

Healthy Dating Leads to Healthy Marriage Webinar

February 8, 2018

Operator

Please stand by, we're about to begin. Good day, and welcome to the "Healthy Dating Leads to Healthy Marriage" webinar. Today's conference is being recorded. At this time, I would like to turn the conference over to Ms. Jackie Rhodes with the National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families. Please go ahead.

Jackie Rhodes

Thank you so much, and welcome, everyone. Thank you so much for joining us today for the National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families webinar, "Healthy Dating Leads to Healthy Marriage." We are so sorry about the late start—we had some technical issues with the audio, so we thank you all so much for being flexible and joining by phone. Other than that, the logistics for today are going to run as our usual webinars do. My name is Jackie Rhodes, and I'll be helping with the logistics today, along with my colleague, Andreea Mitran, and our Resource Center Director, Robyn Cenizal, who will be moderating.

Before we get to the content for today's webinar, I just wanted to quickly go over a few logistical items. The webinar today will end around 3:30 p.m. Eastern Time—it will be recorded, and the slides, transcript and recording will be posted on our website in the coming weeks for your view.

Audio for the webinar is broadcast through your phone. If you are having issues hearing through the phone, you can call our Resource Center number: it is (866) 916-4672, and we can help you out with making sure you have the correct information.

After the presentations today, we're going to have an online Q & A session. We encourage you to type in your questions at any time during the presentation as you think of them by typing in the Q & A pod, which is located at the bottom right of your screen. After you enter a question, click Enter to make sure that we received it, and we will respond to let you know we got it. We'll collect all of the questions submitted throughout the webinar, and as time permits, we will ask those during the Q & A session at the end. If your question is for a specific presenter, just reference that when typing in your question so that we can make sure to address it to the correct person.

Throughout the webinar, presenters may reference materials or links relevant to their presentation. You can browse the weblinks by clicking on any of the links in the Weblinks [no audio] pod at the top right of your screen, and you can download materials by selecting Files in the Downloadable Resources pod on the right-hand portion of your screen as well.

We'll also be including several poll questions throughout the webinar that we encourage you to participate in by selecting your response on the screen.

We are very excited about the agenda for today's webinar. It's going to include a brief introduction of our presenters which I'll be doing next. Then we're going to have a welcome and overview of the Resource Center, followed by opening remarks focused on National Marriage Week, USA, so you'll learn more about that, and then three presentations from our speakers which will focus on the impact of relationship education on youth in California; an overview of the Think, Act, Grow approach to adolescent health; and a presentation on using healthy relationship education to support high-risk youth.

Following the presentations [no audio], as I mentioned, we'll have an online Q & A session, and when we close, a brief feedback survey will pop up on your screen. We encourage you to complete the survey to provide us with valuable feedback for improving future webinars, and once you complete the survey, you'll be able to download a certificate of completion for attending today's webinar.

So before we start, I just wanted to briefly introduce our speakers, and there is a Bios document in the Downloadable Resources pod on your screen, so you learn much more about each of these presenters by opening that document.

Our first presenter is Robyn Cenizal, who's the Project Director of the National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families. After Robyn, we'll hear from Tiffany Watkins Ahern, who is from National Marriage Week USA; Patty Howell, the President of Healthy Relationships California, followed by Jamie Kim, a Health Scientist with the Division of Policy, Planning, and Communication within the HHS Office of Adolescent Health; and then finally, Ashley Garrett, who is the Director of the National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center.

And now, Robyn, I'm going to turn it over to you to get us started and set the context for today's discussion. Thank you.

Robyn Cenizal

Thanks, Jackie, and thank you all for joining us, and for your patience with our technical difficulties today. We know you're all busy, and we really do appreciate you spending time with us. I'm especially excited about today's presentation celebrating National Marriage Week USA, in partnership with our funder, the Office of Family Assistance. The Resource Center is focusing its entire year on youth and young adults through our targeted campaign, Healthy Dating Leads to Healthy Marriage. You'll see this theme in our social media, our product development and our library's special collections.

So what do we mean when we say Healthy Dating Leads to Healthy Marriage, and why is that so important? Well, it's because we know that relationship skills are typically developed when we're young, and from behavior modeled in our family of origin. Interpersonal skills like communication and conflict management, along with critical skills like parenting and financial literacy, are crucial to successful adulthood. If we happened to grow up in a family where healthy relationship skills are modeled, we're off to a good start. Unfortunately, many young people don't have that experience, and as a result, they may not recognize unhealthy behaviors such as intimidation, verbal abuse or even violence, because unfortunately, through parental modeling, those behaviors have

become normalized in their family, and that lack of awareness often leads young people to carry those behaviors into their own relationships.

And we're not just talking about couple relationships, either—these interpersonal skills, or lack thereof, play out in relationships at school, the workplace and the community. And once these unhealthy behaviors become ingrained, it becomes more difficult to unlearn those behaviors, often resulting in a pattern of unsafe or failed relationships throughout adulthood. These early relationship experiences also shape young people's perception of adult relationships and marriage, discouraging some of them from marrying at all, and others to marry almost with the expectation of divorce. And whether they marry or not, many of these couples will go on to have children together.

Our hope is to get a bit upstream by integrating healthy relationship education into social service delivery systems, where families are already accessing services. Raising awareness among parents regarding the importance of modeling healthy relationship skills is important for children in the home, but it's not enough for youth who are already entering adulthood. We need to reach those youth and young adults directly. And the Resource Center, as you can see in this slide, offers lots of free resources and free training and technical assistance to support you in integrating healthy relationship education into youth-serving organizations.

We also offer stakeholder-specific and culturally-responsive resources—so, depending on the type of populations you work with, we have resources that speak directly to them. We've also created a special collection for our library. Our library's special collection makes it even easier to find target resources for youth and young adults. In addition to the resources offered through the Resource Center, today's presentation includes information about a number of other free resources available to support the work that you do. You'll notice, as Jackie mentioned, some of those resources in the Downloadable Resources box, as well as some additional links to resources in the Weblinks box.

You'll hear from Tiffany how National Marriage Week USA can help you identify workshops available in your community, and Patty will talk about the amazing work her organization has done with thousands of youth and the outcomes they're seeing. Jamie from the Office of Adolescent Health will tell you more about the importance of healthy relationship skills to positive youth development. And finally, Ashley will share with you some of the dangerous reality [sic] of unhealthy relationships in the home, and how these unhealthy environments put youth at risk.

Please feel free to type your questions in the box throughout the presentations, and I'll return at the end of the presentations to facilitate a Q & A session. Thanks again for joining us, and I'll turn the presentation over to Tiffany now. Tiffany?

Tiffany Watkins Ahern

Thanks, Robyn. I want to turn to a quick poll question: In 1970 in the U.S., 80 percent of adults were married. How many adults are married today in the U.S.? So if you all would just take quick opportunity to fill in your answers, I'll wait a few seconds. [pause]

OK. Has everyone had a chance to answer? Great. So for those who answered 51 percent, that is correct. And that is according to the 2011 U.S. Census. Unfortunately,

marriage has been on a decline of years [sic], and that's where National Marriage Week USA comes in. I'll make a switch to my slide.

National Marriage Week was founded in 1996 in the United Kingdom, and in 2002, Marriage Week was adopted in the U.S. In 2009, a group led by Chuck Stetson and Sheila Weber worked with dozens of organizations in the U.S. to develop the National Marriage Week USA website. The purpose of the site is to bring together the many activities that organizations all around the country are already doing to strengthen marriage. This effort ignites National Marriage Week USA.

So, since then—2009—National Marriage Week happens each year. It has been consistently held from February 7th to February 14th. It is a collaborative campaign to strengthen individual marriages, reduce the divorce rate, and build a culture that fosters strong marriages. During National Marriage Week we highlight, through our national calendar and various media outlets, all the marriage and relationship activities going on during the week and the year. We are delighted to be a part of this webinar hosted by the National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families during National Marriage Week.

I just want to share a few quick research observations on marriage and youth. Social scientists at the Institute of Family Studies assert that marriage, or its lack thereof, can have effects on youth relationship development. If their parents are married and in a healthy relationship, the outcomes for youth are positive, such as, they have more stability, they receive consistent discipline, they receive more attention from their parents, and they are less likely to be in poverty. In addition, they do better in school, and are more likely to graduate from high school and avoid being in trouble, and will potentially obtain a better-paying job.

Youth as Robyn mentioned, subconsciously and consciously, are observing their parents and how they interact in their daily relationships. And youth model their relationships off from what they see from their parents.

Really, the future of marriage depends on our youth. Going back to the poll at the beginning of my remarks, the number of married adults has decreased since 1970. So if marriage is ever going to thrive again, it will be because more youth or young adults are getting married. Now, only 22 percent of millennials are married, so we still have a lot of work to do with our youth. It's never too early to start the conversation on what a healthy relationship looks like.

One interesting positive outcome for youth to consider, if they do get married—marriage often leads to more financial stability. No matter if you start off as a low-income married couple or a middle-income married couple, the research shows, by the Institute of Family Studies and American Enterprise Institute, that these couples will have better success. They have coined the term "the success sequence," which is: If millennials and youth graduate from high school, work full-time and marry before having children, they are more likely to have better financial stability and to not live in poverty.

Youth are very much impacted by marriage and healthy relationships, so again, it is never too early to start having these conversations with them on what healthy relationships look like. If youth choose to get married, there are so many great resources

out there, and many of them are aggregated on our website at NationalMarriageWeekUSA.org, and so many other great places. Thank you so much for having me today, and I turn it over to Patty Howell from Healthy Relationships California.

Patty Howell

Thank you very much. So here [is] my poll question: What is the top reason why you think American youth should have widespread access to relationship education? So please vote on that, because these are all very interesting rationales for relationship education for youth.

And meanwhile, I will start by saying that at Healthy Relationships California, we have taught well over 40,000 youth in relationship education programs, and I've gotten very enthusiastic responses from the students.

So on this basis, we were confident that our RE programs were very valuable in helping youth develop the skills they need to form and sustain healthy relationships in their lives, both in their current lives and as they move into and through adulthood, because learning foundational relationship skills enables you to have successful family relationships and successful relationships in the workplace, and be surrounded by the social support that we know is important for health and well-being, as some of these poll questions reflect.

Yet it's important to have hard data on this so we can justifiably make the case for a level of funding that would make relationship education programs as a resource for every youth in the country, which is what I'd like to have happen. So on this basis, Healthy Relationships California conducted research on the impact of our RE programs for youth, and the data from this investigation is published in our report called *Early Intervention*. It's an 80-page booklet on the research that we conducted in 2005 with 4,565 high school students, almost half female and male mostly—a little bit more female—grades nine through 12 with 42 percent of them being ninth graders. So that's an interesting skew.

Another interesting skew is that 86 percent of these participants were Hispanic, versus 53 percent of teens in California being Hispanic. So it really told us that Hispanic youth flock to our classes. It was really kind of astonishing to us to have such a high proportion of Hispanic youth.

So the students who participated in this research study took one of seven nationally-recognized relationship education curricula that were targeted for youth. These include some that you may know, like *Connections*, *Heathy Choices*, *Healthy Relationships*, *Love You Too*, *Pick A Partner*, and *World Class Relationships for Work & Home*. This was a quantitative and qualitative study. They filled out questions and rated themselves on a scale of 1 to 5, and then we asked them in many places to describe, in their own words, the impact of the relationship education course on them. And this was done as a retrospective post-class survey on the last day of class.

We asked them to focus on one key relationship, and I had thought that they would all pick a dating partner, but 51 percent of them picked a parent, 45 percent of which were their mother. But I think this is reflective of the fact that we had so many ninth graders taking the course. And from this study, we found positive impact across four key

relationship factors. One was on developing relationship efficacy, which is the sense that you know how to create a healthy relationship. After the RE class, 82 percent of these youth reported they now were confident in handling day-to-day challenges in their relationships; 82 percent also felt they were able to do the things necessary to settle conflicts; and 84 percent were now confident that they could use positive communication in their relationships. Those are very [no audio].

Another variable that we found strong data on was in developing conflict resolution skills: 78 percent were more respectful of others' feelings during conflicts; 74 percent now tried more often to end conflicts in a way that's satisfying to all involved. And then we also saw a significant change in demonstrating appreciation and support: 74 percent now express more often how much they care, 81 percent now let their partner know more that they appreciate their ideas or things they do, and 80 percent now are more supportive and understanding toward their partner. Now remember, in 51 percent of the time, the partners that they had in mind were their parents—so imagine as a parent having your child, your teen, be more appreciative of your ideas or the things you do for them, and be more supportive and understanding, and this is lovely kinds of change.

And then a fourth area of change was in decreasing aggressive behaviors and hostile interactions: 82 percent now yell and scream less often—yay! for that; 78 percent now use a disrespectful tone of voice less often; 88 percent now punish by withholding affection less often; 82 percent now use hurtful and targeted insults less often; and 75 percent now work hard more often to ensure no one in the relationship gets hurt emotionally or physically. So you see those changes are really so encouraging. The amount of change, the number of students who changed in those variables, is extremely high, and they're very encouraging results.

Now, we drilled down more on youth intimate partner violence, and found that after taking an RE class, 77 percent now physically hurt their romantic partner, such as hit, push, grab or shove less often; 85 percent now use threats less in an attempt to control their romantic partner; and 82 percent now agree more [that] in today's society, hitting, pushing, slapping, grabbing or shoving a spouse or dating partner is unacceptable under any circumstances.

And then, in their own words, how they talk about this—here are some examples: "This course helped me recognize what abuse really is. It helped me know if I myself am doing it. It helped me know all the different kinds of abuses. It will help me teach others who don't know about abuse."

And someone else says, "This course helped me to identify and admit what kinds of reaction I have when I get mad. I'm going to make sure I control them and be calm, and not say something I'll later regret. This will help me help others avoid abuse relationships." Again, somebody who not only has changed inside [of themselves], but they want to have an impact on their cohort in terms of this important factor.

And then somebody else says, "I've seen firsthand very bad relationships with violence and drugs, and I never want to be in their shoes. This presentation really taught me a lot of beneficial ideas."

And looking more at youth bullying, after taking a relationship education course, youth reported fewer physically and verbally aggressive behaviors associated with bullying and intimate partner violence. It's an indication that RE for youth provides an important course correction that can have large ripple effects throughout their lives.

Youth also report positive changes in their relationship with their fathers, including increases in problem solving and warm and supportive interactions, and decreases in negative and hostile interactions. This is an encouraging factor, because so many youth are disconnected from their dads because of the problems in the relationship with the mother. So for us to be able to help reach across that chasm is really very encouraging.

And then also, youth reported improved relationships with their siblings—this is also about the capacity of RE to help siblings build the connections that are really important, ones that can endure through their lives. And this youth bullying data and the intimate partner violence data are really quite heartening, because we can see the capacity of relationship education to stop the generational repetition of abusive behavior. So we're really quite pleased with this data.

Then I want to tell you specifically about one of our curricula that has really amazing efficacy for youth, helping them develop skills for getting and keeping a job, as well as developing successful relationships with their family and co-workers. The skills we teach in *Work & Home*, as we call it, include setting goals, effective listening, non-blameful confrontation, assuming self-responsibility, resolving conflicts, avoiding blame, giving apology and growing yourself. Now who doesn't want youth to learn those skills?

We've had strong demand for this curriculum in high school—it started as a program for adults, and some of our instructors and local partners begged us to be able to offer it to youth. They said they had opportunities to offer it in schools, so we cautiously let them do it on a trial basis, and the results were so encouraging and successful that we made it widely available for youth. And we've gotten very strong responses by school principals who see this course as being relevant to high school students, many of whom have an after-school job, and many of whom will be, after graduation, going out full-time into the workplace. So they recognize that it helps students develop these important job-related skills, and they see *World Class Relationships for Work & Home* not just as a dating and relationships course, which might be less valuable in a principal's eyes, than a course that really equips students for getting and keeping a job.

The students love it, as we said, and employers also love it because they need employees who have soft skills—have the capacity to relate effectively with customers and other staff, and so on. This curriculum is also taught in Department of Public Social Services and Welfare offices in their Jobs Corps program.

And then, just some brief data on the *Work & Home* program—we found highly significant change between the pre-test and the post-test on workplace communication and motivation and confidence to find a job, or a better job, and also highly significant improvements in relationship satisfaction at home, and in communication skills. And these data were significant to .001, so they're really quite astonishingly strong results.

So let me encourage you to contact me if you would like more information about our research on the relationship education programs with youth, and also on the *World*

Class Relationships for Work & Home program. [patty@RelationshipsCA.org, info@RelationshipsCA.org, 760-436-3960, www.RelationshipsCA.org] I'll be very happy to talk with any of you. I thank you for your involvement in this webinar, and I turn it over now to Jamie Kim.

Jamie Kim

Thanks, Patty. Today I'm going to talk about Positive Youth Development, and how it is an integral part of prevention efforts for youth and youth development. Second, I'm going to talk about some ways you can incorporate PYD and [unintelligible] work they do by using Adolescent Health: Think, Act, Grow (or TAG), or Call to Action for Adolescent Health. And finally, I'll share some TAG resources and OAH web content [that] hopefully you can find useful in your work.

The Office of Adolescent Health's mission is to lead the nation to ensure that America's adolescents thrive and become healthy, productive adults. It's a pretty broad mission statement, but positive youth development is embedded in our mission statement in all the work we do at OAH.

You might be asking, what's Positive Youth Development, or PYD? The Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs—it's a federal group of 20 federal departments and agencies that support youth—created upon a definition of positive development:

PYD is an intentional, pro-social approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups and families in a manner that is productive and constructive. It recognizes, utilizes and answers young people's strengths and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships and furnishing support needed to build on their leadership strengths.

This definition is based on years of work by experts, including Dr. [Richard] Catalano from the University of Washington, Karen Pittman and her colleagues at the Forum for Youth Investment, and Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg of Fostering Resilience.

PYD has its origins in the field of prevention. In the past, prevention efforts typically focused on single problems before they surfaced in youth, such as teen pregnancy, substance abuse or juvenile delinquency. But over time, practitioners, policymakers, funders and researchers determined that promoting positive asset building, and considering young people as resources, were critical strategies for broad-based prevention. The youth involvement field began examining the role of resiliency, which are the protective factors in a young person's environment, and how these factors can influence one's ability to overcome adversity and prevent problems.

Some of the factors that they identified included, but are not limited to, family support and monitoring, caring adults, positive peer groups, strong sense of self, self-esteem and future aspirations, and engagement in school and community activities. As you can see, a lot of these are built around relationships, whether with adults or within peer groups. Using Positive Youth Development approaches that support and enhance these factors is now considered necessary for improving many critical outcomes for youth.

So we used PYD principles in the development of adolescent health, Think, Act, Grow, or TAG, which is our national call to action for adolescent health. So what does that

mean? We're trying to engage professionals who work with teens, parents and other caring adults, and teens themselves, in ways that build on young people's strengths and improve adolescent health now and into adulthood. TAG is a comprehensive, strength-based, positive youth development approach to improving adolescent health sponsored by OAH, and the goals of TAG are to raise awareness about the importance of adolescent health, engage stakeholders, get adolescent health on the national agenda, and spur actions to improve adolescent health.

TAG was developed with input from a broad group of more than 80 expert stakeholders representing six different youth-serving sectors from across the U.S. Originally, these six sectors included professionals from the field of public health, health care, social work, education, community and out-of-school time programs, as well as faith-based leaders. We also had input from groups representing parents and teens. Currently we're updating TAG with some information from workforce development professionals, so that should be coming out, hopefully, in the next month or so.

So those original experts all agreed on the five essentials for adolescent health that function as the cornerstone of TAG. They are positive connections with supportive people; safe and secure places to live, learn and play; access to high-quality teen-friendly health care; opportunities to engage as learners, leaders, team members [and] workers; and coordinated adolescent- and family-centered services. By using the five essentials as our foundation, we worked with the national leaders to develop specific research-based action steps tailored for each of the sectors. We then developed action steps for parents, other TAG members and teams, and for all of those we identified curated resources to help implement those action steps.

TAG is part of a national and international movement to raise awareness of the importance of adolescent health, and to raise awareness [that] taking a Positive Youth Development approach is critical to successfully improving the health outcomes of adolescents. Some ways that TAG has translated PYD into action is by highlighting young people's strengths, promoting opportunities to engage young people, and consistently reinforcing PYD through all of our messaging and materials.

Our website has a bunch of content covering a number of adolescent health topics. Some of this content includes information on physical and mental health, reproductive health, substance use and healthy relationships. The healthy relationship content is being updated right now, and will include information on friendships and parenting relationships. And for all these, we have national statistics available for the nation and by state, so you can go in and see different measures, relationships or substance use or reproductive health.

The OAH website also has tips for parents on talking to their teens about different subjects, and we also link to many other federal resources in our Adolescent Health Library. We have a federal services locator which is pretty popular that allows people to go in and put in your community ZIP code or city name and find services in your community. Some are more TAG-specific resources, including the TAG Playbook; TAG Talk videos, which features adolescent health experts; research reviews for the five essentials; a TAG social media toolkit; and successful program strategies exemplifying

TAG in action, and how some of these programs utilize the five essentials. All of these products are free to download from our website.

So next, I have a poll question: Does your program incorporate any of the TAG five essentials for healthy adolescents? Again, those were positive connections in support of people; safe and secure places to live, learn and play; access to high-quality teen-friendly health care; opportunities to engage as learners, leaders, team members, workers; [and] coordinated adult and family-centered services. You may not know it, but if you incorporated any of those essentials, you are a part of TAG. [pause] It looks like some of you do, and some of you might after the webinar, so—looks pretty good.

So I guess I'll just move on to the Connect with OAH. So here are some ways to connect with us: here's our website URL [<https://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah>], our Twitter handle [[@TeenHealthGov](#)], the hashtag we use for TAG [[#TAG42mil](#)], our email address for the office [oah.gov@hhs.gov]. We also have a TAG-specific email [TAGteam@hhs.gov] if you have any questions about TAG or some of our resources, and also we're on YouTube [www.youtube.com/teenhealthgov]. We're currently sharing some content on the Office of Women's Health Pinterest page [www.pinterest.com/womenshealth/girls-health/], so you can go there and find some more information also.

So thank you, and the next speaker will be Ashley Garrett.

Ashley Garrett

Hi, everyone. Again, this is Ashley Garrett—I'm the Director of the National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center, and I have the opportunity to talk a little bit more about what can go wrong when healthy relationships don't exist for the youth that we work with. I think Patty highlighted some of the ways that we look at dating violence, harm in the home, and I am going to talk a little bit about youth being at higher risk for being trafficked, as well as survivors of trafficking and the ways in which the lack of understanding and knowledge on healthy relationships can pass on multigenerational violence against kids.

So on that note, I did want to do a quick poll to get a better sense from all of you about how have you worked with individuals or families impacted by human trafficking. So this'll help me tailor a little bit to understand more about where some of you all are coming from. [pause] OK—it looks like maybe a third think they might, and about 20 percent of you are not sure. And many of you I am willing to bet may, after this session, recognize that you may have been working with them, folks that are at least vulnerable to it.

When we look at what is human trafficking—so there are federal and state statutes that are important to know. I'm just going to highlight the federal statute, which is that "Human trafficking is a crime involving the exploitation of someone for the purpose of compelled labor, or a commercial sex act through the use of force, fraud or coercion." According to federal law, a commercial sex act means "any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person." And really important, when looking at youth, when a person is younger than the age of 18 and is induced to perform a commercial sex act, there is no requirement about providing any force, fraud or

coercion. Basically, under federal law, a youth cannot consent, no matter what the circumstances are, to commercial sex.

So when we look more specifically at how that may play out for our youth, sex trafficking is really looking again at the variety of ways in which someone may be forced into a commercial sex act, and that could be anything from doing particular sex acts within different environments like strip clubs—it can be involved in party settings, we see a lot with gang activities as well. And labor trafficking—if anyone's heard of sex trafficking when it comes from the youth perspective, usually the focus is on sex trafficking, and I think it's also really important to recognize our youth are being exploited for labor trafficking—and this can be anything from magazine crews, working at carnivals or in restaurants, a whole wealth of different ways in which someone is trying to take advantage of our youth.

When we look at the population, anyone is and can be affected by trafficking, but there are some populations that are more vulnerable than others. And the ones where we really see youth are, unfortunately, in all of these categories, right? So kids that are involved in the child welfare system or are runaways, and often are fleeing circumstances in their own home situation; LGBTQI individuals who are often very vulnerable, depending on the circumstances of the community and the family that they live within; [and] survivors of other crime. The statistics show that if you have a history of child abuse or child sexual abuse or domestic violence in your home, you are much more at risk of becoming trafficked.

While I'm not going to go into a huge amount of depth on each of those, I think it's just really important to keep in mind that these are trends, in terms of looking at who's vulnerable, but that traffickers are equal opportunity exploiters. What they're really looking for is someone that can be any race, gender, identity, sex, age or profession, but there are particular groups that are vulnerable. So it's important to recognize those vulnerabilities, but also not let the stereotypes cloud your perception.

So, one of the things I think that's really interesting when we look at some of the research that's been recently done—this is from a research study that was done with youth in Covenant House, which is based out of New York City, so this is a scope of research done specifically within New York City. Many people think, in not an unsurprising way, where we look at other forms of violence—sexual assault, stranger danger, child abuse—that strangers are the ones that are coming into bringing individuals into the circumstance. And this research shows that a much more significant level of exploitation and abuse through trafficking is done through immediate family, through personal relationships, whether it's friends, boyfriends or workers, the employers that folks are looking at.

I think one of the other things we want to look at is the ACEs study. I'm assuming some of you are familiar with this study—it was done in the mid-1990s by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Kaiser Permanente, and they looked at 17,000 participants on childhood maltreatment, family dysfunction and current health status and behaviors to create what is commonly called ACEs. The ACEs pyramid represents that framework, and they basically categorized experiences into three areas: abuse, which can be physical, emotional or sexual; neglect, which is physical or emotional; and

household dysfunction, which can include mental illness, incarcerated relatives, mothers treated violently—domestic violence, substance use or divorce. They found that of the 17,000 respondents, over 64 percent of them had at least one of these factors, and that as they became adults, their negative health outcomes became pretty profound. And the more ACEs that you have in your experience and in your background becomes, the more at risk you are for significant health outcomes, including death.

One thing I do know in my work with survivors is that most survivors have very high ACE scores, so the [more] ways in which we can work through healthy relationships to address the core fundamental issues that our children are experiencing, the more we can also look towards preventing them from becoming trafficked.

For those of you not so familiar with trafficking, there's some different flags to be aware of as you're working with youth. We tend to classify these into some different areas. An environmental type of red flag could be if you are working with a child or a youth that does not seem to be getting a lot of sleep and seems to talk about a lack of privacy that they may have, either in their home or in the environment in which they are living. We see a lot of environmental factors related to school attendance. Some individuals, you will see school-age children at home during the day when they should be in school, and other survivors actually report that they were the superstar [with] hundred-percent attendance records because school was the safe place for them to be.

When we look at physical, there's a lot of different ways, as you can imagine, that trafficking and the different forms of exploitation can manifest physically—certainly, particularly looking at youth with sexually-transmitted infections, malnourishment or reporting of chronic pain. A thing specific [sic] that we see a lot with sex trafficking is what we call "branding," which are individual tattoos where someone is literally branded to demonstrate their trafficker's control and ownership over that individual.

And then when we look at the behavior sides of things, you'll see a lot of survivors that have experienced substance use, either as part of the exploitation where their trafficker forced substance use onto them, or as a means of coping, either during or even after they have been able to escape or gotten away from the circumstance. Guilt and shame—people don't recognize that they're being exploited or trafficked, so they don't define themselves in that way, and in the same way that we see a lot of domestic violence, they are taught by their traffickers that this is their fault, and this is what they deserve.

We also see a lot of trauma bonding, and this is where the individual has built a connection with their trafficker that, from the outside looking in, it's a very toxic and obviously [no audio, 13 sec] exploitive relationship. But from that individual's perspective, it is the bond that they can rely on, it is their safest bond, and it's a place that they need to be able to focus in on.

So what do you do about that if you are working with a youth, and you're concerned that they may be vulnerable? One of the first things to do is figure out where to go to reach out, whether it's within your community—there's lots of different structures and organizations out there working in your communities. If you're not already connected, a great way to connect to those folks is through the National Human Trafficking Hotline,

where they have a whole resource directory across the country, where they are resourced, and part of their main mission is to connect you to who is doing this work in your community. So you can help the individual that you may already be working with, or get involved because you know that there may be some ways that you and your own expertise can contribute.

When we look at how to actually respond to the issue, I think one of the things that's most critical is that we apply what we call a trauma-informed approach when we're working with anyone who has been affected by trauma, and particularly looking at individuals who are survivors of human trafficking, because it's most likely that they have had multiple levels of trauma and violence committed and perpetrated against them.

For those of you unfamiliar with a trauma-informed approach, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration—we like to call it SAMHSA—defines trauma as "the results from an event, series of events or set of circumstances that is experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening, and that has lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning, mental, physical, social, emotional and spiritual well-being." In short, trauma is any experience that overwhelms one's ability to cope, and when we look at survivors of trafficking, we know that not only have they experienced trauma related to their actual exploitation specific to trafficking, but we also know that there were many of the factors that are identified through that ACES study, and others that we consider upstream determinants, that made them vulnerable to trafficking to begin with.

As we look at how to devise and do an approach to impact that, [it's] really important that we do realize that there is widespread impact of trauma, and that there is a variety of different ways and paths for recovery. That we recognize what the signs and symptoms of trauma are—not just in the individuals that we're serving, but also the families, our own staff and others that are involved in the system. That we respond by fully integrating our knowledge about trauma and how that can manifest and play out in our organizational policies, procedures and practices. And that we actively resist, both in our individual interactions and through our organizations' responses, to prevent re-traumatization. That's not easily done, but there's lots of really good ways to get some support in how to do that and how to proceed, if this is an area that you are now starting to recognize, or have already recognized, that you are serving this population.

One of the most important things about trafficking and identifying individuals who are either at risk or who have been trafficked is that they come up and they appear in a variety of different places. You may be a child welfare individual. You may be an emergency room doctor or a pediatric nurse. You may be doing clinical work in a school setting. You may be supporting someone as a lawyer going through a domestic violence situation. All of these are places where those individuals may appear, and they're also really important in terms of figuring out how to respond cohesively and holistically to all of the needs that these individuals have, so that we are not just serving their individual needs when they are identified in the immediacy of the aftermath of an exploitation related to human trafficking, but we recognize that that does have a long-term impact on their health and well-being, and the well-being and health of their families and friends and community members. And that by using strategies that are inclusive of doing healthy

relationship work, that we can not only help in the recovery of the individuals who have already experienced this trauma, but also work towards actively preventing future individuals from being trafficked.

I know that's a lot of information, and for those of you that are newer to this issue, the good news is there's a lot of resources out there to help you be able to learn and dig further into understanding this. I work with the National Human Trafficking Training and Technical Assistance Center, and our job [here is] to support all of you in your communities in responding to these issues. [acf.hhs.gov/otip/training/nhttac, info@nhttac.org, 844-648-8822] We have a variety of different ways that we can support you. We provide individualized technical assistance to organizations and communities upon request. We also have a variety of on-demand and accredited trainings that you can watch, either from your own home or office, through online resources as well as in-person, formalized accredited trainings.

And throughout all of our work, I think one of the most foundational pieces of our work is that we actively involve survivors in our responses. We not only create opportunities for professional development for survivors who want to be part of the movement against human trafficking, but also look at partnering communities and organizations with survivor leaders who can provide a particular lived-experience reality in how they respond to the issue.

So, on that note, I'm going to turn it over to Robyn.

Robyn Cenizal

Wow—thank you. Gosh, I hope that all of you who joined us for today's webinar enjoyed all this fabulous information. I know I did—I find it so interesting.

So I do have a few questions, and just before I start with the questions that have come in from you, I want to remind you all that at the end of this presentation, you will receive a pop-up survey, and once you complete the survey, you'll have a link to receive a certificate for participating in today's webinar. So don't go away—hang around for the survey so that you can make sure you get your certificate.

So let's start with some questions. First of all, Patty—there's a question regarding the amount of change in youth, and did you do a pre-test? And I know you mentioned a retrospective pre-test, so could you talk a little bit more about that?

Patty Howell

Yes. In our early intervention study, which was the large study with 4,500 youth, it was a retrospective post. So no, there was no pre-test for that study. For the smaller study that we did on *World Class Relationships for Work & Home*, we did a pre-test/post-test design.

Robyn Cenizal

And can you share a little bit more about the research methods that you used?

Patty Howell

Like what? What do you want to know?

Robyn Cenizal

I don't know [laughter], I guess maybe talk a little bit more about how you determined how you were going to look at the research.

Patty Howell

Well, with the large study I think I'd have to identify one limitation of working in a school system, which is that it's hard to get your surveys into classrooms, and there's only so much time in a classroom, so you focus on teaching the curriculum. And our researchers felt at the time, and I think there's a case to be made, that a retrospective post was a useful design, because the students themselves can look at how they've changed across different variables—to what extent do you see yourself now engaging less in certain kinds of behaviors, or more in certain kinds of behaviors, and then rank that on a scale of 1 to 5, and then tell us more about that in your own words.

For the research on the *World Class Relationships for Work & Home* curriculum, we did the same kinds of data collection through surveys, but we did them pre- and post- both so we could look at statistically the amount of change after they've taken the program.

Robyn Cenizal

One more question for you, Patty, before I let you go: How do we articulate to employers the value of healthy relationship education? I love this question because you and I talk about this stuff all the time, about how important it is. So share with them how you articulate to employers.

Patty Howell

Well, if you're going to have a successful employee, it's very important because every employer invests in their employees. It costs you a lot of time and money to educate new staff members, whether it's just flipping hamburgers or something more. You want to have an employee that will be responsive to your needs as an employer, you want to have an employee that will be responsive and sensitive to the needs of customers, and it's just very important that they have the kind of skills that will enable them to interact effectively, not only with you and the customers, but also with other workers on the job.

So if you can hire somebody that has these [kinds] of relationship skills that are taught in our *Work & Home* curriculum, you really have more confidence that your investment in the employee [will pay] off. And so I think it's a very attractive attribute for employers that someone has taken a curriculum like *World Class Relationships for Work at Home*, and for that reason, that curriculum is taught in Jobs Corps programs and Welfare offices here in California.

And I think it's fantastic—I mean, I know that every job I've ever been on, I have to be able to get along with my boss, with my colleagues and also with customers. That's the name of the game. And it takes skill, because you always bump into conflicts in every relationship—so the extent to which you know how to resolve them and be able to listen sensitively to each other's needs and work creatively to work out solutions, you've got somebody who's extremely valuable for the company.

Robyn Cenizal

Absolutely. And when you can get along with people, sometimes that's more important than having the skills. Because we can teach skill, the technical skill, but you can't always teach people how to get along. That's really important.

Patty Howell

That's right.

Robyn Cenizal

And I would also add that the Resource Center has a workforce professional's guide which gets into some of the research about the \$6.8 billion a year that it costs employers for unhealthy relationships. So I would encourage folks who are trying to make the argument for employers to look at that resource as well. Thank you, Patty.

So, Jamie—can you give an example of the successful strategies you mentioned in your presentation?

Jamie Kim

Sure. We have about 30-some successful strategies on the website right now, and they're filterable by different parameters. I'm trying to pull them up real quick to pull one out. For example, one of our first ones we put up was Colorado 9 to 25, which is run by the Colorado Department of Public Health, and they did a bunch of work with engaging youth around the state and working with adults to align efforts and achieve positive outcomes for all youth ages 9 to 25. But it was really kind of a cool program. They did a lot of work with the youth—they went all over the state. We had one of those.

We had one with [no audio] Health Centers in Schools, which is in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. It's a school-based health center. They're in all of the schools in the district, and they had a lot of research on the things they've done to keep kids healthy—also stay in school, and we know all the positive outcomes that come with that.

Those are two examples—we have about 30 up right now, I think.

Robyn Cenizal

Great. And so folks can access some of those examples on the website as well?

Jamie Kim

Yep—they're all up there. We have web-based text, and also PDFs if you want to download it and print it out.

Robyn Cenizal

Perfect. So, one more question for you: How can Positive Youth Development approaches be integrated into healthy relationship education programs? For example, folks who are already offering a relationship education program, how can they incorporate your work into that?

Jamie Kim

Sure. They're not interchangeable, but there's a lot of relationship emphasis in PYD. So whether it's with teen youth or with positive adult connections, we have a bunch of resources on our website for this relationship-building aspect. I can't think of specific examples right now, but we definitely have the information up there, and there are resources that are federal and some non-federal they can use to integrate the PYD stuff into relationship work.

Robyn Cenizal

And your group also offers training and technical assistance. So if somebody has some specific questions, they can contact you, correct?

Jamie Kim

Yeah—we don't exactly do T&TA specifically, but yeah, we definitely can answer questions and direct you to resources and try to help out in that way.

Robyn Cenizal

Perfect. And on the healthy relationship education side, the Resource Center can provide some technical assistance and also support in identifying appropriate resources. So we can cover them from both sides there—that's great. Thank you, Jamie.

Ashley—the question for you is: What strategies do you have for integrating human trafficking identification/prevention strategies into youth development programs?

Ashley Garrett

Phew—good one. [laughs] You know, I think one of the things that we are really trying to emphasize now is how to make that more effective. The Department of Education has put out a toolkit that they use, which I can help make available to all of you working in an education setting, on how to do that. The other piece is, there's a lot of programs that work with youth that are at risk that meet some of those factors, whether there's been some red flags identified—they have high ACE scores—and other ways in which they're intervening. And there's some peer-to-peer models that are compelling and have done some interesting work in how to connect both healthy relationships with what is going on with their reality now, and use it as a way to empower those youth to make different choices. So I think there's a lot of really good opportunities out there.

There isn't, however, a lot of research yet on what works.... The anti-trafficking movement in the United States is relatively new, all things considered. The federal law was not passed until 2000. So while this exploitation has been going on for generations, the actual response network and process for how to do that first became very active at wanting to make sure that individuals who are already being exploited were identified and responded to, and the criminal justice response resulted from that. And part of what NHTTAC is doing is we're trying to help shift and broaden the conversation, to look much more from a public health lens which looks at these vulnerability factors and those opportunities for intervention early on to prevent trafficking from happening. I'm hopeful that there's some momentum that is going to lead to more evidence-based approaches, but right now those are some of the examples of some good promising practices.

Robyn Cenizal

Thanks. I think we're all hopeful for sure—thank you.

Ashley Garrett

Yeah.

Robyn Cenizal

One last question for Patty. Patty—

Patty Howell

Yeah?

Robyn Cenizal

—can you tell us how much of your youth work continues under the new fatherhood grant? Are you continuing your work with youth under that grant as well?

Patty Howell

Unfortunately, no.

Robyn Cenizal

Okay. So it's all out from under the fatherhood grant?

Patty Howell

Yeah, yeah.

Robyn Cenizal

How about young dads? Are you working with young dads?

Patty Howell

Well, in our grant application, we wrote in the eligibility for dads—I think it was 18 years and older—and surprisingly, we haven't gotten any teen dads. None. All of our dads have been at least in their 20s, if not older.

Robyn Cenizal

Interesting. Once the judgment portion of the brain develops, they realize they can benefit from these programs.

Patty Howell

Maybe, maybe.

Robyn Cenizal

Well, thank you all so much for the questions. I'm going to turn it back over to Jackie. I thank you all again for the questions. Thank you for joining us for today's presentation, and Jackie will go through the follow-up pieces with you all. Thank you again.

Jackie Rhodes

Thanks, Robyn, and thank you so much to our speakers for their expertise and your willingness to share with us today. As the webinar concludes, as we mentioned, there

will be a brief survey that pops up on your screen. Please remember to provide your feedback using the survey, as it helps us with planning for future webinars. And once you complete the survey, you'll be able to access your certificate of completion for attending the webinar. And the survey link will also be sent out via email after the webinar. So if you miss it, or you're attending with multiple people, you'll be able to get to it that way.

If you have any additional questions, you can send them to info@HealthyMarriageandFamilies.org, and you can check out more resources and find information at our website, which is www.HealthyMarriageandFamilies.org. Thank you all so much for joining today. That concludes the webinar.

Operator

And ladies and gentlemen, that concludes today's webinar. We thank you for your participation.