relationships more generally for married and unmarried couples. SHR aims to meet the myriad of relationship, family, economic and other social service needs of couples raising children and/or expecting a child in the Bronx. The program also provides employment services, supplemental activities, intensive services for distressed couples, and supportive case management.

Following an initial intake assessment, couples take core marriage and relationship education (MRE) workshops with a cohort at Montefiore, which run for 30 hours over 12 consecutive weeks. Services are offered in English and Spanish. After couples complete the MRE curriculum, they begin phase two, attending monthly supplemental workshops. Montefiore offers intensive services to couples who meet criteria for being “distressed.” These services include core marriage and relationship education workshops, targeted supplemental workshops on topics such as on parenting and stress management, and walk-in supportive crisis services. In addition, couples are referred to couples’ treatment when appropriate.

Results: UBA/Montefiore was one of two Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education programs included in a rigorous, large-scale healthy marriage impact study, [Parents and Children Together](#) (PACT) study, conducted by Mathematica Policy Research for ACF. PACT found that UBA/Montefiore and the Healthy Opportunities for Marriage Enrichment Program, at the El Paso Center for Children in El Paso, Texas:

- Improved couples’ commitment, supportiveness, and affection.
- Helped couples avoid destructive conflict behaviors.
- Increased the likelihood that couples were married at the one-year follow-up.
- Improved couples’ co-parenting relationships.

Program Perspective: “What keeps a relationship healthy is the quality of emotional connection between partners. SHR provided us with the tools to enhance our communication, sharing our innermost hopes, fears, and dreams. After attending these workshops, we noticed a significant improvement in our connection. The exercises helped to prevent frequent arguments. SHR provides an environment to learn, grow, and evolve to a higher level of awareness, promoting intimacy and a greater capacity for love.”—Chenier Rivers (2017 graduate with her partner, Bradley Ferrance)

Federal Funding Stream Used: Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education grants, Office of Family Assistance, Administration for Children and Families (HHS)

For More Information: Dr. Traci Maynigo, 718-401-5050, tmaynigo@montefiore.org

