



Reach for Health

A School Sponsored Community Youth Service Intervention for Middle School Students

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FOCUS

- ☒ Primary Pregnancy Prevention
- ☒ Secondary Pregnancy Prevention
- ☒ STD/HIV/AIDS Prevention

ORIGINAL SITE

- ☒ School-Based
- ☒ Community-Based
- ☐ Clinic-Based

APPROACH

- ☒ Abstinence
- ☒ Behavioral Skills Development
- ☒ Community Outreach
- ☐ Contraceptive Access

SUMMARY

The REACH FOR HEALTH (RFH) program targets African-American and Hispanic youth living in urban areas. RFH combines a classroom component with community service work. The intervention provides opportunities for middle school students to participate in service activities while simultaneously reducing early and unprotected sexual activity.

The intervention was initially delivered in 1994 to two large middle schools in Brooklyn, NY; one school was designated as the intervention school, the other as the control. In the control school, 584 students received the standard New York City health education program, which includes some mandated lessons on drugs and AIDS. Within the intervention school, 222 students were randomly assigned to receive the core RFH curriculum (classroom component only), and 255 intervention students received the enhanced RFH plus Community Youth Services program.

At the six-month follow-up, reports of sexual activity were higher across the sample. However, students in the control condition showed greater increases in risk behavior (e.g., recent sex, recent sex without condom or birth control) than did their peers in the treatment conditions. In contrast, students in both intervention conditions showed increases in their use of STD protection and birth control. Students in the RFH-CYS program were significantly less likely ($p < 0.05$) to report recent intercourse at follow-up than youth in the control condition; there was no significant difference, however, between students in the curriculum-only control and the control conditions.

☐ Contraceptive Education

☐ Life Option Enhancement

☒ Self-Efficacy/Self-Esteem

☒ Sexuality/STD/HIV/AIDS Education

COMPONENTS

☒ Adult Involvement

☐ Case Management

☒ Group Discussion

☒ Lectures

☐ Peer Counseling/Instruction

☐ Public Service Announcements

☒ Role Play

☒ DVD

☒ Other
Community service, homework

SUITABLE FOR USE IN

RFH was designed to be implemented in middle schools and surrounding community healthcare and social service settings such as day care centers (in the 7th grade), or nursing homes, health clinics or senior centers (in the 8th grade).

ORIGINAL INTERVENTION SAMPLE

Age, Gender

The original intervention sample included 1,157 students. About half of the sample were 8th graders (48.4%), and about half were female (52.8%).

Race/Ethnicity

Almost all students identified themselves as non-Hispanic African Americans (79%) or Latino (16%).

PROGRAM LENGTH

RFH is an intensive intervention, taught over the course of a full school year in grades 7 and 8. During the year, students spend approximately three hours per week in a supervised community placement. In addition to that off-site work, students receive weekly health lessons-35 lessons in the seventh grade and 30 in the eighth grade-that supplement the traditional health class curriculum.

STAFFING REQUIREMENTS/TRAINING

Implementation of RFH requires collaboration between middle schools and community service sites. In the original implementation of RFH, a full-time, on-site coordinator was hired to manage activities between school and community sites as well as communication among various agents and players, including students, parents, school administrators, teachers, field site mentors and other community site staff.

At the middle school, health teachers delivered the classroom component of RFH.

At the community sites, nursing students and other agency staff mentored students and crafted and supervised community experiences. Staff participated in program orientation.

The PASHA Program Package for this program includes:

PASHA User's Guide

7th Grade Curriculum (two green booklets and program materials envelopes with photocopy masters)

8th Grade Curriculum (two yellow booklets and program materials envelopes with photocopy masters)

Teacher's Guide

DVD: Smart Kids, Smart Choices

Prevention Minimum Evaluation Data Set (PMEDS)

Local Evaluator Consultant Network Directory

Telephone technical support on implementation and evaluation for 1 year