

# **¡Cúídate! Curriculum Empowers Latino/Hispanic Male Teenagers in Negotiating Abstinence and Condom Use\*\***

Evaluating Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Project (TPPP) in Maryvale Community at Arizona

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## **ABSTRACT**

The authors present pilot study findings demonstrating the effectiveness of an evidence-based program for Latino youth (age 13-18) related to HIV/AIDS and teen pregnancy prevention. ¡Cúídate!, or Take Care of Yourself!, is currently being replicated in the Maryvale community of West Phoenix, Arizona. The ¡Cúídate! curriculum was designed to lower the incidence and prevalence of teenage pregnancy and the risk of HIV/AIDS among Latino youths ages 13 to 18. This study examines gender differences in knowledge about HIV transmission and prevention as well as the ability to negotiate abstinence or condom use prior to and after implementation of the ¡Cúídate! program. Participants were 76 female and 57 male high school students who responded to questions before and after the program was implemented. The pilot study indicates that the program successfully increased knowledge about HIV/AIDS in both female and male teen populations; however, there are ceiling effects on negotiating skills among female students. The program was shown to only empower male students with negotiating skills to reduce risky sexual behaviors. Higher sex knowledge scores have no effect on the negotiating skills among both female and male students. The pilot study shows that the ¡Cúídate! program successfully improved male students' skills to (1) say "no" to sex, (2) use condoms when having sex, (3) say "no" to partners, and (4) negotiate the use of condoms with partner(s). The pilot study offers initial evidence that the ¡Cúídate! program reduces risky sexual behaviors among male, Latino/Hispanic students, but other intervention strategies for Latino/Hispanic female students still need to be investigated.

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## Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Project (TPPP) Program

Arizona has one of the highest rates in the country of babies born to teen mothers ages 15 to 19 (CDC, National Center for Health Statistics, 2006). Hispanic or Latina females under 19 years old residing in Arizona have the greatest influence on the overall teen pregnancy rate. In 2009, Arizona had 10,952 babies born to teen mothers ages 19 or younger, while Maricopa County during the same time period had 6,246 babies born to teen mothers ages 19 or younger, 57.03% of the teenage mothers in Arizona (Data Sources: Arizona Department of Health Services, Vital Statistics). The teen birth rate for Maricopa County from 2005 to 2009 was 13.0 live births per 1,000, and the birth rate amongst teenage mothers in Maryvale<sup>3</sup> was 22.1 per 1,000 during the same time period (Data Sources: American Community Survey; Arizona Department of Health Services, Vital Statistics).

Touchstone Behavioral Health Center is located in North Phoenix, Arizona. Touchstone Behavioral Health Center is a non-profit community institution that primarily provides evidence-based services and support to help Maricopa residences in Arizona acquire the skills to live productive and responsible lives. Touchstone is applying five-year Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Project (TPPP) in September, 2011, to lower the incidence and prevalence of teenage pregnancy in the city of Maryvale located in Maricopa. Touchstone's TPPP began piloting intervention groups throughout the Pendergast Elementary School District (PESD). These pilots began at Calderwood and Copper King Elementary Schools (one all-boys group at each campus) and were ongoing as of March 1, 2011. All pilots were completed using the ¡Cuídate! curriculum and the participants were primarily 8th graders, with some older 7th graders. Additional pilot implementations were scheduled for Pendergast Elementary, Childhelp (Keys Community Center) and Maryvale High School in March 2011; Isaac Middle School in April 2011; and at the Day and Evening Support Center in Maryvale in May and June 2011. Since Touchstone applied Be Proud! Be Responsible! Curriculum not ¡Cuídate! to Isaac Middle School and Day and Evening Support Center, this pilot study does not include these two schools in its analysis.

The original ¡Cuídate! curriculum had six intervention sessions, but did not focus specifically on teenage pregnancy prevention. After consulting with program developers from Select Media, Inc., Touchstone added another session to the ¡Cuídate! curriculum – The Consequences of Sex: Pregnancy Module from Making Proud Choices. The new session covers teen pregnancy more heavily and other effective methods of birth control outside of condoms. Through piloting TPPP it was discovered that a pre-session was necessary (to gather data, do group rules, rapport building), followed by the now seven modules of curriculum, and a post session (to post test, wrap up, answer any questions). Touchstone's program will now be implemented as nine (9) sessions at all sites. Another adaption was group size, to accommodate school sites that wanted the program inside a pre-established classroom. The frequency of the modules was altered to accommodate one module per session on different days. This flexibility allowed the program to fit into the school schedule effortlessly.

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<sup>3</sup> Maryvale is a populated place located in Maricopa County at latitude 33.502 and longitude -112.178. The elevation is 1,119 feet. Maryvale appears on the Glendale U.S. Geological Survey Map.

## **METHODS**

**Sampling Strategy.** A non-random sampling strategy was employed by this pilot study in which eligible participants were all adolescents age 13 to 18 residing in the Maryvale Community of West Phoenix. Youth were recruited for participation through local schools and community kick-off events in which parents/caregivers are introduced to the evidence-based program ¡Cuídate! and are provided with up-to-date information on HIV/AIDS and teen pregnancy.

**Sample.** The pilot study sample consisted of n=133 students (age 13-18) from Maryvale who completed baseline and post-intervention surveys. Pre-intervention (baseline) surveys were administered to n=157 youth. The vast majority of youth participants were Hispanic/Latino (86.5%), and there were more female (57.1%) than male participants. Sixty percent (60%) of the sample was high school students; the remaining 40 percent were ninth graders. Approximately three (3) students passed or graduated from the ¡Cuídate! program for every one (1) student who failed. Program completion was defined as completion of five (5) out of the original six (6) curriculum modules of ¡Cuídate!

**Survey Administration.** Program Facilitators (i.e., intervention staff from Touchstone Behavioral Health of Arizona) administered the pre-intervention (baseline) evaluation surveys to n=157 youth participants in the ¡Cuídate! program during the fall of 2010 (during the introductory program session). Post-intervention surveys were given to n=133 youth upon completion of the final program session.

**Data Collection and Transfer.** Program facilitators collected all completed youth surveys during the first and last program sessions and transferred the de-identified survey data to local evaluators in person and/or electronically. A separate data transfer was made containing youth demographic information obtained from program enrollment forms. Upon receipt of the data, local evaluators entered the paper-based survey data into a password-protected SPSS database, cleaned it (i.e., double-check all entered values), and prepared the data for analysis.

**Variables.** The following outcome variables were created in SPSS, based on pre-post survey questions: (I) Abstinence negotiation skills, (II) Condom use/birth control negotiation skills, (III) HIV/AIDS knowledge, (IV) Intentions to abstain from sex, (V) Intentions to use condoms/birth control, (VI) Intentions to have more than one sex partner. In addition, several predictor variables will be created to test for differences between groups (e.g., sex, race/ethnicity, age/grade level, program completion status, site of implementation, etc.).

**Analysis.** The authors conducted a variety of statistical analysis to determine if program participants made significant post-intervention gains in terms of sex negotiations skills, HIV knowledge, and intentions to abstain from sex/use condoms/. t-tests were used to compare post-test scores to baseline percentages and logistic regression was used to provide evidence that the ¡Cuídate! program reduces risky sexual behaviors among social and demographic groups (e.g., race/ethnicity, age/grade, sex/gender).

**Table 1 TPPP Participants' Demographic Characteristics**

	<b>n</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	76	57.1
Male	57	42.9
<b>Age</b>		
under 15	63	47.7
15-18	69	52.3
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Hispanic	115	86.5
Non-Hispanic	18	13.5
<b>Attendance</b>		
Pass	99	73.3
Fail	36	26.7
<b>School District</b>		
Claderwood Elementary	8	5.9
Copper King Elementary	4	3
Maryvale High School	81	60
Pendergast Elementary	42	31.1

**Table 2 Pre and Post Knowledge Scores T-test**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Knowledge Scores</b>					<b>% Increase</b>	<b>Paired t-test</b>	<b>p-values</b>
	<b>Pre-Test</b>		<b>Post-Test</b>					
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>n</b>			
Female	75.556	13.494	93.333	10.722	65	23.528	9.516	P<.000***
Male	75.283	14.918	92.517	14.591	49	22.892	5.764	P<.000***

**Table 3 Pre and Post Negotiating Skills Scores T-test**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Say "No" to Sex</b>					<b>% Increase</b>	<b>Paired t-test</b>	<b>p-values</b>
	<b>Pre-Test</b>		<b>Post-Test</b>					
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>n</b>			
Female	1.123	1.111	1.200	.987	65	6.857	-.516	.608
Male	.188	1.123	.813	1.065	48	332.447	-3.517	.001***

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Using condoms when having sex</b>					<b>% Increase</b>	<b>Paired t-test</b>	<b>p-values</b>
	<b>Pre-Test</b>		<b>Post-Test</b>					
	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>n</b>			
Female	1.292	1.071	1.492	.812	65	15.480	-1.688	.096†
Male	1.13	1.708	1.708	.089	48	51.150	-4.276	.000***

Gender	Say "No" to partners					% Increase	Paired t-test	p-values
	Pre-Test		Post-Test					
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	n			
Female	.446	1.173	.585	1.059	65	31.166	-.868	.388
Male	-.184	.167	.571	.130	48	410.326	-4.067	.000***

Gender	Request partners to use condoms					% Increase	Paired t-test	p-values
	Pre-Test		Post-Test					
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	n			
Female	.600	1.309	.908	1.042	65	51.333	-1.947	.056†
Male	.208	1.071	.688	1.075	48	230.769	-3.042	.004**

**Table 4 Negotiation Skills**

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	Say "No" to sex		Using condoms when having sex		Say "No" to partners		Request partners to use condoms	
	B	p value	B	p value	B	p value	B	p value
Gender (ref.=female)								
Male	-.469	.641	1.751	.016*	.742	.476	.154	.880
Age (ref.= age <15)								
Age 15 +	-.142	.019*	-.046	.274	.063	.307	.032	.598
Ethnicity (ref. =others)								
Hispanic/Latino	.139	.626	-.038	.849	-.032	.914	-.128	.658
Attendance (ref.=Fail)								
Pass	-.050	.827	-.141	.387	.061	.796	-.390	.096†
Pre- knowledge scores	-.005	.546	.006	.388	-.001	.915	-.004	.668
Gender × pre knowledge scores	.003	.813	-.020	.034*	-.007	.583	-.003	.815
Pre-test negotiating scores								
Say "No" to sex	.295	.000***	-	-	-	-	-	-
Using condoms when having sex	-	-	.310	.000***	-	-	-	-
Say "No" to partners	-	-	-	-	.250	.002**	-	-
Request partners to use condoms	-	-	-	-	-	-	.406	.000***
Intercept	3.370	.002**	1.530	.042*	-.438	.687	.914	.397

$p < .1^\dagger$ ,  $p < .05^*$ ,  $p < .01^{**}$ ,  $p < .001^{***}$