The Austin Healthy Adolescent Peer 2 Peer Project

Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services
Maternal, Child, and Adolescent Health Division
The **Austin Healthy Adolescent (AHA) Program** focuses on the health and well-being of youth through youth empowerment and leadership, development of youth-adult partnerships, teen health education strategies, and system level collaborations.
Austin Healthy Adolescent (AHA)
Vision & Mission

• **Vision**
  – Adolescents are active decision makers and fully engaged in improving their own health and the health of our communities.

• **Mission**
  – Engage youth and adults in partnerships
  – Empower adolescents with opportunities to have a voice in decision making
  – Collaborate across the community to improve the adolescent health infrastructure

• **Programs, Contracts, and Special Projects**
  – Youth Adult Council (YAC)
  – Young Artist Project (YAP)
  – Youth Violence Prevention Special Project
  – Adolescent Social Service Contract Management
  – Peer to Peer (P2P)
Peer to Peer (P2P)
“Landscape”

• “The landscape”

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Texas Department of State Health Services, 2011

• Low to moderate income neighborhoods forming a crescent in the central and eastern portions of Travis County.
• Goal
  • 10% Decrease in the incidence of teen births within Travis County by 2016 (specific focus Latino youth)

• Objectives
  • **Education:** Increase/improvement in knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes (KSA) about sexual activity, contraceptive use, risks of sexual activity.
  • **Health:** Decrease reported pregnancy, birth, and STI/HIV/AIDS rates among youth (13-19 years of age).
  • **Empowerment:** Increase/improvement in beliefs and/or attitudes that community offers/supports their leadership/empowerment.

• Strategies
  • Peer to Peer (P2P) Health Education Model- Moving from promising practice to evidenced based.
  • Youth Development, Empowerment, and Leadership
  • Building community partnerships to work with youth
Building a P2P Framework

Comprehensive Approach
How to provide coordinated recruitment, outreach and education to empower youth to take ownership of their own health and the health of their communities.

- Recruitment
- Training
- Development
- Program Implementation
- Community Activities
- Evaluation
Recruitment

• Partnership: We partner with youth leadership programs and youth social services to recruit peer health educators and participants.

• Process: Gauge motivation of potential educator through an application and teacher recommendations.

• Application reviewed by staff and youth leaders.
Training

- Content: Peer Health Educators are trained to facilitate “¡Cuidate!” (tailored) curriculum to peers.

- Teambuilding: Peer Health Educators will engage in an AHA orientation and teambuilding exercises as well as additional leadership development trainings.

- Additional Training: Fieldtrips conducted with area schools, recreation centers, community groups and organizations.
Youth Development

Development

• A positive youth development project

• Utilize the Search Institute’s 40 Developmental Assets

• Identification of needs and support

• Peer health educators engage in community organizing and public speaking

• Parent/Guardian night held once a semester to build connection with family
Program Implementation

Implementation

- Recruitment of youth program participants through partners, Community Health Educators and Peer Health Educators.
- Identification of sites (schools, recreation centers, community groups) in which to conduct program implementation.
- Curriculum implementation with target population
- Monitor and assess implementation
Program Evaluation

- Quantitative Evaluation
  - Pre/Post-test of participants’ KSAs
  - Tracking recruitment and retention
- Qualitative Evaluation
  - Feedback from P2P participants
  - Feedback from PHEs
Community Activities

• Creative Expression (Spoken-Word, Poetry and Hip-Hop) events help youth express their feelings and come to new understandings

• Peer Health Educators exposed to the field through conferences

• Community Partners include: Communities in Schools (CIS), Lifeworks, Planned Parenthood, Local ISD’s (Austin, Pflugerville, Del Valle), Engender Health, UT School of Social Work, Healthy Youth Partnership
P2P Achievements

Achievements

• Cadre of youth leaders trained in “Cuidate” curriculum and implementing curriculum in schools and recreation centers
• Improvements in knowledge, attitudes, and intended behavior
• Conference presentations
• Partnerships with local non-profits
• Partnerships with schools
• Excellent staff recruited
• P2P Recruitment Video [https://vimeo.com/120500648](https://vimeo.com/120500648)
• 350 youth reached with evidence-based curriculum
Discussion

Question and Answer
THANK YOU!

Principal Investigator
Rosamaria Murillo, Assistant Director
Austin/Travis County Health and Human Services Department
rosamaria.murillo@austintexas.gov

Co-Investigator
Tim Eubanks, AHA Supervisor
tim.eubanks@austintexas.gov

AHA Program Coordinator
Alda Santana
alda.santana@austintexas.gov

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