
SCHOOL PROFESSIONALS' PERSPECTIVES ON THE PREVENTION OF DATING VIOLENCE IN A PREDOMINANTLY LATINO COMMUNITY

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PRESENTATION OBJECTIVES

- Upon completion of this presentation, the learner will...
 - Identify themes in school personnel responses about the need to support dating violence prevention in their community's schools.
 - Describe trends and associations in the responses from school personnel on ways to improve dating violence behaviors among adolescents in their communities.

ADOLESCENT DATING VIOLENCE

- Dating violence is defined as the physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional violence within a dating relationship, including stalking.
 - Also known as, *Relationship abuse, Intimate partner violence, Relationship violence, Dating abuse, and Domestic abuse/violence*
- It can occur in person or electronically and might occur between a current or former dating partner.
- According to the CDC's 2013 YRBSS, approximately 10% of high school students reported physical victimization and 10% reported sexual victimization from a dating partner in the 12 months before surveyed
- Consequences of dating violence
 - Symptoms of depression and anxiety
 - Engagement in unhealthy behaviors, such as tobacco and drug use, and alcohol
 - Involvement in antisocial behaviors
 - Thoughts about suicide



ADOLESCENT DATING VIOLENCE AMONG LATINO(A) POPULATIONS

- Latinos currently represent the largest and one of the fastest growing groups in the United States
- Literature describing intimate partner violence is well situated, however, a gap in understanding dating violence among Latino adolescents currently exists
- According to the CDC's YRBSS (2011), Latino youth reported physical dating violence victimization incidence rates of 11.4%, lower than African American peers (12.2%), but higher than fellow Caucasian youth (7.6%)
- An important consideration in studying dating violence among Latino youth is the role of cultural
 - *Familism* (The needs of the family are more important and take precedence over the needs of individuals)
 - *Acculturation* (The process of adopting the cultural traits of social patterns of another group)
- Such factors may impact both *psychological outcomes* for victims and their likelihood and patterns of *seeking help*
- Informal help-seeking, such as going to family or friends, is much more common than formal help-seeking for both Latino and non-Latino adolescents
 - Latino youth may be especially unlikely to seek help, due to their limited English proficiency



ADOLESCENT DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION

The Role of School Health Professionals

- Advocate for DVP Programs
- Lead and implement DVP Programs
- Assess and evaluate the need for DVP programs

Current Curriculum and Program Models

- Some effective school-based programs change norms, improve problem-solving, and address dating violence in addition to other youth risk behaviors, such as substance use and sexual risk behaviors
- Evidence-Based Interventions (EBI) or practice-informed list
- Demonstrated positive impact on teen dating violence prevention through supporting evidence and peer-reviewed studies
- CDC compiled Dating Violence Prevention Initiative List (*Respect Works and Dating Matters*)

STUDY PURPOSE

- *THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY WAS TO UNDERSTAND SCHOOL PROFESSIONALS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE IMPACT DATING VIOLENCE HAS ON YOUTH AND ADOLESCENTS IN THEIR COMMUNITY.*
 - Insight from this target population was needed to better understand what information is already being delivered in the region's schools related to dating violence and what school professionals' believed adolescents should be learning about this topic.
 - Study was sanctioned as a needs assessment to aid in further development of a curriculum supplement supporting local school districts

METHODS

- During the Spring of 2015, participants (n=141) were recruited from a large rural and urban geographic area surrounding El Paso, Texas
 - The region spans from the southeast corner of New Mexico (Deming, NM) to the rural areas east of El Paso, Texas
- **Youth** (*middle/high school students*), **Teachers** (*those most likely to teach curriculum supplement*), and **School Health Professionals** (*school nutrition personnel, custodians*), and **Parents** (*volunteers*) participated in the facilitated discussions (n=14) through the duration of the study
- Unique to this presentation, are the responses specifically from the individuals representing school health professionals (n=43)
- Goal of the facilitated discussions ***was to develop an in-depth understanding of facilitators and barriers for dating violence prevention initiatives within the schools***



METHODS

- Focus groups were conducted:
 - Participant consent was obtained
 - Across multiple school campus sites
 - Lasted approximately 1 hour
 - Semi-structured interview guides to direct discussion among participating school professionals
- Two person research team
 - One facilitator and One note taker
- The data were transcribed, coded, and analyzed for emergent themes by the research team



SAMPLE FACILITATED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. WHAT ARE STUDENTS LEARNING IN SCHOOL ABOUT DATING VIOLENCE?

What do students learn out of school about dating violence?

2. DO YOU EVER HEAR THE STUDENTS TALKING ABOUT DATING VIOLENCE? WHAT DO YOU/HAVE YOU HEARD?

In your role, what could you do to intervene?

Should you intervene?

Do you have a way to educate students about dating violence prevention?

3. WHEN LEARNING ABOUT DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION, WHO DO STUDENTS WANT TO LEARN FROM?

4. WHERE DO YOU CURRENTLY GET INFORMATION ABOUT DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION?

5. DO YOU THINK SCHOOL PERSONNEL SHOULD BE TRAINED ON DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION?

What kind of training do you need if you were asked to intervene with a dating violence situation?

How long should this training be?

What would make school personnel want to come?

6. DO YOU THINK PARENTS SHOULD BE TRAINED ON DATING VIOLENCE PREVENTION?

What kind of training do you need if you were asked to intervene with a dating violence situation?

How long should this training be?

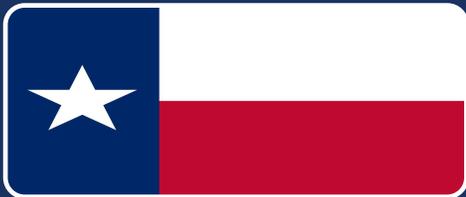
What would make school personnel want to come?

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS



Deming Independent School District (ISD)

- N=5
- District Administrative Assistants, Middle/High School Health Educators



El Paso Independent School District (ISD)

- N=25
- 6 -12 Educators, Nutrition Services Personnel, Custodial Staff, District Counselors



Socorro Independent School District (ISD)

- N=13
- Middle/School Educators, School Parent Volunteers, High School Counselors

RESULTS

Reflections from the school health professional's perspective

- Tracking and Assisting Students
 - Early intervention and tracking of students who are showing signs of violence in the home might be a good idea for primary prevention
 - Do not have an immediate point of contact to seek help for students; however, they were all willing to step in
 - They believe that helping students find out 'who they are' is an important first step in talking about/educating on dating violence prevention
- Need Additional Training Experiences
 - The group felt underprepared in their knowledge and skills related to dealing with adolescent/teen dating violence
 - Feel training of all school personnel (specifically those working directly with students) was critical; to be done at the beginning of the year
 - Most agree that a summer day training on how to report DV/signs of it would be best for helping them to know what to do
- Need for Updated Curriculum/Classroom Materials
 - Posited textbook and school resources need to be updated. They have some existing sources (i.e., Big Decisions, outside speakers) but need to better incorporate technology and create stuff for all teachers to use for implementation.
 - Feel that dating violence content can be cross-curricular and contribute to a '*global education*' for all students
 - Discussed importance of integrating technology and relevant medias into lessons to connect with students

RESULTS

- **Reflections from the school health professional's perspective**
 - Lack of Administrative Support
 - Reported lack of supported by their administration at some of the schools and fear intervening with students will result in retaliation
 - Some participants unsure of the protocols for reporting any types of negative behaviors
 - The Role of Parents & Home Environment
 - Strongly believe parent involvement is needed; but not sure how to engage all types of parents
 - Believe students witness/experience violence at home & therefore may think it is a normal relationship behavior
 - Assert that parents are in denial about the existence of dating violence in this community because of lack of education, Mexican/Latino cultural norms, and societal norms and messaging
 - Emphasized that DV behaviors may seem normal to students because they see it so often in their homes



“Minimum crisis center intervention is needed. People don’t realize how important the initial reactions needs to be; we are the 1st line responders for a lot of the students we serve”

“Prevention needs to start in elementary – that’s when they [students] first start looking into relationships and thinking about it; even the younger students are seeing it in their home”



“Teachers need to have better resources & if people don’t know where to go, they are going to hurt the students because they are not going to be able to provide. This culture places high respect on teachers”

DISCUSSION

- Dating Violence Prevention efforts are desired by school health professionals.
- There are passionate individuals willing to serve and work with schools to implement Dating Violence Prevention programs.
- Community wide initiatives with an ecological approach may have a greater impact than program based initiatives focused on the individual.
- Limitations of the Study
 - Results from this investigation cannot be generalized to broader audience

IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL HEALTH

- School health professionals have a role in the Dating Violence Prevention programs.
 - There are several individuals involved in the WSCC model who can make an impact.
- Utilized these facilitated discussions to make future curriculum decisions and training decisions.

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