Mar 4th, 3:00 PM - 4:15 PM

Utilizing Hip Hop and African American History as Change Agents for Teenage Pregnancy Prevention

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1. **RELEVANCE: Explain how the proposal relates to one or two (no more than two) of the five strands (see strands) connected with the conference theme. (Use "person-first" language when applicable.)**

Wholistic Stress Control Institute, Inc. is proposing to provide an educational and engaging hip hop workshop on the delivery of its Blueprint: A Sexual Risk Avoidance and Wellness program. This interactive prevention program is connected to the conference's HEART and HEALTH strands. The topics to be discussed per the HEART strand include: character education; communication skills; positive identity development; decision making; and goal setting. The topics to be discussed per the HEALTH strand include: drug, alcohol, and tobacco education; teenage pregnancy, HIV, and STD prevention. All topics listed are included in the 8-week program curriculum that also utilizes hip hop and African American history modalities.

2. **BRIEF PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: Write an informative and interesting description of your presentation in 35 to 65 words; include specific objective(s), topics(s), and target audience. (If accepted, this description will be used in the conference program.) (Use "person-first" language when applicable.)**

Calling all health educators interested in utilizing hip hop and African American history as an teaching tool to decrease risky behaviors. The objectives for this educational and engaging workshop will provide innovative ideas to: 1) engage youth utilizing hip hop music; 2) integrate African American history to enhance positive identity concepts; and 3) increase pro-social skills to prevent teenage pregnancy prevention and other negative behaviors.

3. **SUMMARY:** Summarize proposal in 250 to 350 words. Preference will be given to proposals that describe practical models, programs, methods, strategies, or practices and provide "take home" learning opportunities for participants. Session presentations must not include advertisements for books, products, programs, or services. Do not include any self-identifying information. (Use "person-first" language when applicable.)

The hip hop culture has been criticized for its depiction and glamorization of sex, drugs, alcohol, violence, teenage pregnancy, and overall negative character traits. However, the roots of hip hop culture encompassing varied communication mediums, conflict resolution, anti gang, pro-social skills, entrepreneurialism, and knowledge of self through cultural pride are hip hops guiding principles. These principles served as a positive code of ethics for youth and the blueprint for Wholistic Stress Control Institute, Inc. sexual risk avoidance and wellness program.

This presentation will provide an overview of Wholistic Stress Control Institute's Blueprint: A Sexual Risk Avoidance Education Project model. Various activities utilizing Hip hop and African American history will be implemented as take home learning opportunities. These activities will demonstrate how to utilize these art and cultural forms as change agent strategies for specific HEART and HEALTH strand topics. The programs evaluation results and a question and answer session will be included.

The Blueprint Project provides an evidenced based, wholistic approach, grounded in the social learning theory. It promotes the benefits of self-regulation, poverty prevention, healthy relationships, goal setting, resisting sexual coercion, dating violence, and other youth risk behaviors such as underage drinking and illicit drug use without normalizing teen sexual activity. *REAL Essentials*, an evidenced based, age

appropriateness and medically accurate curriculum, developed by the Center for Relationship Education is taught. The project also incorporates a multi-faceted positive youth development approach which includes: 1) College, Career and Vocational Explorations; 2) Stress & Anger Management (Conflict Resolution/Effective Communication/Decision Making); 3) Money Management; 4) Art & Cultural Development (African American History and hip hop infusion). Peer leadership training, social media programming and parent education are the remaining components. The project targets 250, males and females, ages 13-19 in Fulton and Dekalb counties, who are in foster care or group homes, had contact with juvenile justice system, live in low income communities, and/or are at risk for teenage pregnancy.

4. Describe evidence that demonstrates the field-tested effectiveness of the proposed solution or approach. Explain how the proposal is based on known research and promising practices. Do not include any self-identifying information. (Use "person-first" language when applicable.)

Wholistic Stress Control Institute, Inc. has implemented effective teenage pregnancy prevention programs for more than 10 years. Evaluation activities have included collecting the survey instrument from the targeted groups at two points—baseline and exit. The evaluation team is involved in significant aspects of program functioning. Members of the evaluation team conduct record reviews on a quarterly basis, site visits at least once each semester, are present at project team meetings, and for on-site for testing, focus groups, and special activities. Monthly meetings with the evaluation team were held to ensure fidelity, discuss upcoming programming and schedule of events; discuss adaptations and review the quality assurance tools for programming effectiveness overall.

Members of the evaluation team conducted a total of eight site visits thus far to witness the program activities and services being provided for the program participants during the Fall and Spring semesters for the 2017-2018 school year. A different class topic area was assessed during each visit and included observing the instructors for the program. Overall, the facilitators demonstrated that they were exceptionally well prepared for the course, in being effective with the program participants, in ability to build rapport, and seeing to it that the objectives for the day were achieved. It was observed that the facilitators had individual conversations with students after class addressing personal issues, demonstrating that a high degree of trust had been developed. The participants appeared to be relating the topics covered to situations in their personal lives.

Blueprint Evaluation results have found:

- A person who has had sex can choose to wait until marriage to have sex again.

Agree or Strongly Agree = 76.6%

- If a friend asks you for advice on how to say "no" to someone who wants to have sex, how prepared do you feel to help them?

Somewhat or Totally Agree = 83.6%

- I am able to communicate my thoughts and feelings in a relationship.

Agree or Strongly Agree = 81.2%

- I am able to communicate boundaries in my close personal relationship.

Agree or Strongly Agree = 82.2%

- I have the skills to resist sex.

Agree or Strongly Agree = 86.2%

The proposal is based on known research and promising practices. According to, "*Rap Music and the Empowerment of Today's Youth: Evidence in Everyday Music Listening, Music Therapy, and Commercial Rap Music,* interest continues to grow in understanding meaningful ways of engaging Hip-Hop culture and rap continues to grow in the area of promoting health and well-being. Their research as well as others have found the following implications:
- integration of the empowering aspects of Hip-Hop culture have shown to transcend
race, ethnicity, gender, culture, geography and nation.
- These methods engage youth in positive change as both individuals and as part of communities.
- For the work to realize measurable advances in improving knowledge, attitudes, behavior and health for youth, a strong interdisciplinary network of applied stakeholders, a common vision and valid research-informed strategies are essential.
- Findings suggest that empowerment and risk are relevant constructs for understanding music engagement and that there is utility in further defining empowerment by the dimensions: esteem, resilience, growth, community and change.
- These empowering dimensions are salient for those that engage music in casual everyday use, those that engage music through their own self-expression (within structured music therapy), and within commercial music that may be employed in therapeutic interventions.
- These dimensions consolidate existing themes and concepts that have been written about in the past, offering tremendous therapeutic utility.
- These dimensions allow flexibility within therapeutic environments so that judgment about ''preferred'' music styles and content can move past ''positive versus negative'' and instead frame music within the health and well-being contexts of empowerment and risk.
- Practitioners can use this research-informed developmental perspective for strategic guidance and reliable measurement.

Rap Music and the Empowerment of Today's Youth: Evidence in Everyday Music Listening, Music Therapy, and Commercial Rap Music. Available from:
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/257544331_Rap_Music_and_the_Empowerment_of_Today's_Youth_Evidence_in_Everyday_Music_Listening_Music_Therapy_and_Commercial_Rap_Music
[accessed Sep 07 2018].

According to A TALE OF TWO CULTURES: HIP HOP AND SCHOOLING AND THE IMPACT ON AFRICAN AMERICAN IDENTITY AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT by BARBARA S. WISNIEWSKI (2011) dissertation, she found and cited the following:

- When an educator acknowledged such a cultural affiliation, rather than used it to discipline, students felt more at home in school and more connected to such an educator. This underscores the need for educators to acknowledge students' hip hop identities as an aspect of building positive student/teacher relationships. Rather than viewing hip hop as a tool to challenge racial oppression (such as in Sampson, 2004), participants understood hip hop culture as more about the

pool of resources from which they constructed a sense of themselves in the context of being Black and living in an urban area.

Sampson, C. (2004). Black Voices, Black Souls: Black Music as a Means of Voice, Resistance, 92 and social Transformation in Education. Thesis for Master of Arts, Graduate Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning, Ontario Institute of Studies in Education, University of Toronto.

- It is important to bridge academic and hip hop identities. For instance, Geneva Gay (1994) links positive identity with social compatibility and student achievement, writing: "…Since ethnic identity is closely related to academic performance, feelings of personal competence, and social adjustment and all of these are important components of quality education for young adolescents, they all should be taught simultaneously."

  Gay, G. (1994). Coming of Age Ethnically: Teaching Young Adolescents of Color. Theory Into Practice. Summer, 33(3), 149-155.

6. Bios

Kelvin Walston has coordinated and supervised five federal Sexual Risk and HIV funded federal grants and served as WSCI Senior Health Educator for 20 years. Mr. Walston holds a Master of Arts Degree in African Studies at Clark Atlanta University. He has worked in the Public Health field with community coalitions for juvenile populations for the past 20 years. He was integral in facilitating and writing of one of WSCI evidenced based preventions programs receiving SAMSHA's highest accreditation for effective programs. His additional experience includes coordination, training and programming for Youth Peer Leadership Trainings.

Tarita Johnson, MSW has 20 years of experience facilitating and managing a range of programs prevention and intervention programs for children, adults and families in the areas of substance abuse, life skills, vocational development, violence prevention, stress and anger management, teenage pregnancy prevention, abstinence education, sexual risk avoidance, and aesthetic arts. A standard part of her work involves developing infrastructure tools for program operations. She has worked with the community extensively in organizing interventions and community coalitions, workgroups, health fairs, HIV/AIDS testing, prevention and intervention programming for African American youth, women and adult's reentry populations. She has written more than 15 grants and has been the co-principle investigator and/or Program Manager of nineteen federal grants, several state, local, and foundation grants. She has successfully completed psychosocial and mental health assessments, performance reports for funders, internal programmatic reports, and other related online reporting systems. Ms. Johnson has worked extensively with establishing and sustaining prevention programs and community coalitions. Her experience further includes, quality assurance management, evaluation and program analysis, coordinating services for linkages of care for minorities and juvenile populations, supervising social media programs for youth and young adults. She has served on several coalitions, including the Georgia Ryan White Planning Council Priority Committee. Ms. Johnson received the M.L.K. Community Service Award for her work with the juvenile justice populations. She has a Master's of Social Work degree, is a certified School Social Worker, and is a certified Red Cross HIV/AIDS trainer.