



# Aligning sexual risk avoidance education (SRAE) with the Title V legislation: Applying the SRAE program model to practice

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Administration for Children and Families (ACF)  
Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) and  
Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE)

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Reunite, Reignite, Re-energize: Innovating for the Future  
Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program Grantee Conference  
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# Acknowledgment

- **Development of SRAE model was prepared under contract with the Administration for Children and Families (ACF)**
- **Disclaimer:** The views expressed in written training materials, publications, or presentations by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services; nor does mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

# Workshop Objectives

By the conclusion of the workshop, participants will have:

1. Shared current challenges faced and strategies used in adjusting programs to current Title V requirements
2. Understood how the SRAE program model can support alignment to Title V requirements
3. Explored how to apply the tool to consider their program alignment
4. Received assistance in how to use the framework and tools in their local contexts

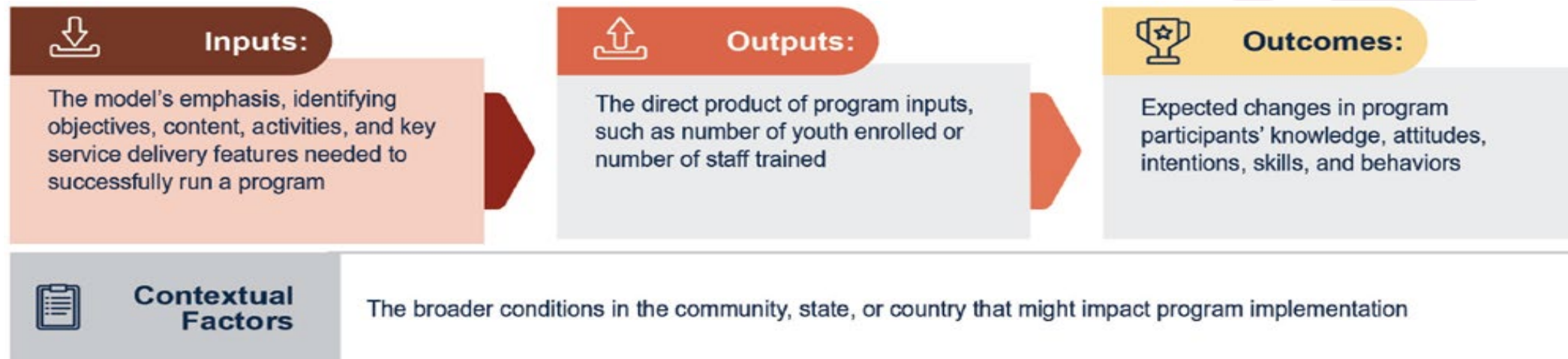
# Agenda

- Introduction to SRAE program model (15 min)
- Small Group Discussion Activity (20 min)
- Activity Wrap-up (10 min)
- Using the Draft Alignment Tool Paired Activity (20 min)
- Activity Wrap-up and closing remarks (10 min)

# Program model for Sexual Risk Avoidance Education (SRAE)

# What is a program model?

- A visual representation of program components that are designed to influence key outcomes of interest
- Its purpose is to provide a framework for understanding the objectives, content, and implementation of a program, and how these components may influence outcomes
- SRAE program model (shown on next slide) was developed as a research-based resource for guiding the design and implementation of SRAE programming, consistent with the Title V legislation



## SRAE PROGRAM INPUTS

### Program objectives:

Educate youth to recognize the benefits and value of avoiding sex until it is part of a healthy married relationship and empower youth to avoid sex and other risky behaviors by building skills that promote healthy decision making, self-regulation, supportive relationships, goal setting, and a focus on future well-being.

### Required program elements:

- Unambiguous messaging across required topics (below) that emphasizes the avoidance of non-marital sexual activity as an optimal health behavior
- Content that is medically accurate and complete; age-appropriate; based on adolescent learning and developmental theories; and culturally appropriate and sensitive to youths' diverse experiences

### Required program topics:<sup>1</sup>

- Life skill building to support future goals and well-being
- Advantages of refraining from non-marital sexual activity in order to improve future outcomes, enhance overall health, and avoid poverty
- The importance of healthy relationships, and their influence on the formation of friendships, romantic relationships, healthy marriages, and safe and stable families.
- Avoidance of risk-taking behaviors like drug and alcohol use
- Prevention of and support related to sexual coercion and dating violence

### Key program features and delivery system:

- Curricula and supporting materials that address all SRAE program elements and topics
- Facilitators carefully selected, trained, and supported and who are committed to the SRAE message and working with youth
- Facilitation strategies that are based on sound educational theory and use active and reflective learning techniques and a mix of group and individual activities

## OTHER INPUTS AND CONSIDERATIONS

- While adhering to the required SRAE elements and topics, programs may tailor the mode of delivery, dosage, and youth engagement strategies for the target population and setting.
- Programs may refer youth to outside services as needed (such as mental health), as well as opportunities for involvement in school and community activities (although SRAE grant funding cannot be used to pay for these outside services and activities).
- Programs should establish data systems and processes to monitor implementation fidelity and support evaluation efforts.

## CONTEXT

Contextual factors that may influence how youth experience a program: community norms and values related to adolescent sexual behavior; socioeconomic traits (for example, teen birth and STI rates, safety, and economic conditions); relevant national, state, or local policies; and availability and accessibility of community services.

## IMPLEMENTATION OUTPUTS

### Staff facilitation

- Staff commitment to SRAE vision and goals
- Positive facilitator: youth interactions
- Skilled delivery of program
- Ongoing supervision and support to staff

### Service delivery

- Program delivered at intended dosage
- Program delivered with fidelity to curriculum and SRAE legislation

### Youth and family engagement

- Youth attendance and participation
- Youth satisfaction with program
- Individual needs addressed
- Parent engagement in program

## EXPECTED SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES

### Improved protective factors

- Healthy individual functioning and well-being
  - Self-determination (feels control over what happens to self)
  - Emotion regulation
  - Positive emotional state
- Future aspirations and intentions
  - Intention to avoid sex until marriage
  - Belief in the value of avoiding sex until marriage
  - Academic and career aspirations
- Healthy relationships and communications
  - Healthy secure attachment to parent/caregiver
  - Connectedness to parents
  - Communication with parents about sexuality
  - Parental oversight/monitoring
  - Positive peer role models
  - Sexual refusal skills and techniques

### Reduced risk factors

- Risky peer behavior and permissive peer sexual norms
- Romantic partner expectations and intentions to have sex
- Prevalence of age difference in romantic partners
- Opportunities to have sex
- Drug and alcohol use
- Exposure or use of sexually explicit media or internet porn
- Depressive symptoms and anxiety



## EXPECTED INTERMEDIATE-TERM OUTCOMES

### Improved outcomes related to sexual risk avoidance:

- Avoidance of sexual activity and intercourse
- Reduction in sexually transmitted infections
- Reduction in teen pregnancy

### Improved non-sexual outcomes related to:

- Academic achievement
- Mental health
- Alcohol/drug use
- Delinquency
- Relationship quality

## POTENTIAL LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

- Overall health, happiness, and well-being
- Economic self-sufficiency
- Healthy relationships
- Avoidance of sex outside marriage
- Healthy and supportive marriages
- Formation of stable, healthy families
- Positive outcomes for children of the next generation

<sup>1</sup> These topics align with the required "A-F" topics specified in the SRAE legislation, Title V, Section 510. The first bullet aligns with Topic A, the second with Topics B and C, the third with Topic D, the fourth with Topic E, and the fifth with Topic F.

# Who is the SRAE program model for?

- **Practitioners:** Guide program planning, monitor implementation, inform ongoing program improvement, and design an evaluation
- **Program or curriculum developers:** Ensure that SRAE content and programming aligns with the program model's inputs
- **Policymakers:** Guide development of future grant programs and funding opportunities
- **Researchers:** Use as a conceptual framework to guide research and program evaluation efforts



# Building healthy futures for youth

## Program objectives:

Intended to recognize the benefits and value of avoiding sex until it is part of a healthy married relationship and empower youth to avoid sex and other risky behaviors by building skills that promote healthy decision making, self-regulation, supportive relationships, goal setting, and a focus on future well-being.

## Required program elements:

- Unambiguous messaging across required topics (below) that emphasizes the avoidance of non-marital sexual activity as an optimal health behavior
- Content that is medically accurate and complete; age-appropriate; based on adolescent learning and developmental theories; and culturally appropriate and sensitive to youths' diverse experiences

## Required program topics:<sup>1</sup>

- Life skill building to support future goals and well-being
- Advantages of refraining from non-marital sexual activity in order to improve future outcomes, enhance overall health, and avoid poverty
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## Key program features and delivery system:

- Curricula and supporting materials that address all SRAE program elements and topics
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## OTHER INPUTS AND CONSIDERATIONS

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Contextual factors that may influence how youth experience a program: community norms and values related to adolescent sexual behavior; socioeconomic traits (for example, teen birth and STI rates, safety, and economic conditions); relevant national, state, or local policies; and availability and accessibility of community services.

# A program model for sexual risk reduction

## IMPLEMENTATION OUTPUTS

- Staff facilitation**
  - Staff commitment to SRAE vision and goals
  - Positive facilitator: youth interactions
  - Skilled delivery of program
  - Ongoing supervision and support to staff

- Service delivery**
  - Program delivered at intended dosage
  - Program delivered with fidelity to curriculum and SRAE legislation

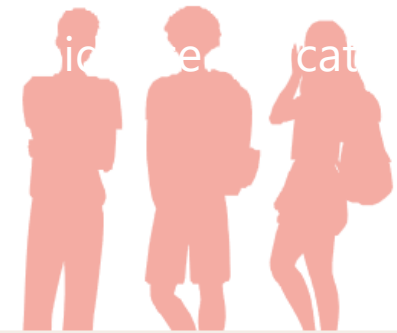
- Youth and family engagement**
  - Youth attendance and participation
  - Youth satisfaction with program
  - Individual needs addressed
  - Parent engagement in program

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- Improved protective factors**
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    - Emotion regulation
    - Positive emotional state
  - Future aspirations and intentions
    - Intention to avoid sex until marriage
    - Belief in the value of avoiding sex until marriage
    - Academic and career aspirations
  - Healthy relationships and communications
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- Reduction in teen pregnancy

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- Mental health
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- Delinquency
- Relationship quality

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- Overall health, happiness, and well-being
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# SRAE program inputs

## SRAE program inputs include:

- Program objectives
- Required program elements  
(Title V Elements A-E)
- Required program topics  
(Title V Topics A-F, with B/C combined)
- Key program features and delivery system

### SRAE PROGRAM INPUTS

#### Program objectives:

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# Possible ways to use the SRAE program model

- **Describe SRAE to schools, community members, and new staff**
- **Consider how curricula and programs align with the required SRAE elements and topics (consistent with the Title V legislation)**
- **Assess how the model's suggested subtopics align with your program to identify gaps or opportunities for enhancement**
- **Review and apply tips on promoting high-quality facilitation**
- **Review the research-based protective and risk factors and assess how your program targets them (or could target them)**
- **Use program outputs and short-term outcomes as measures to monitor performance, assess fidelity, and track changes over time**

# Program model resources

- **Brief on the SRAE program model (released September 2022)**

[Promoting Healthy Futures for Youth: A Program Model for SRAE | The Exchange \(hhs.gov\)](#)

- **Recording of grantee webinar in November 2022 (available on The Exchange)**

[Promoting Healthy Futures for Youth: A Webinar Presentation on a Program Model for Sexual Risk Avoidance Education | The Exchange \(hhs.gov\)](#)

- **2-page tip sheet (next page)**



## Promoting Healthy Futures for Youth: A Program Model for Sexual Risk Avoidance Education

September 2022

OPRE Report Number 2022-170

The avoidance of sexual activity among youth ensures the prevention of unplanned teen pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs). It can also promote healthy outcomes and contribute positively to the development of youth. Sexual risk avoidance education (SRAE) is a primary prevention approach that educates youth about the benefits of avoiding non-marital sexual activity and other risky behaviors. Beyond the avoidance of these risks, SRAE also emphasizes the importance of building life skills that promote healthy decision making, personal responsibility, self-regulation, healthy relationships, and goal setting. This brief describes a program model for implementing sexual risk avoidance programming for youth that is research-based and also informed by the legislation authorizing SRAE grants. The program model was developed as part of a portfolio of youth-focused projects on sexual risk avoidance funded by the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and supported by ACF's Family and Youth Services Bureau and Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation.

The SRAE program model identifies key content, strategies, and resources to design and implement SRAE programs, and the expected outputs of implementation related to staff facilitation, curriculum delivery, and youth engagement. It also presents expected short- and longer-term outcomes for youth, along with contextual factors that might influence program implementation. The program model clarifies key elements of SRAE for grant recipients, to ensure their programs align with legislative and program requirements. The model can be used by a variety of audiences to refine curricular products, guide ongoing program improvements and research, and inform future grant opportunities.

The SRAE program model described in this brief was informed by a previously developed conceptual model that identified research-based protective and risk factors associated with the avoidance of sexual activity among youth (Inanc et al. 2020; see also Appendix Table A.2 below). Many of these factors can potentially be modified by program interventions. The SRAE program model specifies the content and other components designed to target and influence the modifiable protective and risk factors, which are included as short-term outcomes in the program model. By influencing these factors, programs may in turn influence the avoidance of sexual activity among youth and also promote other outcomes that reflect youth's overall health and well-being.

### Introduction

In recent years, federal policymaking related to adolescent pregnancy prevention has focused on outcomes related to overall health, strategies to support successful transition to adulthood, and avoidance of sexual risks. Grant programs have increasingly emphasized the social, psychological, and biological factors that can eliminate sexual risk and encourage healthy behaviors. To support this approach, in 2016, Congress authorized the General Departmental Sexual Risk Avoidance Education (SRAE) discretionary grant program. Then, in 2018, Congress authorized and funded the Title V State and Competitive SRAE programs.

SRAE programs emphasize overall health and well-being and risk avoidance in preparing youth for the

future. They focus on goal setting, decision making, and healthy relationships to encourage youth to voluntarily refrain from non-marital sexual activity and other risky behaviors. In 2020, over 700 SRAE programs served more than 650,000 youth in school and community-based settings.<sup>1</sup> These SRAE programs are administered by 110 organizations receiving grants and delivered by 350 organizations. Most grant recipients work with middle or high school youth in schools; about half include youth in foster care, adjudicated youth, and youth with emotional or behavioral health needs as part of the population they serve. SRAE programming is typically delivered via group lessons taught by professional health educators or trained facilitators but may also be delivered through individualized mentoring sessions, or a combination of the two.

<sup>1</sup> These data were collected from a survey of all SRAE grantees operating in summer 2020, conducted as part of the Sexual Risk Avoidance Education National Evaluation.

# SRAE program model tip sheet

## Promoting Healthy Futures for Youth: Tips for Using the Sexual Risk Avoidance Education (SRAE) Program Model

### What is SRAE?

Sexual risk avoidance education (SRAE) is a type of program for youth that promotes the development of life skills related to healthy relationships, decision making, goal setting, and self-regulation, as well as the benefits of avoiding sexual activity and other risky behaviors.

### What is the SRAE Program Model?

The SRAE program model, described in this [brief](#), and shown graphically on the next page, provides a framework for designing and implementing SRAE programs in a manner consistent with the Title V SRAE legislation and informed by research. The model shows how the components of SRAE programs are designed to influence key outcomes. This tip sheet provides examples of ways SRAE grant recipients can use the program model to focus and enhance their efforts to improve youth outcomes.



### Who should use the SRAE program model, and how?

Various audiences, including program practitioners, curriculum developers, local evaluators, and policymakers, can use the model. For example, grant recipients can use it to help describe SRAE to schools, community members, and new staff members. Grant recipients can also crosswalk the model with their logic model, curriculum, and program to ensure alignment with the model's SRAE inputs and identify gaps and opportunities for enhancement. Additional tips and examples for using the program model are presented below.

#### Refer to the Program Inputs to:

- Ensure the curriculum covers all required content and consider how it aligns with [recommended subtopics](#)
- Identify if external partnerships or services may be helpful to deliver or supplement the program

#### Use Implementation Outputs as a guide to:

- Engage youth using tips on high-quality [facilitation](#)
- Review [measures](#) and consider how to use them to monitor performance, assess implementation fidelity, and track changes over time

#### Review the Expected Outcomes to:

- Assess how well the program targets the [protective and risk factors](#) (short-term outcomes) that [research shows](#) are associated with the avoidance of sexual activity among youth

### Where can SRAE grantees find more information?

For more information on the model and related documents, please see the [SRAE Program Model Brief](#). For general guidance on how to use a program model, see the [Practitioners Guide to Program Models](#).

SRAE and the SRAE program model are designed to be inclusive of all youth, regardless of socioeconomic status, background, prior sexual experience, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

- **2-page resource (released April 2023)**
  - Usable online or via hard copy
  - [Tips for Using the Sexual Risk Avoidance Education Program Model \(hhs.gov\)](#)
- **Explains and offers tips on how grantees can use model components to design and deliver SRAE programming**
- **Provides links to other resources**

# Small Group Discussion Activity: “Rose, Thorn, Buds”

# Aligning program content with Title V requirements

- **To what extent is your program's content aligned with the required SRAE elements and topics in the Title V legislation?**
  - What has seemed to work well in considering alignment with Title V?
  - What has been more challenging?
  - What would be helpful?
- **See handout of Title V SRAE elements and topics**

# Activity: Small Group Discussion - Instructions

- **Use post-it notes provided to write responses to questions on the next slide**
- **Discuss at your table as you write**
- **Post your responses to the corresponding poster**
- **Walk around, read other responses, share reactions with others**



# Activity: Small Group Discussion - Prompts

- **ROSES:** Use the yellow post-it notes to write at least one strategy you have used that you think has been effective (at least partially) in aligning your program to the Title V legislative requirements
- **THORNS:** Use the purple post-it notes to write a challenge you face as you interpret the Title V requirements and consider how they apply to your program
- **BUDS:** Use the blue post-it notes to list resources you have used or think could be helpful with alignment with the Title V requirements
- **QUESTIONS:** Use the pink post-it notes to write questions you have about the SRAE program model or the Title V requirements

# Activity Wrap-up

# Using the Alignment Tool Paired Activity

# Preview of SRAE Curriculum Alignment Tool

- **Draft tool to support the alignment of SRAE programming with the required Title V topics and elements**
  - Based on the content (sub-topics) identified in the SRAE program model
- **Allows users to map the lessons and activities of a curriculum (or program) to assess how topics A-F and elements A-E from Title V are addressed**
- **Completed tool will help grantees determine what, if any, supplemental content or activities could be added to more thoroughly cover the required SRAE topics and elements**

# Sample Preview of Alignment Tool: Topic A

## Coverage of “Life Skill Building to Support Future Goals and Well-being”

Life Skill Building Sub-Topics :	Relevant lesson(s) that promote the sub-topic	Relevant activities that promote the sub-topic	Total relevant lessons/time on the sub-topic
Personal responsibility			
Self-worth			
Goal setting and future planning			
Decision making			
Self-regulation			
Other:			

Narrative summary of Life Skill Building lessons and activities:

# Sample Preview of Alignment Tool: Topic D

## Coverage of “The Importance of Healthy Relationships”

Healthy Relationships Sub-Topics	Relevant lesson(s) that promote the sub-topic	Relevant activities that promote the sub-topic	Total relevant lessons/time on the sub-topic
Trusted relationships with parents/adults			
Healthy peer friendships			
Healthy romantic relationships			
Community connections			
Other:			

Narrative summary of Healthy Relationships lessons and activities:

# Alignment tool paired activity - Instructions

- **Choose one person to work with and decide who will take notes**
- **You will have two handouts:**
  - Handout 1: Segment of alignment tool (two different versions, each with a different topic; pairs will only use one of the two versions)
  - Handout 2: Reaction worksheet
- **Look at the topic alignment tool handout and discuss with your partner following the guiding questions in the “reaction worksheet”**
- **Complete the “reaction worksheet”**

# Activity wrap-up and closing remarks



# Resources

- **Brief on the SRAE program model**

[Promoting Healthy Futures for Youth: A Program Model for SRAE | The Exchange \(hhs.gov\)](#)

- **Tip sheet on the SRAE program model**

[Tips for Using the Sexual Risk Avoidance Education Program Model \(hhs.gov\)](#)

# Thank you!

- **For questions:**

- Alicia Meckstroth at [ameckstroth@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:ameckstroth@mathematica-mpr.com)

- Lourdes Fernandez at [lfernandez@mathematica-mpr.com](mailto:lfernandez@mathematica-mpr.com)

# Session Evaluation

Please complete a brief evaluation form for all workshops and panels on Tuesday, May 23 and Wednesday, May 24 by scanning the QR code below or visiting the following link:

<https://tinyurl.com/SessEval232323>

