Welcome!

Connecting the Dots:
Healthy Romantic Relationships in Adolescents’ Lives

We will begin promptly at 4 PM Eastern time.
Irene Varley

Director of Education
The Dibble Institute
Webinar Information

• If you are unable to access audio through your computer, please use your phone: +1 (415) 655-0059 /access code: 200-500-972. All attendees are muted.

Ways to participate:
• Type your questions in the “Questions” box
• Raise your hand
• Answer the poll questions

• This webinar will be archived at: www.dibbleinstitute.org/webinar-archives/
CHARLIE AND HELEN DIBBLE
What the Dibble Institute believes ...
Dr. Mindy Scott

Deputy Program Area Director and Senior Research Scientist, *Child Trends*
About Child Trends

Child Trends is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research center that improves the lives and prospects of children and youth by **conducting high-quality research** and **sharing the resulting knowledge** with practitioners and policymakers.

**We . . .**

1. take a whole child approach
2. study children/youth of all ages and social groups
3. seek ways to help children flourish
4. value objectivity and rigor
5. pursue knowledge development *and* knowledge transfer
6. have expertise in diverse methodologies and broad research topics (e.g., healthy relationships, youth development, reproductive health and family formation, parenting)

[www.childtrends.org](http://www.childtrends.org)
Outline & Objectives

• Understand the multiple dimensions of healthy adolescent romantic relationships & how they influence other areas of teen and young adult lives

• Identify commonalities among relationship education (RE) programs and other interventions for youth, including:
  ▪ Teen pregnancy prevention
  ▪ Teen dating violence
  ▪ Social skills
  ▪ College and career readiness
Why Relationships Matter for Youth

• Relationships are important for the healthy development of children and youth

Infancy/Early Childhood

Middle Childhood

Adolescence

Young Adulthood
Why Romantic Relationships Matter

• Romantic relationships during adolescence can set the stage for romantic relationships throughout life

• These relationships can influence youth decisions about:
  - School
  - Employment
  - Peer relationships
  - Pregnancy prevention
Teen Relationships

• Most teens would say they are single
• Casual dating peaks around age 16-17
• By 18 or 19, more teens who are dating are in serious relationships
Percent of Students Who Ever Date, 2012

- 8th Grade: 42%
- 10th Grade: 60%
- 12th Grade: 64%

Source: Child Trends analysis of Monitoring the Future Data, 2012
Percentage of 8th-, 10th-, and 12th-Grade Students Who Date Frequently, by Grade, Selected Years, 1976-2012

Note: Frequent dating is used here to describe youth who report going out on more than one date a week.

Source: Child Trends analysis of Monitoring the Future Data, Selected Years, 1976-2012
Healthy Teen Relationships

• Dating is part of normal adolescent development

• Receiving support and affection from a partner can contribute to self-esteem and promote communication and conflict management
Unhealthy Teen Relationships

• Having multiple, very short-term relationships and being in relationships with high levels of aggression have been linked to:
  ▪ Alcohol and drug use
  ▪ Poor academic performance
  ▪ Low self-esteem
  ▪ Teen pregnancy and STDs
A Focus on Social Skills

• Children with positive social skills are more likely to:
  ▪ Have high self-esteem
  ▪ Have positive relationships with peers
  ▪ Achieve in school

• Deficits in social skills are associated with more aggressive behaviors, including:
  ▪ Bullying
  ▪ Fighting
  ▪ Delinquency
Teen Dating Violence

- Four in ten teens report experiencing dating violence
  - 9% of teens report committing an act of sexual assault; half blame their victim
- Both genders are equally likely to report dating violence perpetration and victimization
  - This is true for both LGBTQ and heterosexual teens
    - Although the type and severity of abuse varies across males and females
Negative Effects of Dating Violence

• Teens who experience dating violence are more likely to be involved in abusive relationships as adults

• Other long-term effects of dating violence include:
  ▪ Poor academic performance
  ▪ Low self-esteem
  ▪ Eating disorders
  ▪ Depression
  ▪ Suicidal behavior
  ▪ Sexually transmitted diseases
  ▪ Pregnancy
Teen Perspectives on Healthy Romantic Relationships among Racial/Ethnic Minorities

Lina Guzman, PhD
Erum Ikramullah
Jennifer Manlove, PhD
Kristen Peterson

•This research was funded by the Office of Population Affairs through grant APRPA006012-01-01
Research Questions

• What are the different types of teen romantic relationships and what characteristics distinguish them?

• What are the critical dimensions of healthy adolescent romantic relationships as defined by teens?

• Are the critical dimensions of healthy adolescent romantic relationships comparable to those of adults?
Methods and Sample

• Focus groups (N=7)
• Total males N=16; Total females N=36
• Age distribution:
  ▪ N=33: 12 to 14-year-olds
  ▪ N=19: 15 to 17-year-olds
• Largely African-American (79%)
• Only 31% lived with 2 biological or adoptive parents
• 73% ever in a relationship that was more than just friends
Major Themes

• Teens have a rich and complex language to describe romantic relationships
• Teens have a clear definition of a healthy teen romantic relationship
• Teen relationships fall short of their own standards
Implications for HMRE Programs

• Low-intensity, “go-slow” approach to relationships
• Building blocks of positive relationships
• Effective communication
• Conflict management
• Handling pressures of sex
• How to choose partners
• Exploring diverse
• Populations of youth
Questions?
Connecting the Dots - Linkages between Relationship Education Programs and Other Youth Needs and Interventions

- Relationship Education
- Teen Pregnancy Prevention
- Teen Dating Violence
- Social Skills
- College & Career Readiness
Healthy Marriage and Relationship Education Models and Measures (3M)

• Recommends measures for assessing HMRE program outcomes for adolescents
• Outcome measures developed through a process that included:
  ▪ A review of research and evaluation literature
  ▪ A review of existing measures in HMRE research
  ▪ Input from HMRE experts
  ▪ Cognitive interviews with adolescents

*This work was funded by the Administration for Children and Families’ Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation*
HMRE Outcome Domains for Adolescents

• 12 recommended outcome domains:
  ▪ Healthy relationship knowledge, expectations, and attitudes
  ▪ Perceived program effects
  ▪ Fidelity
  ▪ Emotional and personal support
  ▪ Shared interactions and activities
  ▪ Sexual interaction and pregnancy prevention
  ▪ Partner communication
  ▪ Conflict management/conflict
  ▪ Reduced violence
  ▪ Social skills
  ▪ Individual well-being
  ▪ Career and college readiness
Relationship Education Programs – Goals and Approaches

- RE programs for adolescents aim to foster healthy relationships throughout adolescence and promote healthy relationships in young adulthood.
- Support adolescents’ development of:
  - Knowledge to recognize the characteristics of healthy (and unhealthy) relationships
  - Belief that they can create healthy relationships and avoid unhealthy relationships
  - Skills to form healthy relationships and avoid unhealthy relationships
  - Budgeting and financial literacy components
- School and non-school based
- Relevant for adolescents who are and are not in current romantic relationships
Dating Violence Programs – Goals and Approaches

• Main objective is to reduce rates of intimate partner violence perpetration and victimization among adolescents

• Program components include:
  ▪ Healthy relationships
  ▪ Conflict management
  ▪ Dating attitudes and behaviors
  ▪ Dating violence norms
  ▪ Victim supportiveness
  ▪ Psychological, physical, and sexual dating perpetration
Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) Programs – Goals and Approaches

- Main objective is to promote positive adolescent development through reducing unintended teen pregnancy
- Program components include:
  - Healthy relationships
  - Risk avoidance
  - Communication skills
  - Contraception use
  - Identity development
Social Skills Programs – Goals and Approaches

• Main objective is to promote positive social skills among adolescents

• Program components include:
  ▪ Getting along with others
  ▪ Communication skills
  ▪ Expressing empathy
  ▪ Conflict resolution skills
  ▪ Emotional and behavioral regulation
Career and College Readiness Programs – Goals and Approaches

• The main objective of these programs is to support adolescent development to prepare for completing college coursework or competing in the labor market.

• Program components include:
  - Goal setting
  - Academic preparation
  - Employer-desired skills
  - Personal resources
  - Developmental maturity
  - Relationships (with mentors, peers, family, etc.)
# Intervention Comparisons: Main Components

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<th>TDV</th>
<th>TPP</th>
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<td>Healthy relationship attitudes/behaviors</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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Intervention Comparisons: Main Components

**RE**
- Healthy relationship attitudes/behaviors
- Emotional and personal support
- Communication
- Conflict Management
- Dating violence
- Risk avoidance
- Budgeting

**Social Skills**
- Getting along with others
- Communication skills
- Expressing empathy
- Conflict resolution skills
- Emotion and behavior regulation

**Career/College**
- Goal setting
- Academic preparation
- Employer-desired skills
- Personal resources
- Developmental maturity
- Relationships (mentors, peers, family)
Conclusion

• Romantic relationships during adolescence are important
  – The goals and approaches used in RE programming for adolescents overlap in important ways with other interventions
    ▪ Providing adolescents with the tools to create and sustain healthy relationships can contribute to overall positive development in multiple domains of life

• Across interventions, integrated approaches that address healthy relationships along with other intervention-specific goals and outcomes may be beneficial
Love Notes: Making Relationships Work v2.0

Relationship Smarts PLUS

Connections: Dating & Emotions

Connections: Relationships and Marriage

Healthy Choices, Healthy Relationships

Money Habitudes® for Teens and Young Adults: How to be rich in life and love

Questions?
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July 2015 Webinar

July 8, 2015

Building Brighter Futures – Relationship Education with Non-Custodial Parents

*Presenters: Kay Reed*, Executive Director, The Dibble Institute
*Vera Ashley-Potter*, Supervising Child Support Officer, Los Angeles County Child Support Services Department