



# *Program Abstract*

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**Summary** The *ABAN AYA YOUTH PROJECT (ABAN AYA)* is a long-term Afrocentric social development program specifically for African American youth from grades five through eight. The program addresses multiple risk behaviors such as violence, substance abuse, delinquency, and sexual activity, by promoting conflict resolution, drug and alcohol avoidance, abstinence, and safer sex. The name of the intervention is drawn from two words in the Akan (Ghanaian) language: *ABAN* (fence) signifies double/social protection; *AYA* (the unfurling fern) signifies self-determination.

*ABAN AYA YOUTH PROJECT's* effects on violent behavior, delinquency, substance abuse, and sexual behavior was evaluated with a longitudinal study involving 12 schools in the metropolitan Chicago area between 1994 and 1998. At baseline, 1153 fifth graders participated in the pencil-and-paper assessment. There was an average annual turnover rate of about 20%. Of the group that completed the baseline survey, 668 were still present at the conclusion of the program.

The group was fairly evenly divided between males and females; the average age was 10.8 years. All participants were African American. Follow-up assessments were conducted at the conclusion of grades five through eight for all students in the test schools with parental consent at the time of assessment. Students who transferred out of the test schools were not followed for the purposes of the study.

Participating schools were assigned to one of three conditions using a randomized block design. The first experimental condition, the Social Development Curriculum (SDC) included 16-21 classroom-based lessons each year. The second experimental condition, the School/ Community Intervention (SCI), included SDC plus a parent/community element. The control condition, Health Enhancement Curriculum (HEC), was equal to SDC in intensity, and focused on general health, nutrition and physical activity.

The PASHA program package includes only the SDC curriculum. Therefore, effectiveness information will include only HEC and SDC.

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At study conclusion, there were no significant intervention effects for girls. For boys, however, the SDC significantly reduced the rate of increase in violent behavior (by 35% compared with HEC), provoking behavior (41%) school delinquency (31%) drug use (32%), and recent sexual intercourse (44%). SDC also improved the rate of increase in condom use (95%) as compared to HEC.

**Focus**  Primary pregnancy prevention  Secondary pregnancy prevention  STI/HIV/AIDS prevention

**Original Site**  School-based  Community-based  Clinic-based

**Suitable for Use In:** *ABAN AYA YOUTH PROJECT* is suitable for use in middle schools, grades 5 through 8. It may be suitable for use in community based organizations that provide services to youths in this age group.

**Approach**  Abstinence  
 Behavioral Skills Development  
 Community Outreach  
 Contraceptive Access  
 Contraceptive Education  
 Life Option Enhancement  
 Self-Efficacy/Self-Esteem  
 Sexuality/HIV/AIDS/STI Education

**Original Intervention Sample** Age, Gender The baseline sample was 49.5% male, and averaged 10.8 years at the beginning of fifth grade.  
Race/Ethnicity All participants were African American.

**Program Components**  Adult Involvement  
 Case Management  
 Group Discussion  
 Lectures  
 Peer Counseling/Instruction  
 Public Service Announcements

## *Program Abstract (continued)*

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- Role Play
- DVD
- Other: Homework, some with parental participation

**Program Length** The Social Development Curriculum (SDC), discussed in this User's Guide and detailed in the facilitator's manuals, is classroom based and involves 16-21 lessons each year in grades five through eight. The lessons are designed to be taught in a typical classroom period, and last approximately 40-45 minutes each.

**Staffing Requirements/ Training** In the original implementation, health educators delivered the curriculum in social studies class. In order to ensure fidelity of implementation, two training sessions were held before each lesson during which health educators role played the activities and senior project staff provided feedback. In addition, each year, the regular classroom teachers received a four-hour workshop to provide an overview of program content and philosophy.

Given the nature of the Aban Aya curricula, training is required. Training provides an opportunity for Aban Aya instructors to feel comfortable with the curricula content, while enhancing their knowledge of the prevention conceptual framework used to develop Aban Aya. Training will also increase instructors' competence and capacity to teach the cognitive-behavioral skills that comprise the curricula. A 1-day training program is available from Sociometrics. Sociometrics also provides other training services including technical assistance after training and refresher training at the beginning of each year of the curricula. Sociometrics can also assist in consultation on program implementation and evaluation design and metrics. Please contact Sociometrics at [socio@socio.com](mailto:socio@socio.com) or 650-949-3282 for more information on how to tailor a training and/or evaluation package to meet your needs in the implementation of Aban Aya.

**Notes about Evaluation** This program contains three resources to assist you in evaluating the effectiveness of *ABAN AYA* in your setting:

- (1) Original Evaluation Instrument (please refer to the yellow booklet),
- (2) *Prevention Minimum Evaluation Data Set Jr+ (PMEDS Jr+)*, a generic questionnaire that can be adapted to suit most prevention programs, and
- (3) *Local Evaluator Consultant Network Directory*.

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These evaluation materials are included as a starting point for evaluating your program, should you choose to do so. Before using this or any survey instrument(s) with your participants, it is very important that consent be received from the appropriate people in your community (e.g., school officials, parents, etc.). Most programs can benefit from outside help in designing and carrying out an evaluation. Your local university may be a good place to look for outside help—or you may refer to the *Local Evaluator Consultant Network Directory*. For further information, call PASHA staff (see below).

**Contact Information** Sociometrics Corporation  
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**Bibliography** Flay, BR, Graumlich, S, Segawa, E, Burns JL, Holliday, MY (2004). Effects of 2 prevention programs on high-risk behaviors among African American youth, *Archives of Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine*, 158, 377-384.