



CENTER *for*

ADOLESCENT
HEALTH

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Health & Opportunity Partnership (HOPE) Project: A
Community-Based Participatory Research Approach to Address
Adolescent Mental Health

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The Center for Adolescent Health

- Mission: To work in partnership with youth, people who work with youth, community residents, public policymakers and program administrators to help urban adolescents develop healthy adult lifestyles
- Founded 1994 as a CDC Prevention Research Center (PRC)

PRC Guiding Principle: Public Health & Community Partnerships

- Create and foster partnerships among public health and community organizations to address health promotion and disease prevention issues.
- Respect the values and priorities of public health and community partners.
- Encourage public health and community partners to participate in shaping, promoting, and evaluating research priorities.

PRC Guiding Principle: Public Health & Community Partnerships

- Conduct, interpret, and disseminate research in partnership with public health professionals and community members.
- Collaborate with partners to build local capacity and resources that can sustain interventions after studies are completed.

What is the HOPE Project?

- CDC Core Research Project
- Intervention to implement and evaluate *mental health promotion activities* into an employment and training setting
- Goal is to improve mental health status for out-of-school youth in a setting that does not typically address health needs

Who are the Community Partners?

- Eastside Youth Opportunities (YO!) Program
- Mayor's Office of Employment Development
- Baltimore City Health Department
- Community Agencies
- East Baltimore Residents
- Young People

What is the YO! Program?

- Classes and tutorials to support academic achievement
- Assistance enrolling in college
- Clubs to support job seekers and the newly employed
- Career training classes
- Internet access
- Recreational activities
- Assistance with substance abuse or mental health issues



Project Initiation:

How Was Mental Health Focus Chosen?

- Formation of Advisory Board
- Advisory Board reviewed analysis of survey and focus group data that asked youth members and staff about various health issues
- Advisory Board prioritized mental health as issue for focus of subsequent work

Project Implementation: Designing a Mental Health Intervention

- Multiple stakeholders involved in designing intervention:
 - Advisory Board
 - YO! Case Advocates and Mental Health Counselors
 - YO! Executive Director and Associate Director
 - Current and former YO! members

Proposed Intervention Components

1. Mental health screening
2. Support group network led by the Peer Leadership Group (PLG)
3. More on-site mental health services
4. Training for YO! staff advocates
5. Integrating mental health into work done by YO! staff advocates

Proposed Intervention Components

1. **Mental health screening**
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Development of Mental Health Screening

- Researchers developed list of constructs that had been used in previous studies examining urban adolescents' mental health
- Key stakeholders (i.e., Advisory Board, YO! Staff, YO! Participants) validated the importance of these constructs

Development of Mental Health Screening (cont...)

- YO! Participants reviewed candidate instruments to ensure their appropriateness
 - Were instruments getting at what we wanted?
 - Were instruments asking the right questions?
 - Were questions worded the right way?
 - Were there questions that needed to be added?

Development of Mental Health Screening (cont...)

- Mental health screening tool was put together based on the recommendations of YO! Participants
 - Will likely enhance the quality of screening tool
 - Will allow researchers to pick up on areas that existing instruments did not ask about

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Development of PLG

- PLG members recruited by soliciting YO! staff suggestions of well-respected YO! participants
- Consists of seven male and female YO! members or alumni, ages 18-24
- PLG intended to establish a peer support group network that provides support on “emotions and feelings”
- Have met regularly since January 2006

Development of PLG (cont...)

- PLG has focused on:
 - Determining appropriate content areas for support group discussions & identifying an advisor
 - Establishing feasibility of support group concept to recruit current YO! Members (e.g., skating party, Easter cook-out, “The Door” community health fair)
 - Group facilitation of Center for Adolescent Health’s Youth Advisory Council (YAC) meetings
 - Training by New Lights Leadership Coalition
 - YO! program advocacy efforts

