



High Impact Approach to Sexual Health Promotion and Advocacy Among African American Female Collegiate Students.

Background:

The burden of HIV/AIDS in the United States specifically in the south disproportionately impacts African Americans. Few sexual-health campaigns target African American colligates. Formative research with this population proposes the need to reach females in this setting with assertive and empowering methods. We sought to develop, implement and evaluate a sexual health project for African American Females between the ages of 17-22 enrolled in college.

Methods:

Lady Phronie, MPH (LPMPH), The Community Education Group (CEG), and key stakeholders implemented LADY Project. It engaged members of a pre existing campus organization located and operating on a Historically Black College campus in Atlanta, GA. to promote positive attitudes and behaviors related to sexual and reproductive health. The intervention consisted of five peer lead sessions conducted weekly. The LADY Project concluded with the participants conducting a service learning project with a self efficacy theme to the residents of the freshman dormitories on campus. Mix method data was collected from pre and post tests, as well as individual and overall session evaluations. The data was analyzed to determine the project's effectiveness on HIV Knowledge, empowerment, advocacy and stigma.

Results:

A total of 16 females age 18 - 21 completed the pre-project test and 11 completed the post-project test. The responses on the pre-test related to HIV transmission demonstrated a need for HIV/AIDS education. There was a statistical significant gain in HIV/AIDS knowledge from pre to post test. 100% of the project participants expressed overwhelming interest and motivation while designing the service learning outreach portion of the LADY Project.

Conclusions:

Data indicate initial success of LADY on African American Colligate female's desire for self-efficacy and willingness to advocate around sexual health issues. When executed with fidelity, high impact projects are cost effective in promoting social and sexual reproductive justice, while providing opportunities for colligate females to take ownership in transforming their health as well as take leadership in promoting better health in their community. Replicated of the LADY Project Model could expanded to other colleges and universities and for other health behaviors.



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