

EVALUATION ABSTRACT: YOUTH ALL ENGAGED (YAE) IN DENVER, CO

Grantee	Evaluation Abstract: Youth All Engaged Denver Health and Hospital Authority
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Intervention Name	Youth All Engaged (YAE)
Intervention Description	<p>This was an evaluation to determine if YAE, added to the TOP® program, was more effective than TOP® alone in improving sexual health and education outcomes for youth. TOP® is available for use with youth ages 12-19 and has been shown to be efficacious with high school-age participants in grades 9-12. Guided by an engaging and relevant nine-month curriculum, TOP® has been shown to have efficacy in reducing the risk of sexual risk behavior and behaviors that impede school performance while promoting healthy choices and empowering teens to lead successful lives and build strong communities. TOP® includes sessions on values clarification, relationships, communications/assertiveness, influence, goal setting, decision-making, human development and sexuality, and community service learning. The TOP® Curriculum consists of three interconnected components: adult mentoring, classroom-based activities related to youth development, and classroom- and community-based service learning (CSL). Youth select their community service activities under the supervision of trained program staff and complete a minimum of 20 service hours during the program year. Classroom-based discussions and activities take place during weekly group meetings facilitated by trained program staff.</p> <p>Youth in the intervention received YAE, which was comprised of 5-7 text messages each week that reinforced specific topics covered each week in the TOP® sessions and that offered additional information and resources related to the topics covered in TOP® each week. Approximately 30% of outgoing messages requested a response or were considered 'bi-directional'. Once the TOP® program was completed, YAE messages continued at the average rate of three per week for an additional 12 weeks.</p> <p>YAE messages were developed following a formative evaluation with input from youth with characteristics similar to the intended audience for the program. YAE messages were developed with specific attention to improvement in self-efficacy, attitudes, intentions and norms related to the primary behavioral outcomes of contraceptive and condom use. In addition, message development included attention to best practices in communication research related to design that can facilitate engagement with and can maximize positive response to messages.</p>
Counterfactual	TOP® alone.
Counterfactual Description	The TOP® curriculum included a required 25 educational peer sessions of approximately 40 minutes in length and a minimum of 20 service-learning hours completed by each participant. These were designed for delivery over an academic school year. Sessions typically occurred once per week (with breaks for holidays).

Primary Research Question(s)	<p>What is the impact of ‘YAE, added to TOP[®], relative to TOP[®] alone on the proportion of sex acts protected by condoms over the past 3 months assessed at TOP[®] program completion? and</p> <p>What is the impact of YAE added to TOP[®], relative to TOP[®] alone on the proportion of sex acts protected by contraception over the past 3 months assessed at TOP[®] program completion?</p>
Sample	<p>Eligible youth included those aged 14-18 who belonged to one of the 8 Boys and Girls Clubs in which the study was implemented each year for four academic school years (2011-2012 through 2014-2015). The sample of clubs was 32 each with approximately 25 participants per club; the total number of youth participants in the sample was 852.</p>
Setting	<p>The Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Denver are located in high-poverty communities where participants face disparities in access to quality education, health care and other social services.</p>
Research Design	<p>This was a cluster-randomized controlled trial, where Boys & Girls Clubs were the unit of randomization. Eight clubs have a high proportion of youth with the demographic profile matching those youth at highest risk for teen pregnancy in Colorado. For that reason we considered the ninth club ineligible for randomization. Evaluation staff at the University of Colorado Denver conducted random assignment for all four years at the outset of the study. All 32 eventual groups were randomized at the same time. An implementation study was also conducted.</p>
Method	<p>The analytic sample included all youth assigned to condition, following an intent-to-treat approach. Data were analyzed at the individual level (with data from all clubs and years combined into a single analytic dataset), but the analyses took into account the fact that individuals were nested within their specific cohort of TOP[®] delivery. The analytic sample comprised individuals with data at TOP[®] program completion. We employed multilevel regression to examine the impact of the intervention on study outcomes.</p>
Impact Findings	<p>There were no statistically significant differences between the intervention and control groups on primary outcomes. A secondary analysis comparing Hispanic to non-Hispanic participants found that Hispanics exposed to the intervention had fewer pregnancies compared to Hispanics not exposed to the intervention (1.60% versus 6.15%).</p>
Implementation Findings	<p>Those in the intervention arm were sent approximately 93 text messages over the program period. For the first two years, 40% of those messages were bi-directional and four-fifths (82%) of participating youth responded at least once to a bidirectional text.</p>
Schedule/Timeline	<p>Data collection for enrollment was completed in September of 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014. Initial follow-up assessments were completed in May 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015. Data analysis was completed in August 2015.</p>
