

4-H Extension Case Study

Organization: University of Maryland Extension

URL: <https://extension.umd.edu>

Program Name: 4-H Program

Funding: Internal + County Council grant to prevent domestic violence

Curricula Used: Relationship Smarts Plus 4.0; abridged

Curricula Benefits: This curriculum provides plenty of games and other experiential learning activities that do not rely solely on lecture to have an impact. Even if a class is not particularly attentive, the experiential elements always draw back in the majority of participants. The curriculum is also easy to adapt for use in a variety of settings / time constraints, while still achieving measurable improvements in students' knowledge / attitudes.

Target Audience: 8th grade health class

Audience Demographics: 90% African American, 10% hispanic; age 13-14 middle income

Class Size: 16-20 Students

Location of Instruction: Middle School classroom

Length of Instruction: 4 Sessions (75 Minutes each); Used Lessons 1, 2, 3, 6, and 13

Instructor Training Protocol: Instructors from the UME faculty were trained by a Dibble Master Trainer in February 2019.

Utilization of Teacher and Student Materials: Utilized pre-made RQ 4.0 handouts that supplement instruction in the majority of sessions.

Program Recruitment Process: School principal welcomes UME 4-H program into various grades to teach character development, home economics, and other enrichment programs. At the end of 2018, teachers and students agreed to implement RQ 4.0.

Incentives:

No explicit incentives were used. Teachers were given some respite during the period UME faculty was present.

Tips:

There were some challenges with the different grades. 8th and 9th grade can be a sweet spot of implementation for RQ 4.0 due to the relative inexperience of this age group with real dating. 8th grade maturity is significantly different even in 9th grade. Classroom management skills on the instructor's part are more essential to the success of an 8th grade class than high-school classes. An understanding with the teacher whose room you are in that they are expected to assist with this is useful.

Linking the issues discussed in RQ back to friendships can help open up the conversation so more people feel comfortable.