

Peer-Led Preconception Health Workshops



Outline

- What is the Preconception Peer Educator (PPE) program?
- What is PPE at Northeastern University?
- Workshop development process
- Implementation of workshops
- Evaluation of workshops
- Future Directions for PPE

What is the Preconception Peer Educator program?

- The Preconception Peer Educator (PPE) program was created by the Office of Minority Health to reduce disparities in infant mortality by promoting preconception health.
- PPE trains college students as peer educators, *targeting younger people that are not actively trying to start a family*
- Learn more about the PPE program at:
<http://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/templates/content.aspx?ID=8394&lvl=2&lvlID=117> OR Google search, "Preconception Peer Educators Program"

What is preconception health?

- Preconception health (PCH) is a woman's health before she becomes pregnant.
- PCH involves preventing unintended pregnancies, identifying risk factors that could affect reproductive outcomes, and initiating education and preventive interventions before pregnancy.

Why is it important to promote preconception health?

- Infant mortality rates among African American babies are twice as high as those of non-Hispanic white babies.
- 50% of all pregnancies are unintended or unplanned, and the fetus is most susceptible to developing birth defects in the first 4-10 weeks after conception, before prenatal care is normally initiated. Therefore, many women are unable to reduce many controllable risk factors *unless intervention begins before conception*.

**Infant mortality rate
per 1,000 live births,
2009**

Non-Hispanic Black	Non-Hispanic White	All Races	Non-Hispanic Black/Non-Hispanic White Ratio
12.4	5.3	6.4	2.3

Source: CDC 2013. Infant Mortality Statistics from the 2009 Period Linked Birth/Infant Death Data Set. *National Vital Statistics Reports*. Table A.

http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr61/nvsr61_08.pdf

What is PPE at Northeastern University?

- A group of students within Northeastern's Health Disparities Student Collaborative
- Create and implement programs to promote preconception health in collaboration with the PPE program.
- Teach workshops to teens and young adults.

Our Mission: To educate and empower teens and young adults with the skills and knowledge to make healthy decisions, ultimately reducing health disparities and infant mortality rates.

Why peer-led workshops?

- By using a peer-to-peer teaching model, we believe that we can influence a sense of self efficacy in young peoples' abilities to be healthy and to reduce disparities. This positive peer influence can create a domino effect, thus reaching more people in the community.

Workshops:

- Total of four workshops:
 - *General Introduction/Health Disparities*
 - *Be Kind, Unwind*
 - *Fuel Your Fire*
 - *The Life Course Game*
- Approximately 1 hour per workshop
- Includes activities, games, and discussions
- Flexible so that they can be tailored to any school/organization
- Evaluation tools include: quantitative and qualitative pre-tests and post-tests for participants, and self-evaluation for the volunteers

Training volunteers to teach:

- Preconception Peer Educator trainings at Northeastern University
- Meet weekly with the Health Disparities Student Collaborative to memorize the workshop curricula, discuss boundaries, and practice public speaking and teaching skills

Barriers to Implementation:

We came across several barriers to implementation, including:

- Lack of funding
- Resistance of public schools
- Time constraints
- Loss of student volunteers
- Training new volunteers

Pilot workshop in July 2013:

Over the summer, we implemented the first workshop in an affordable living community youth program serving hundreds of youth and teens.

Quantitative Results:

n=15, ages 14-20

Pre quiz average: 66%

Post quiz average: 92%

Highest score on pre test: 86%

Lowest score on pre-test:43%

Highest score on post test: 100%

Lowest score on post-test: 79%

Examples of questions with significant pre-to-post-test improvement:

True/False: Half of all pregnancies are unplanned

True/False: You can help eliminate health disparities.

Preconception health is about

- a) Educating young people about healthy lifestyles before they even considering having a family
- b) Having authority figures (principles, teachers) bully teens into making healthy decisions
- c) Study techniques and getting good grades
- d) Good nutrition for pregnant women

What is the recommended amount of exercise for teens?

- a) 30 minutes per day
- b) 45 minutes per day
- c) 60 minutes every 3 days
- d) 60 minutes per day**

On a scale of 1-10 (1 being highly disagree and 10 being highly agree)

___I know where to find information that guides me to good nutrition

__ I can personally help reduce health disparities

__ I will share what I have learned with friends who did not take part

***100% of participants placed a 10 on each of these questions in the post-tests**

Qualitative Feedback:

What was your least favorite part of the workshop?

“The younger kids yelling”

“Other kids interrupting”

“The quiz”

“Unknown”

What was your most favorite part of the workshop?

“Learning about folic acid”

“Learning something that can definitely benefit me in the future :)”

“I learned some pretty cool information that I didn't know and I want to learn more!!!”

“This is helping me and other people”

Notes on pilot workshop:

- Older participants (above age 14) on average were more interested in the material and performed better on post-tests than younger participants
- Incentives were necessary for participants to complete tests
- Community program restricted us to only one comprehensive workshop; too much information in one sitting
- More qualitative feedback was obtained orally as written feedback was limited

Future Directions:

- Separate by age groups
- Edit the qualitative section in post-tests to obtain more thorough feedback
- Create strong partnerships with Boston organizations
- Build partnerships with other PPE college groups via the up-coming OMH website
- Connect with other Boston colleges to train more PPEs and volunteers
- Continue to analyze results and update the workshops as needed

Discussion/Questions

Thank you! If you would like to collaborate, learn more, or become PPE trained, contact me at: vishnja.e@husky.neu.edu It was great to meet you- Emily