

Family Formation Education

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My Family



Presentation Overview

- What is Healthy Family Formation Education?
- How does Heritage Keepers (a HFF Education program) impact behaviors and how can you use this same information in your own homes, classrooms, and/or communities?
- How do we know this approach works?
- How can Heritage support your efforts?

First...Defining the Problem

If the Problem is defined as...

- Teen pregnancy
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Teens engaging in nonmarital sexual activity

Then possible solutions may be...

- delaying sex, using condoms/contraception, and abortion
- delaying sex, reducing partners, using condoms, and using vaccines
- encourage teens to avoid nonmarital sexual activity

First...Defining the Problem

- If the Problem is defined as...
 - CONSEQUENCES (Teen pregnancy, STDs, etc)
Most Sex Education
 - BEHAVIOR (that could potentially cause consequences, ie. Teens engaging in nonmarital sexual activity)
HFF Education
- Then possible solutions may be...
 - Reduce or Avoid Consequences
 - Avoid the Behavior (encourage teens to avoid nonmarital sexual activity)

Healthy Family Formation

- Is the concept of waiting to form a family when the time is optimal to ensure the health and well-being of the people within the relationship and the children that are formed within that relationship.
- Forming our families within a healthy marriage, and encouraging our children to form their families after they have made the commitment and gone through the vows to stay in the marriage, makes all the difference.

Healthy Family Formation...known for the Positive

- It is **FOR** healthy:
 - family formation,
 - romantic relationships,
 - peer relationships,
 - marriages,
 - parent/child interactions,
 - bodies, etc.
- It is **FOR** teens:
 - building strong character traits,
 - dreaming/planning for the future,
 - determining personal values and goals,
 - advocating for optimal health,
 - protecting and striving for mental and emotional health,
 - knowing the benefits of a healthy marriage, etc.

A good HFF Education program is going to need to inspire teens towards the "**FOR**"



- Your story matters. You have your why.
- You have something deep in you that is motivating you to be here.
- All of our children and teens have stories, too.
 - ignite that deeper core and motivating factors
 - empower teens to establish values and standards that will enable them to reach their potential in life

When teens are confident of the benefits of abstinence until marriage, and of the benefits of healthy family formation, they are much less likely to behave in a manner that puts those benefits in jeopardy.

Stan Weed, PhD, Institute for Research & Evaluation

Dr. Weed has been evaluating abstinence education programs since a modest funding stream was introduced through Title XX under the Reagan Administration.

Dr. Weed set out to answer the question of why teens engage in early sexual activity.

Dr. Weed developed surveys that asked teens about their beliefs about themselves, what's important to them, what they think about risks – internal mediators that might not be evident on the outside, but that reveal their inclination to initiate sex or abstain.

Identifying, Measuring, and Testing the Predictors

Based on the premise that there are key factors operating in an adolescent's life which:

- Have a direct and strong impact on their risk behavior
- Are amenable to intervention and influence
- Can be reliably measured
- Are specifically targeted by the intervention/program

Information from Dr. Weed's presentation at the FYSB 2nd Annual TPP Grantee Conference 2013

Predictors/Mediators of Teen Abstinence

- Teens' responses to these certain constructs could actually *predict* whether a teen would engage in sexual activity or not.
- If we know a teen's attitudes related to sex, we can predict to a high degree of accuracy whether that teen will likely initiate sex or not.
- The important thing to note about all of these predictors is that **they can be influenced** to increase the probability of delaying sexual activity

Predictors/Mediators of Teen Abstinence

Prior Experience

Related Risks

Love/lust/infatuation

Sex is More Than Physical

My Worth

Peer Group

Beliefs About Risks of Sex

Future Impacts of Sex

Sexual Climate

Sexual Independence from Peers

Abstinence Efficacy

Justifications of Sex –

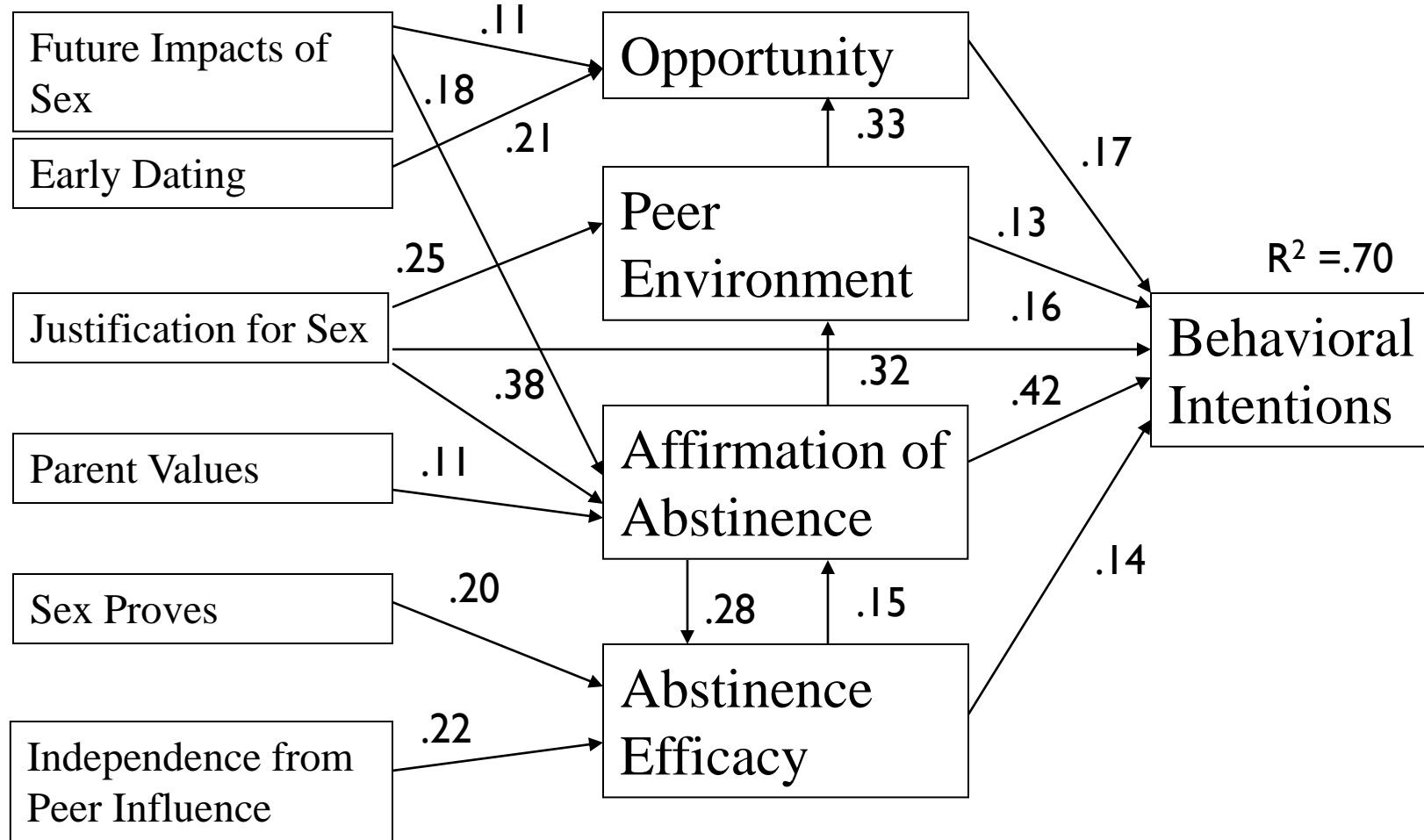
- Contraception
- Depth of Relationship
- Love justifies
- Sex proves love, desirability, maturity

Abstinence Values

- Rejection of permissiveness
- Affirmation of abstinence

The most influential predictors are Behavioral Intentions/ Commitment. All others influence these.

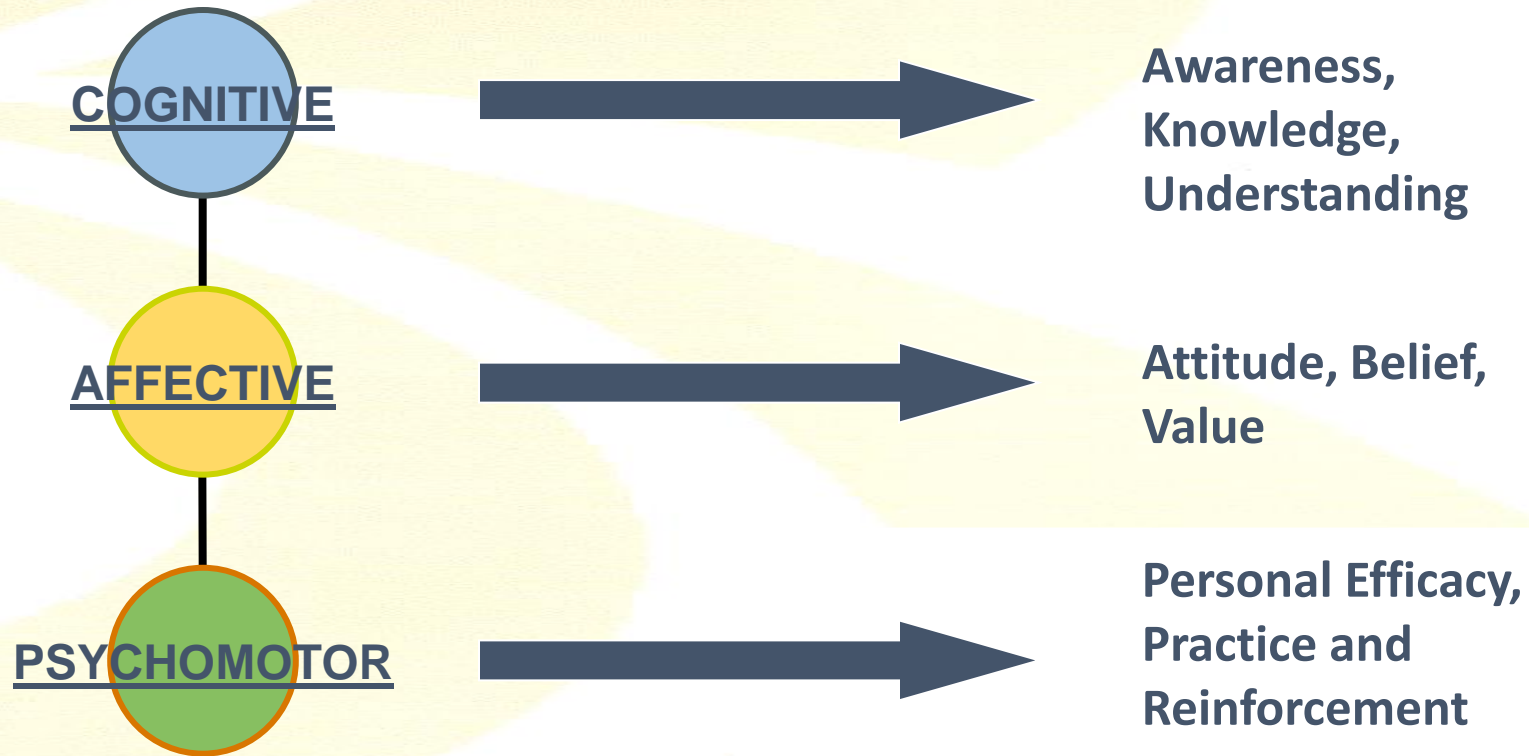
Figure 1: Prediction Model



These Predictors can not only be affected, but can be affected to the extent that teens actually adjust their behavior!

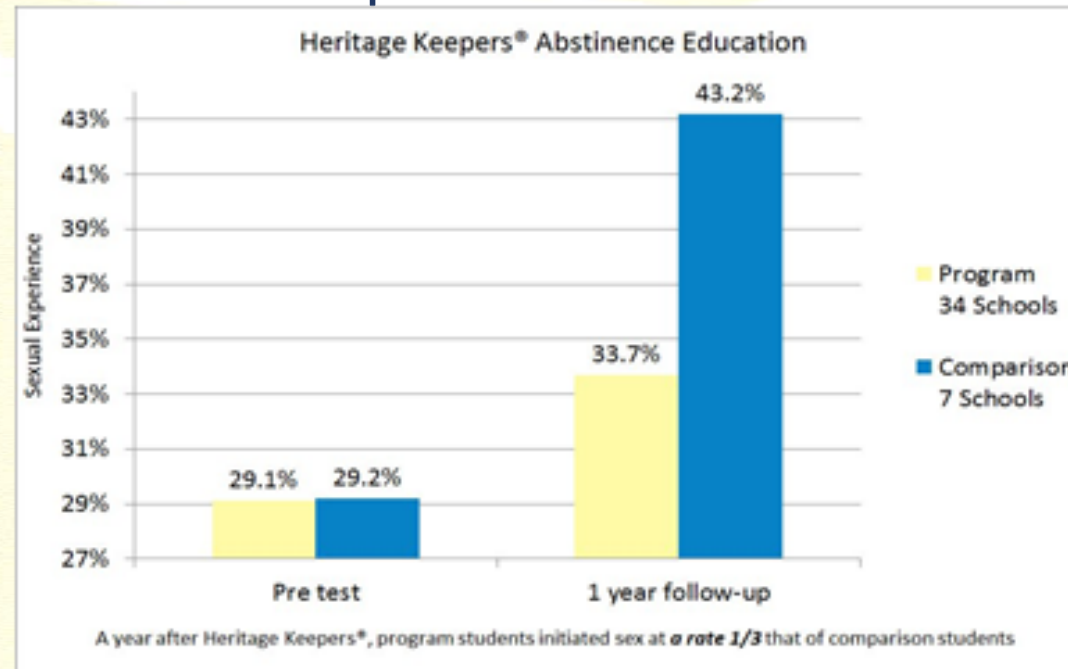
The educator's (or parent's) passion, belief in the concepts and message, and genuine concern for the students are an essential first step, but these are not sufficient to influence actual behavior. **Actual program outcomes indicate that it is these key mediators that predict behavior.**

Intentionally Affecting All Predictors on All Levels



We know this works!

A year after Heritage Keepers, program students initiated sex at a rate 67% lower than well-matched comparison students!



That is an unusually strong and long-lasting behavioral outcome.

Weed, S.E., Birch, P.J., Ericksen, I.H., Olsen, J.A. (2011) Testing a Predictive Model of Youth Sexual Intercourse Initiation.

Implications from the study of Heritage Keepers

This study contributes to the school-based sex education literature by

- 1) providing evidence for the viability of the primary prevention/risk avoidance/Healthy Family Formation strategy,
- 2) offering empirical evidence for some of the causal mechanisms and mediators that influence teenage sexual behavior,
- 3) providing guidance to adults looking for a reliable set of mediators around which to design more-effective interventions and guidance

Information from Dr. Weed's presentation at the FYSB 2nd Annual TPP Grantee Conference 2013

Next steps

- For those fighting against CSE programs in your state, consider offering a HFF Education program as a solution
- Show your districts how this HFF approach helps the schools meet their requirements.
- Even though most laws and Health Standards are focused on education that simply prevents consequences, we can help you show how a HFF approach affects behaviors (which in turn will affect consequences).

Heritage can come alongside you

- Heritage Keepers is on the approved list of Title V SRAE programs in SC, TX, and recently added AZ. Agencies in those states can apply to their states for funds to use Heritage Keepers.
- For states that have rejected the federal Title V SRAE funding, agencies within those states can still apply for the federal Competitive Title V SRAE funds.
- If you are not seeking funding but are helping review or choose sex education curricula in your district/state, we can send a review copy and FAQ document about the program.
- We offer trainings in Heritage Keepers!

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