

Relationship Skills Case Study

Organization:	Relationship Skills Center (RSC), Sacramento, CA
URL:	www.SkillsCenter.org
Program Name:	Flourishing Families
Funding:	Healthy Marriage Grant (OFA)
Curricula used:	Love Notes
Population:	All single parents
Audience Demographics:	<p>Gender: male 11%, female 89%.</p> <p>Education Level: participants range in education level from bachelor's and master's degrees to no high school diploma, and in some cases very little reading ability. The curriculum and instruction methods used need to work for everyone.</p> <p>Income: the majority of the participants have a household income less than 200% of poverty level.</p> <p>Primary Ethnicity: 38% African American, 33% Hispanic, 17% Caucasian, 6% multiracial, and 7% other.</p> <p>Age: 18-24: 18%; 25-34: 49%; 35+: 33%.</p>
Class size:	Classes range in size from 10 to 30 participants.
Instructors:	Relationship Skills Center Staff
Location of instruction:	Classes are held at Family Resource Centers and are located in areas accessible by public transit and near freeways.
Length of instruction (number of sessions and hours per session):	15 hours across 3 Saturdays, from 10 AM to 4:30 PM.

<p>Instructors Training Protocol:</p>	<p>New instructor training and orientation includes observing a full class, formal training in protocols and procedures such as domestic violence, and a less formal review of the Love Notes outlines and materials with time to discuss how they handle different sections of the curriculum.</p> <p>Typically instructors spend at least 24 hours in formal training, not including time the instructors spend on their own working through the material prior to starting their first class. Most instructors are also cross-trained in the communication skills curriculum, which requires an additional 32 hours of observation and formal training.</p>
<p>Utilization of teacher and student materials:</p>	<p>They use the participant journals to support the main topics they cover. Each participant can then use the journal on the remaining topics at their own pace. The interactive portions of the curriculum are very important for the parents they work with, and they provide as many different ways to explore the course content as possible, including Play-Doh, pipe-cleaners, and other art and craft supplies.</p>
<p>Program Recruitment Process:</p>	<p>RSC regularly recruits at organizations such as WIC offices, Department of Human Assistance offices, food banks and other community organizations serving families. RSC also receives referrals from over 60 community organizations.</p>
<p>Incentives to teachers and students:</p>	<p>They provide childcare, lunch or dinner, snacks, coffee, and a \$50 per parent Walmart, Target or utility bill gift card when participants graduate.</p>
<p>Outcomes:</p>	<p>87% of graduates attending single parent's relationship classes reported less yelling when arguing.</p> <p>91% of graduates attending single parent's relationship classes reported an increase in their understanding of the warning signs of a dangerous relationship.</p>
<p>Challenges:</p>	<p>Reaching participants and getting them to class is always the greatest challenge. Incentives help, as does reaching out through phone calls, emails, text messages, postcards, etc. It takes time, and it's helpful to understand this challenge when a teacher is starting out.</p>
<p>Tips:</p>	<p>Pick a few key sections or activities and focus on them. Avoid lecturing through large numbers of PowerPoint slides or lecture sections. The more hands-on the activity, the better (the participants love the sculpture activity with Play Doh, pipe cleaners, etc.).</p>