Promoting Resiliency in At-Risk Youth: Promising Practices for Encouraging Healthy Relationships via Integration of Relationship Education into Services for Youth

Webinar Question and Answer (Q&A)

Monday, August 27, 2012 2:00-3:30 PM EDT

Question: Do any organizations other than schools use the P.A.P.A. curriculum? And how much does it cost?

Answer: From Gilbert Chavez, Program Specialist, Child Support Family Initiatives, Office of the Attorney General:

That's a really good question. As I said, when we started this out in 2004 we primarily did it through family consumer science classes. But we also have a number of community-based organizations which use the P.A.P.A. curriculum [Parenting and Paternity Awareness curriculum developed by the Texas Child Support Division], Head Start organizations, nonprofit organizations working in communities, all of those we train and provide the curriculum to.

And we do that for any agency - we have a requirement of having at least 15 in attendance to really make it worth our while, within the state of Texas. Unfortunately, jokes don't work too well over Webinars. But we don't actually travel out of state to provide that training, but will work with other state agencies to make sure the legal information is up-to-date for whatever state you are interested in.

You can always review our P.A.P.A. curriculum, and we can send that to anybody who wants to see a review copy. Again, it's going to be specific legal information for the state of Texas so it may not transfer over well to other states child-support laws.

Question: Who are the trainers that you're using to teach the curriculum?

Answer: From Gilbert Chavez, Program Specialist, Child Support Family Initiatives, Office of the Attorney General:

Well, I actually - it's a train the trainer model, so I have a group of three P.A.P.A. trainers who go out and provide this training to the health teachers primarily, through a six-hour training that, when they leave, they have the curriculum, they have all the resources that we have available to them. And they've then go out and, as a part of their health day, when the teaching their health class, they would integrate the P.A.P.A. curriculum into their normal health studies.

Multiple classrooms use it. Like I said, the family consumer science and life skills classes continue to use the P.A.P.A. curriculum. But they are primarily done through teachers or nonprofit organizations and facilitators who have gone through our required P.A.P.A. training.
Question: Does the P.A.P.A. curriculum serve teens in the same sex relationships?

Answer: From Gilbert Chavez, Program Specialist, Child Support Family Initiatives, Office of the Attorney General:

It's kind of silent in that. I mean, we talk about healthy relationships, we talk about marriage, but of course within the state of Texas that is specific to male/female relationships. So it's pretty much silent in the issue. It doesn't bring it up one way or the other.

Question: In the beginning did you decide to use the P.A.P.A. curriculum instead of using another curriculum that is out there?

Answer: From Gilbert Chavez, Program Specialist, Child Support Family Initiatives, Office of the Attorney General:

I mean, it's obviously quite selfish, but I mean we honestly see it as a child-support curriculum, so making sure that we do outreach and education, in regards to young people’s knowledge and attitudes regarding legal issues of becoming a parent in the state of Texas. And so it serves our purpose. And we did look at other curriculums. And there are a lot of good relationship curriculums out there.

We hired healthy relationship curriculum writers to help us to design it. And so we just felt that if work wanting to provide this curriculum to everyone who wants it in the state of Texas, it had better be our own. And we were able to make sure that our information was included in a way that we wanted represented.

That really kind of is what's the genesis of what's in the curriculum, and kind of how it serves as a child-support outreach and education program prior to any problems arising to child-support and young families.

Question: Can the National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families provide assistance or resources for choosing a curriculum?

Answer: From Robyn Cenizal, Project Director, National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families:

Well, one way would be to visit the National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families Web site (healthymarriageandfamilies.org), and to see what's already out there. Another would be to send us an e-mail to the Resource Center (info@healthymarriageandfamilies.org) and let us know specifically what you are interested in, and then we can kind of chase it down and get back to you.

Or there is a TA request, training and technical assistance request form, on the Resource Center Web site. If you have some specific ideas filling out the TA request form is probably the easiest way to make that happen.
Question: What other states have adopted P.A.P.A. or have been thinking about it?

Answer: From Gilbert Chavez, Program Specialist, Child Support Family Initiatives, Office of the Attorney General:

There are different levels of integration, or adoption of the P.A.P.A. curriculum. I know New York is looking at it. But it's pretty much citywide. Minnesota, Washington state, I have a list of about ten. I mean, it kind of varies depending on what stage they are in adopting the curriculum, or revising the curriculum. But if somebody wants specific information about the state I'd be glad to share contact with who maybe is in charge of doing that within a specific state.

Question: Is the P.A.P.A. curriculum an evidence-based curriculum?

Answer: From Gilbert Chavez, Program Specialist, Child Support Family Initiatives, Office of the Attorney General:

Well, there are different levels of evidence-based, research based type curriculum. This has not been rigorously evaluated. So I wouldn't want to say that in people's description of using evidence-based curriculum, but it has been evaluated by the LBJ School of Public Policy.

We've seen significant increases in knowledge and attitudes in regards to student's attitudes about parenting, when they want to become apparent, child-support laws, child-support guidelines, policies, things like that. And so we do have quite a bit of evidence that students participating in the curriculum are definitely getting something out of it.

But often times when we talk of evidence-based, as were using it as a definition of talking about rigorously evaluating curricula and P.A.P.A. has not been rigorously evaluated in the terms of being evidence-based curriculum.

Question: Does the Resource Center have handouts that can be used and distributed by programs?

Answer: From Robyn Cenizal, Project Director, National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families:

Yes. Absolutely, there are quite a number of handouts. And they are topic specific so if you just go into the searchable library and indicate the topic that you are interested in, you should be able to find some of those handouts. Some of the handouts, for example, one that comes to mind is on the importance of trust in relationships or a commitment in relationships.

There are also a series of fact sheets related to child support that are in there. The other thing that I would mention about the resources that are available through the Resource
The National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families Web site is that we really didn't try to reinvent the wheel. So if there are other resources on other sites that we think would be appropriate for stakeholders, we have links to those. So there are a lot of good tools and resources that you can get to through our Resource Center that don't necessarily live on our Resource center.

Question: Are you familiar with the cooperative extension (NERMEN) program at (USDA)?

Answer: From Ted Futris, Training and Technical Assistance, National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families:

The cooperative extension system is that each state has a land grant university system in Georgia, for example, the University of Georgia, in Texas that would be I believe that's Texas A&M.

Each land-grant university provides outreach through, it might be a college of agriculture, could be a college of family consumer science or equivalent, but they provide support with 4-H programming, which is programs working with groups of youths to promote positive youth element, as well as family consumer science education where parenting education is offered, financial education, nutrition, as well as relationship education.

Each state varies in terms of the type of program and resources available, within that state. Nationally, there is a network known as the National Extension Relationship and Marriage Education Network (NERMEN), which includes specialists such as myself that work in extension, that specialize in relationship and marriage education and work together to develop resources and educational tools that can be shared. And many of those resources are highlighted and featured on the National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families Web site.

Question: Who should I contact if I have more questions about this webinar?

Answer: Visit the National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families website at https://healthymarriageandfamilies.org/ or email us at info@HealthyMarriageandFamilies.org.