

Relationship Education for Youth



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APPB

ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY PREVENTION BRANCH

Traditional Relationship Education

- Synonymous with marriage education
- First emerged in the late 1970s and early 1980s
- Often delivered to premarital couples as a way to help them plan their future marriages
- Still the vast majority of relationship education programs are designed for and delivered to couples



Increasing Need for Individual-Oriented Relationship Education

- 2004 Median age for first marriage:
 - Males 27.1
 - Females 25.3
- 60-75% of couples married during the past decade lived together first



Individual-Oriented Relationship Education

5 key components:

- Know thyself
- Relationship development
- Communication & conflict management
- Relationships & children
- Safety



Supports Positive Youth Development

- Supports age-appropriate developmental needs and processes
- Fosters a host of positive youth outcomes
- Counters inaccurate (and harmful) messages youth receive about relationships

Relationship Smarts+ Versus Love Notes

RS+	LN
For teens in grades 8-12	For young adults, young parents and sexually experienced older teens
Lesson 1: “Who Am I and Where Am I Going?”	Lesson 3: “My Future and My Expectations
Lesson 5: “Principles of Smart Relationships” with Relationship Pyramid from Lesson 3	Lesson 6: “Principles of Smart Relationships”
Lesson 6: “Decide, Don’t Slide! The Low-Risk Approach to Relationships”	Lesson 9: “Decide, Don’t Slide! The Low-Risk Approach to Relationships”
Lesson 7: “Is It A Healthy Relationship?”	Lesson 7: “Is it a Healthy Relationship?”
Lesson 9: “A Foundation for Good Communication	Lesson 11: “Foundations for Good Communication” AND/OR Lesson 10: “Let’s Talk about Sex- Decide, Don’t Slide

Fosters Problem Prevention (including dating violence prevention)

- Helps adolescents think about how decisions in the present matter for the future
- Offers alternatives for addressing relationship challenges
- Educates adolescents about a range of ways relationships can be unhealthy/violent
- Reduces dating violence by offering ways to identify warning signs and get help if violence is occurring

Unhealthy Relationships: The Terrifying Truth

- 80% of girls who have been physically abused in their intimate relationships continue to date their abuser
- Of the women between the ages of 15-19 murdered each year, 30% are killed by their husband or boyfriend
- If trapped in an abusive relationship:
 - 73% of teens say they would turn to a friend for help
 - Only 33% who have been in, or known about, an abusive relationship have told anyone about it



my relationship's
ok but sometimes
things feel **bad** ▶



i want a relationship
that's fun & makes
me feel **good** ▶

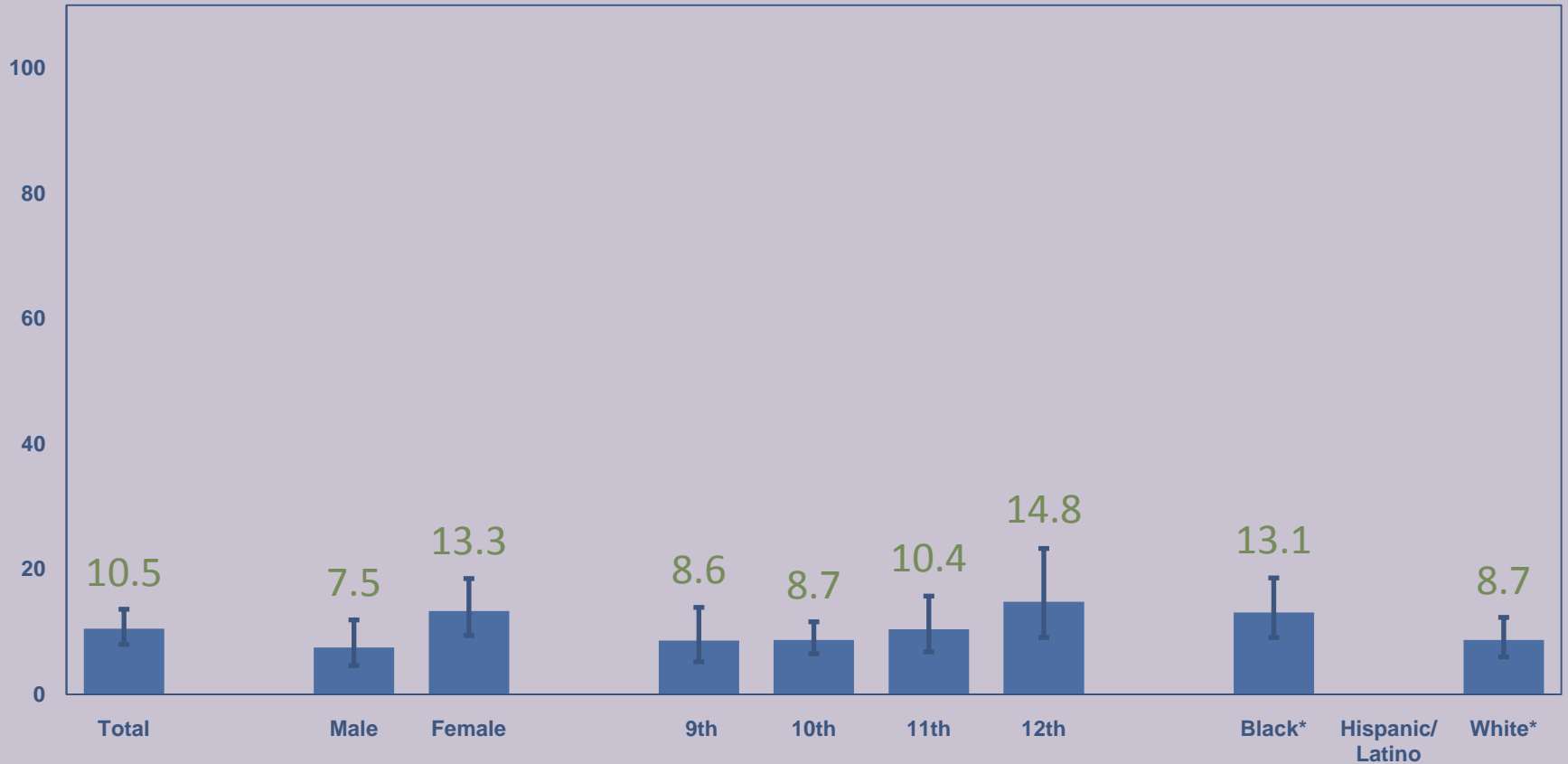
Unhealthy Relationships: The Terrifying Truth

- In 100 domestic violence situations, approximately 40 involve violence by women against men.
- More than 1 in 4 teenage girls in a relationship report enduring repeated verbal abuse.
- Girls and young women between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest rate of intimate partner violence- almost triple the national average.



Alabama High School Survey

Percentage of students who had ever been physically forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to



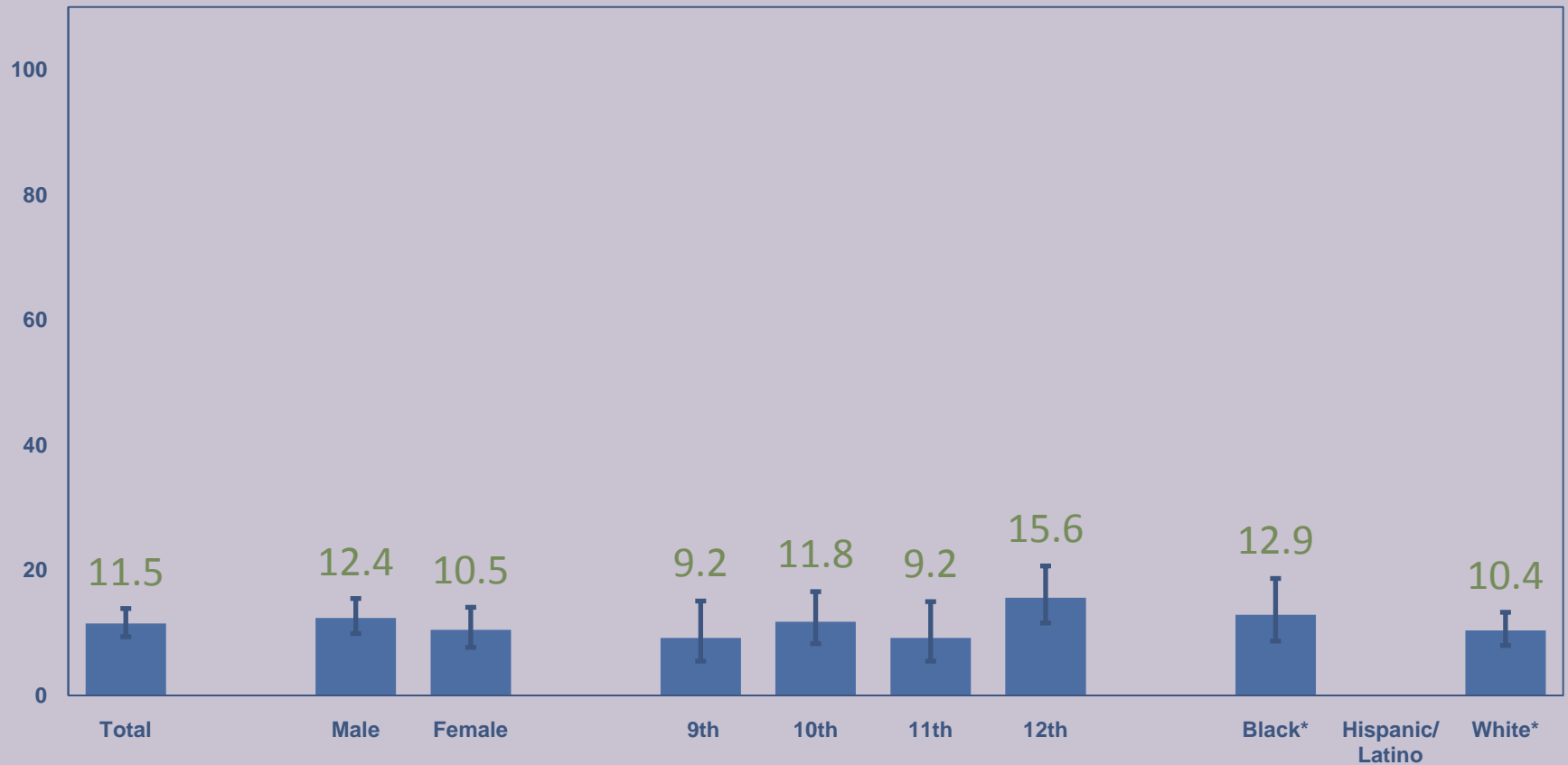
Q21 - Weighted Data

*Non-Hispanic.

Missing bars indicate less than 100 students in the subgroup.

Alabama High School Survey

Percentage of students who were ever hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend during the past 12 months



Q20 - Weighted Data

*Non-Hispanic.

Missing bars indicate less than 100 students in the subgroup.

Reduces Unplanned/Repeat Pregnancies/STIs

- Provides an understanding of the context in which sexual behaviors occur
- Offers a broad range of reasons why sexuality should not be disconnected from relationships
- Reduces sexual health risk taking through knowledge and skill building





Example from RS+ and LN Curricula

RS+	LN
<p>RS+ Lesson 6: The Low Risk Approach to Relationships: Decide, Don't Slide!</p> <p>Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To explore two different approaches to handling one's attractions and relationships.<li>• To become aware of the risks associated with a "sliding" approach to relationships.<li>• To Learn a low-risk "deciding" approach to attractions and relationships.<li>• To identify the kinds of decisions one can make about relationships.<li>• To gain insight concerning what to learn about another person and how to make wise decisions about the person to whom one is attracted.<li>• To become aware of what is important to learn about oneself and others.	<p>LN Lesson 9: "Decide, Don't Slide! The Low Risk Approach to Relationships"</p> <p>Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To become aware of the risks associated with a "sliding" approach to relationships.<li>• To learn a low-risk "deciding" approach to handling attractions, developing relationships, and making decisions.<li>• To gain insight about what's important to learn about another person.<li>• To identify decisions one can make regarding relationships. In addition, to identify what one needs in order to make those decisions and take steps.

7 Principles of Smart Relationships

PRINCIPLE

1. Seek a good match– someone with common interests.

2. Pay attention to values.

3. Don't try to change someone into someone he or she is not.

4. Don't change yourself to get someone's love or friendship.

5. Expect good communication.

6. Don't play games, be phony or pressure someone.

7. Expect Respect– have standards for what you expect.

Main Activities

- Smart or Not-So-Smart– Thumbs Up or Down!
- 7 Principles of Smart Relationships
- Students decide whether or not the scenarios they're presented with match up with the 7 Smart Dating Principles.
- Example Scenario:

“She/He keeps talking about commitments– even about getting married. She gets really jealous if I ever talk to another girl. Hey...I'm not ready for that yet. I'm only 18. If she/he doesn't stop pressuring me, I'm out.”

Reinforces Positive and Challenges Negative Relationship Models

- Offers new perspectives on what makes relationships healthy versus unhealthy
- Helps youth focus on the benefits of healthy relationships
- Increases critical knowledge and skills that enhance health, including interpersonal communication, goal setting and decision making skills
- Provides a foundation for later adult development



Things to Consider When Delivering RE

Targeting Youth:

- The curricular materials to be used
- The context in which the program is implemented
- The background and preparation of the educators
- The implementation of the lessons
- What the youth bring to the education setting (their background and experiences)

Relationship Education is essential to healthy Adolescent Development and transition to Adulthood

