

Case Study

PREP - Garfield County, CO

Organization: Family Visitor Programs

URL: www.garfieldcountyprep.org

Program Name: Garfield County PREP

Funding: CO Department of Human Services; PREP Pregnancy Prevention funding.

What problem is being solved?

Reduce teen pregnancy, STI, and abortion rates. (PREP) AND provide healthy relationship education. The county has high drug use, suicide, domestic violence, and teen pregnancy rates. Love Notes gives an opportunity to encourage Adult-Child Communication with a trusted adult connections activities and to learn healthy life skills especially in regards to relationships. For some families the problem is they don't have the knowledge or tools to provide this info or these skills or recognize how parental choices affect a child's health, success in life and more.

Curricula used: [Love Notes](#)

Curricula benefits: *Love Notes* is used for **adult preparation topics** under the PREP grant to include adult child communication and healthy life skills. *Love Notes* is layered with other EBP pregnancy prevention programs that are delivered in middle and high schools.

It specifically addresses the need for youth to have a trusted adult with whom they can discuss **sensitive topics** around relationships, domestic/dating violence, and expectations.

In order to make a plan for healthier choices going forward, participants evaluate past and current relationships in a safe and nonjudgmental environment.

Young people learn to see how parents' choices affect the child and can begin creating a plan to chart a better future for their children. Pertinent statistics are included to bolster concepts but the program is not statistics heavy. Skill acquisition and relationship awareness are the key components.

Target Audience:	High School students
Audience Demographics:	Mountain rural community, Caucasian and Hispanic and boys and girls a pretty even split, 15-19 yr. olds
Location of instruction:	Alternative high schools
Class size:	10 to 12 per class.
Program setting:	Health class
Length of instruction:	70 min. 2x a week for 6 weeks (one trimester), including an after school movie, pizza night.
Instructors:	Instructors included Family Visitor Program facilitator, a schoolteacher, and an advocate from domestic violence shelter.
Student workbooks:	Folders were kept in a tote at school and used in classes. There were some students who took workbooks with them and brought back. When they'd forget, they were disappointed. The facilitator encouraged them to think of the workbook as a tool they could utilize repeatedly, throughout their lives.
Program recruitment:	Students choose class as a health credit.
Program Retention:	Very high retention and this was not typical of the school. <i>Love Notes</i> encouraged students to attend class every day of class because they were engaged and didn't want to miss the information. The students said "it was because they were having real conversations."
Incentives to students:	Incentives –Pass/Fail Health Credit, provided food and snacks during the showing of Antwone Fisher movie and offered credit for 2 unexcused absences in return for attending special movie night.
Observable outcomes:	Throughout the classes, youth could be heard making audible comments such as, 'hmm, interesting', 'this helps me know I'm in a good relationship', and other aha moments related to their own relationship experiences or those around them. They commented that the <i>True Colors</i> activity was accurate; sometimes blowing them away with how spot on it was. The impact that <i>Read Aloud</i> activities such as the <i>Appointment with Love</i> and <i>Reflections</i> as well as the <i>ScenariosUSA</i> films was felt through their exclamations and the conversations of what they liked more about one over the other. There was no 'dogging' of the pieces as being outdated or not representative

of their peers and situations.

Youth were very engaged both in the activities and the conversations. So much so that it was difficult to fit all the material in to each lesson.

Unique Implementation:

Love Notes was delivered in a stand-alone class in an alternative high school. Other connections for the PREP Program Manager on the topics of condoms, 'sex' related questions, concerns and the Advocate Safehouse Project Outreach Coordinator for dating and domestic violence issues were provided in a safe environment when youth were not necessarily in a state of crisis.

Challenges:

Time was the challenge as in having enough time to provide all info while encouraging conversation and participation. For example, due to another evidence based sex ed. class offered at the school, we considered skipping lessons 9 & 10. Upon review, however, we found these lessons added another level to talking to youth about sex, decision-making, intimacy, and their lives. Also it was challenging to fit all the media pieces in, so only some were used. Trusted adult activities were assigned as homework; some mandatory, and some elective to hold them accountable. Class was completed for a fail/pass grade. Due to the difficulty some youth had in securing a truly trusted adult who was willing to work with them on the assignments, we struggled with 'failing' them for not completing that part of the requirement when they attended and participated in nearly every lesson. We didn't feel they deserved to be punished for the adults who were unwilling to play a role; reasons were varied, from adults not following through to youth forgetting. We will make the biggest adjustment to the TAC assignment going forward to ensure students have success in having someone to talk to.

Tips:

Maybe next session letter to trusted adult or facilitators becoming trusted adult. School counselors will also be educated on requirement so they can offer wrap around to students they advise.

We plan to show Antwon Fisher in its entirety at the start of class instead of as a final event so we can weave it into the conversation more than relying on the lecture scripts to drive lessons. The same focus will be applied to the other media pieces to drive the conversations and key points vs reading the scripts. This will become easier as we gain experience and

comfort with the content.

Overall the 3 facilitators were very enthusiastic about the lesson delivery and look forward to doing it again with continued improvements.