

BE A STAR + YPAR: TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION PROGRAMS

2022
ANNUAL
REPORT



**NATIONAL
HEALTH
FOUNDATION**

HAROLD CARES:

TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION PROGRAMS 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

OVERVIEW

Thanks to generous funding provided by the Harold Edelstein Foundation, NHF empowers high-risk youth attending select schools in Los Angeles Unified School District to prevent a first or subsequent teen pregnancy and equip them with the tools to make healthy life choices, graduate from high school, and prepare for college or vocational achievement. In 2021, with support from youth consultants, NHF updated the curriculum to include Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) activities to increase youth engagement. This past 2022 program cycle (which includes the 2021-2022 school year), we provided our programs to 79 students from 3 different Los Angeles Unified School District high schools, hosted a virtual cohort, and expanded our partnerships with other youth-serving organizations.

Traditionally, NHF's Be A STAR (Successful Teen Acting Responsibly) program is comprised of two school-based programmatic tracks, both incorporating individual services and peer group education to impart learning and improve students' overall health, well-being and success in life. For a second time, we hosted a virtual cohort which was open to students across LA County. We expanded our partnerships to include the Anderson-Munger YMCA in the heart of Koreatown where youth could enroll as part of their free YMCA membership. The goal was the same - empower youth through weekly workshops to help each participant reach the following goals: (1) avoid an unwanted pregnancy, and (2) remain in school with the goal of graduation. NHF is grateful for the Harold Edelstein Foundation's continued support of our work to improve the health of under-resourced communities. Through the Harold Cares Teen Pregnancy Prevention programs, NHF has had the privilege of serving a cumulative total of 1,450 students over the course of fourteen years, thereby setting them up for success in school and in life.



"Be A STAR was fun because all my friends were here and we learned a lot. Some lessons were interesting, it was a learning experience."

-Drake, Be A STAR Participant



"This program has been very helpful and fun. I really enjoyed learning about health and our bodies. Ms. Ariel, Ms. Heidi, and Ms. Steph were super nice and they made the class fun for my friends and I. I would definitely do another program with National Health Foundation."

-Ellen, Be A STAR Participant

PROGRAM TRACKS: TRADITIONAL BE A STAR & BE A STAR + YPAR

Be A STAR (Successful Teen Acting Responsibly)

Designed for teens at-risk for a first-time pregnancy, Be a STAR participants traditionally meet at school and participate in weekly group meetings aimed at empowering them to break the cycle of teenage pregnancy. Group meetings include discussions, role-playing, and guest speakers, all addressing topics such as self-esteem, communicating consent, birth control methods, handling peer pressure, becoming role models, and developing leadership skills.

Be A STAR + YPAR

At the start of 2021, with support from ETR (Education, Training & Research Associates, a national research non-profit), NHF and youth consultants redesigned Be A STAR to include five additional weeks of Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) activities. Our goal was to determine if incorporating YPAR into BAS improved youth engagement and empowerment. Every measure tested showed a positive effect in both knowledge increases and perceptions of empowerment. At the end of YPAR, 100% of youth believed they had a right to access reproductive health services, could identify a positive role model in their life, and knew who to talk to on campus for education and employment opportunities after graduation. Additionally, 100% of youth who attended YPAR knew where to access hormonal birth control and condoms. Our partnership with ETR helped identify a gap in programming, how LGBTQ youth engage with SRH materials. In this iteration, 91% of youth who participated in BAS YPAR were able identify at least one resource in their community or on campus for LGBTQ youth (up from 61% in the pre-test.)



Youth at Santee Education Complex created a public service announcement (PSA) style video about healthy relationships as their YPAR project. This involved researching, writing a project timeline, writing a script, holding auditions, directing filming, and editing video clips.

Side-by-side:

BAS+ YPAR has noticeable impact on youth engagement and had more favorable results compared to BAS alone. For example, 88% of youth who attended BAS + YPAR reported knowing how to prevent an unwanted pregnancy compared to 76% who attended BAS. Youth who attended BAS + YPAR reported using a condom to prevent pregnancy the last time they had sex compared to 67% in the BAS cohort. When asked whether they did anything to prevent pregnancy at all, 100% of BAS +YPAR students said “yes”.

PROGRAM TRACKS: TRADITIONAL BE A STAR & BE A STAR + YPAR

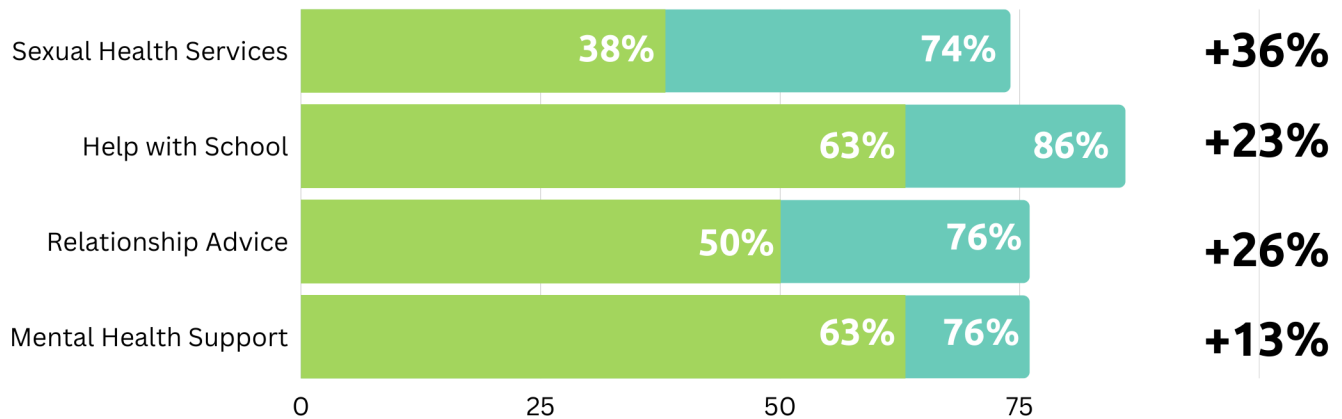
Program Impact:

Both program tracks aim to empower youth to make decisions about their reproductive and relational health. Data from 2021-2022 cohort is shown below.

Pre-test data is shown in **green** and post-test data is shown in **blue**.

Knowledge of Resources and Accurate Information:

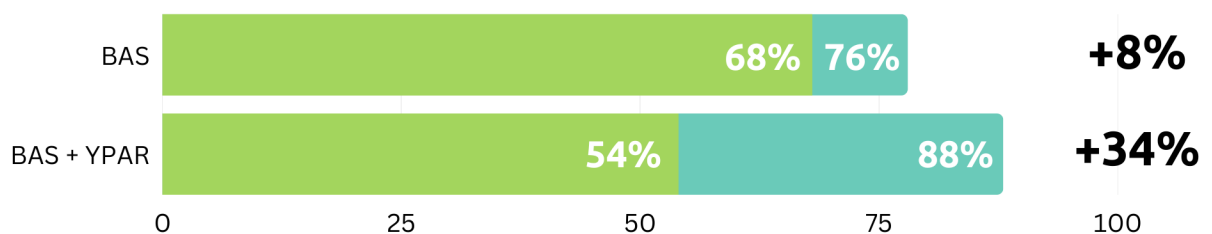
Increase in students who "agreed," or "strongly agreed" they **could identify a place where they feel comfortable receiving services and support** for the following matters (both program tracks combined):



Unplanned Pregnancy:

Unplanned pregnancy can have harmful effects on teen parents, their children, and can be costly for the community. Unplanned pregnancy has a significant impact on the ability of teens to complete high school and finish college.

Increase in students who "agreed" or "strongly agreed" they understand **how to prevent an unplanned pregnancy**:



PROGRAM TRACKS: TRADITIONAL BE A STAR & BE A STAR + YPAR

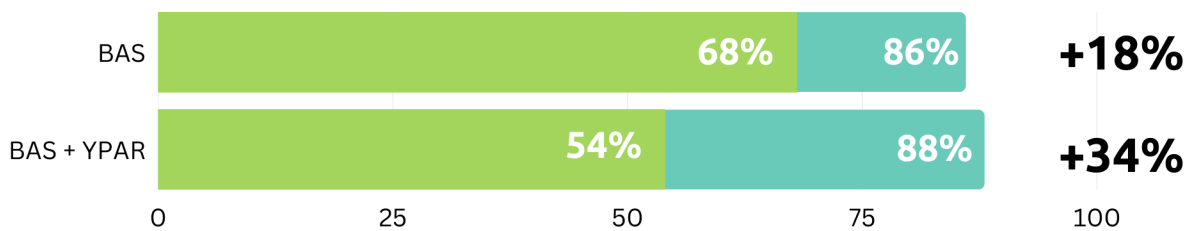
Health Behaviors:

Sexual and reproductive health encompasses more than physical health. Youth in both programs reported healthier relationship behaviors.

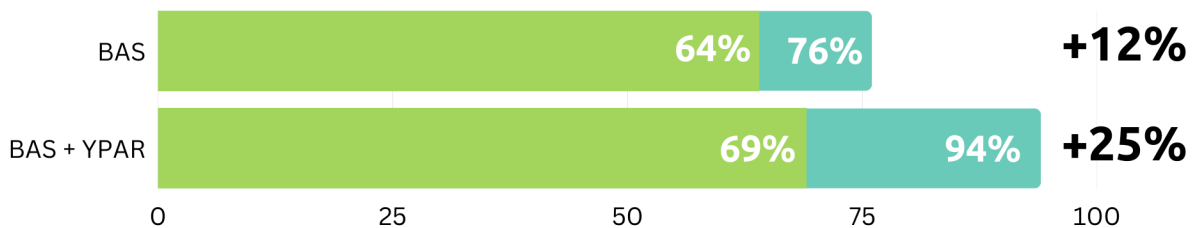
Consent:

Consent is defined as willingness and agreement to participate in an activity. Consent is particularly important in reducing relationship violence among youth.

Increase in students who “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they **knew how to give or communicate consent before participating in sexual activities with someone.**



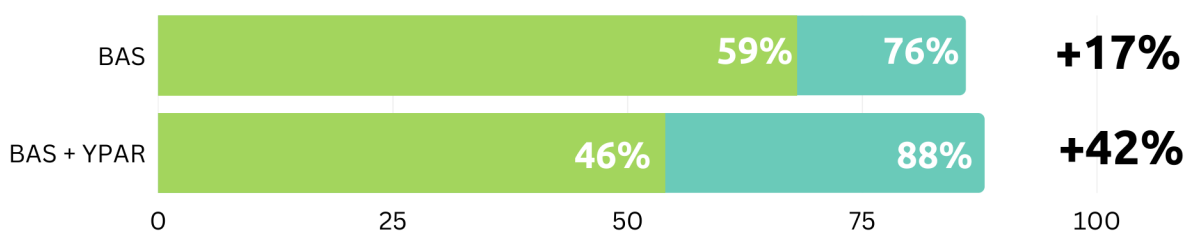
Increase in students who “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they knew **how to ask for consent** before participating in sexual activities with someone.



Healthy Relationships:

Healthy relationships can be defined as free from abuse and coercion, and including feelings of positivity and support. Youth who are aware of signs of unhealthy relationships may be more likely to seek support.

Increase in students who “agreed” or “strongly agreed” that they **knew what makes a relationship healthy or unhealthy.**



OUR IMPACT & OUTCOMES

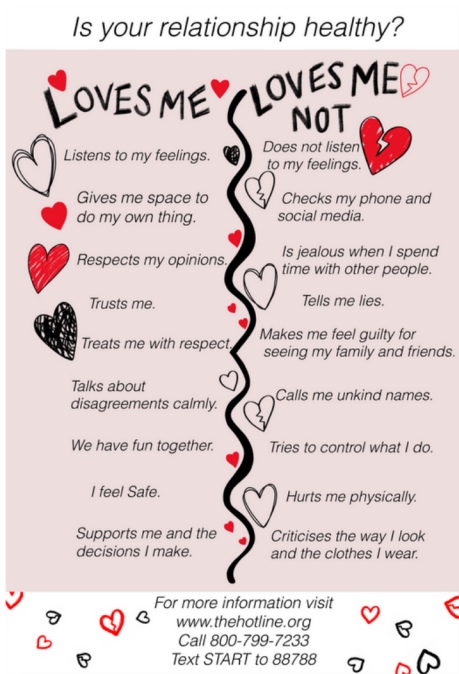
Program Outcomes

In the past, program impact was gauged by student's knowledge of resources and accurate information, health behaviors, and long-term outcomes, measured through self-reported surveys administered at three different points in time: 1) at the beginning of the program, 2) at the end of the program, and 3) at six months after program completion. With assistance from ETR and ICRW, we added questions to measure youth empowerment.

Youth who attended BAS +YPAR “agreed,” or “strongly agreed” to the following statements:

	<u>Pre:</u>	<u>Post:</u>	<u>Change:</u>
“I have a right to access reproductive health care services.”	65%	94%	+29%
“I can identify a positive role model in my family, school, or community.”	80%	94%	+14%
“I can achieve goals I set for myself.”	54%	88%	+34%

Overall, NHF’s Be A STAR program continues to impact teens by increasing knowledge and feelings of confidence resulting in youth making choices that align with their life goals. The addition of YPAR has not only enhanced youth engagement and empowerment, but it also equipped youth with essential life and leadership skills. Be A STAR + YPAR stands as an effective tool for preparing these youth to succeed in school and in life endeavors.



Youth at Thomas Jefferson High School created poster campaigns to illustrate the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships.



STAFF HIGHLIGHTS!

Meet Heidi Muñoz!

Heidi is a first-generation college graduate who received a BSW from Pacific Union College and a MSW from Azusa Pacific University. Heidi started her journey at National Health Foundation as an MSW intern and officially joined the team as a Senior Program Coordinator. With her educational background in macro social work, Heidi values the importance of empowering youth and communities from within. Through the Be a STAR program, Heidi has led multiple cohorts, facilitating conversations around social, emotional and academic support that help young people make informed life decisions. After all, young people are the future!



Meet Stephanie Rodriguez!



Stephanie is a program coordinator who values raising the awareness and knowledge among Los Angeles youth. As a program coordinator, she facilitates Be A STAR in LAUSD schools where youth are empowered to make educated and informed decisions regarding their health. Stephanie learned the value of reproductive health education attending Humboldt State University and participating in CHECK IT, a student led movement that facilitated workshops focusing on bystander intervention, consent, and healthy relationships. Stephanie's dedication and determination to create a more consent-centered culture inspired her to make this knowledge accessible through youth empowerment programs.