MEROS CENTER.

Gozich Isnice! Lessons learned from a youth-led, community-based participatory research project

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Learning objectives:

Recognize the value of incorporating youth into the research process.

Identify key actions that can be taken to accomplish it successfully in your organization or setting.

Community Based Participatory Research

- CBPR consists of three key concepts:
 - **Participation** = active inclusion of members of communities; active involvement of researcher with community activities
 - Action = intend to enact real social and/or material change
 - Community = deliberately include community interests, processes, and members throughout the project

(Huffman, 2017)

- Impact: More than 85% of CBPR studies had statistically positive outcomes using
 - A study advisory committee made up of community members
 - Help/input with data collection
 - Help/input designing the intervention
 - Help/input about participant recruitment

(McFarlane, Occa, Peng, Awonuga & Morgan, 2024)

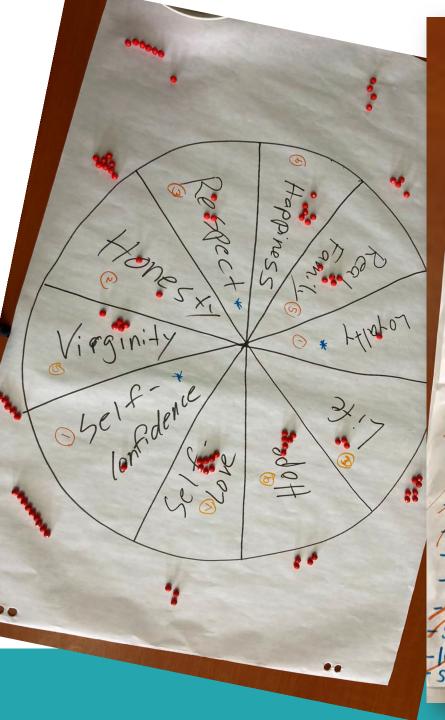
Youth Ignite Program

- **Community** = High School Learners at St. Peter Christian College in Mhluzi, South Africa (about an hour drive from Johannesburg)
- Action = reduce sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancies
- **Participation** = include learners (high school students) to provide input on a new program (intervention) and how to measure the impact (outcomes)...and the title of the project



"God is the source of spiritual passion. In the world we live in, natural passion is often a key to success and impact. Knowing information is valuable, but possessing the fire is invaluable."





Negative & cultural Positive protifices Positive ThSA setting legal age at 18 - sex ed at school (permission) - Christianity - abstinence -mixed messaging about - more informed now; some Parly sexual debut - you can genuincly choose to avoid protect yourself from disease - gov't + stakeholder programs -age gap/lobola - social media finitiation Schools clash with Christian Values - young age before - Cultural practice re: Value of woman maintaining virginity marriago - Older men watching for young B - DOH Youth Corner giels - Church - Youth services parents not being direct with their messaging -teachers euphomisms) positive peer pressure - looking up to older - Parents din know how, Successful ones to speak age-appropriately - healthy competition un peer influence poverty (esp. girls) transactioned sex -have Someone to talk with -SW, pastor, teacher - boys: gain status with more pariners -2 room house / exposure parent with multiple partness having fun before marriage poor diet -> hormones media + social media differing experiences Substance abuse -Loss of grandparent influence babies before marriage Social norms

himo+ 25かント NESS LOYALTY Seif. Rost of Skint authfullness 852 Barb GiubwnH Culture J/25 mpliments Munica Eion HEALTH w peers (not just acadumic) Happiness Seif ENG. Real Family Hard work Privacy Ogy UX ogy PEtc 12 de A.L.Y. 203 mage Heart re: girls having (wanting)

A lation

Essential character traits:

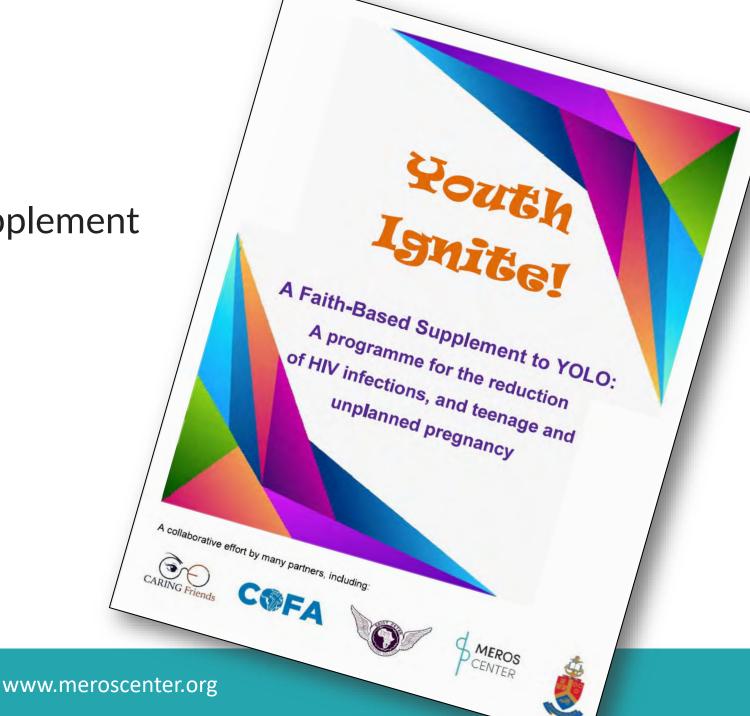
- 1. Loyalty
- 2. Real Family
- 3. Happiness
- 4. Respect
- 5. Self-Love

- 6. Self-Confidence
- 7. Hope
- 8. Honesty
- 9. Life

10. Virginity

Results

- A Faith-Based YOLO Supplement
 - Participatory activities
 - Poetry & Debate
- Outcomes to measure:
 - Sexual behaviours
 - Spiritual beliefs
 - Activities
 - Relationships
 - Social norms (at school)
 - Hope (future, success)



Lessons Learned

- Youth have unique insights that need to be considered
- Participatory actions can and should be fun for everyone
- Be deliberate about how to include youth participants
- Find ways to clearly integrate input with best practices/evidence
- Be prepared to be surprised!



Key References

- Huffman, T. (2017). Participatory/action research/CBPR. The international encyclopedia of communication research methods, 1-10.
- McFarlane, S. J., Occa, A., Peng, W., Awonuga, O., & Morgan, S. E. (2024). Community-based participatory research (CBPR) to enhance participation of racial/ethnic minorities in clinical trials: A 10-year systematic review. Emergent Health Communication Scholarship from and about African American, Latino/a/x, and American Indian/Alaskan Native Peoples, 19-36.