

PHHS BLOCK GRANT SUCCESS STORY 2016

RAPE PREVENTION PROGRAM

PRINCIPLES OF PREVENTION USED TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CALIFORNIA.

Issue: (1) Nearly one in two women (44.6%) and one in five men (22.2%) experience sexual violence other than rape throughout their lifetime; (2) One in three California women, about 4.5 million, have experienced rape, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner in their lifetime; (3) A majority of female survivors are raped before age 25; (4) Exposure to sexual violence (SV) is associated with unhealthy behaviors (e.g., smoking, physical inactivity, eating disorders) that contribute to obesity and chronic disease later in life¹.

Public health practitioners must work to change individual behaviors and the social conditions that encourage and make violence possible.

Intervention: The California Department of Public Health (CDPH), Rape Prevention Program (RPP) established comprehensive guidelines to ensure development of locally funded programs according to sound principles, available evidence, and best practices. The guidelines include CDC-recommended Principles of Prevention (POP)² to ensure that programs: (1) are comprehensive; (2) use varied teaching methods; (3) invoke sufficient dosage; (4) are theory driven; (5) promote positive relationships; (6) are appropriately timed; (7) are socio-culturally relevant; (8) include outcome evaluation; (9) have well-trained staff; and (10) are evidence-based.

Utilizing PHHS Block Grant funding, RPP staff collaborated with the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault in November 2016 to conduct a statewide educational activity in which staff from rape crisis centers highlighted best practices in implementing POP in local programs. These presentations included: (1) The Center for Violence-Free Relationships showcased how to teach resiliency skills by using a ***comprehensive*** SV prevention program within a middle school setting; (2) The Center for Community Solutions focused on how to implement a ***socio-culturally relevant*** SV prevention program through cultural humility, community responsiveness, and healthy community partnerships in a Latino community; (3) The Center for the Pacific Asian Family highlighted ***socio-culturally relevant*** SV prevention strategies in working with young men of Southeast Asian refugee families; and (4) Strength United focused on ***positive relationships*** and an important aspect of using a public health approach--implementing a program that is community-led--by sharing best practices in engaging youth and adults in a community assessment to implement their community-mobilization project focused on SV prevention.

Impact: By providing enhanced educational activities through peer learning and networking, RPP staff promotes learning that facilitates leadership development as well as capacity building within the SV prevention field in California. As a result, presenters engaged in shared leadership, while participants gained a better understanding of how to integrate the POP into their programs, and how to develop a stronger theory of change for their prevention work. This will contribute to the development of programs supported by these principles, as well as stronger evaluation of best practices that will demonstrate impact and outcomes of prevention efforts.