

2024 ADOLESCENT PREGNANCY
PREVENTION GRANTEE CONFERENCE



BUILDING BRIGHTER FUTURES
WITH TODAY'S YOUTH LEADERS

JUNE 25-27 | SAN FRANCISCO, CA



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Benefits of Intentionally Focusing on Impacting Scientifically-derived Predictors of Sexual Activity

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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.
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Learning Objectives

After attending this workshop, participants will be more aware of:

- why and how to influence student behavior by focusing on intentions
- the methodology of purposefully focusing on motivational factors/predictors that influence behavioral intentions
- a replicable example of successful impact of the strategy of intentionally focusing on these predictors during SRAE program implementation in 2023 with American Samoan youth

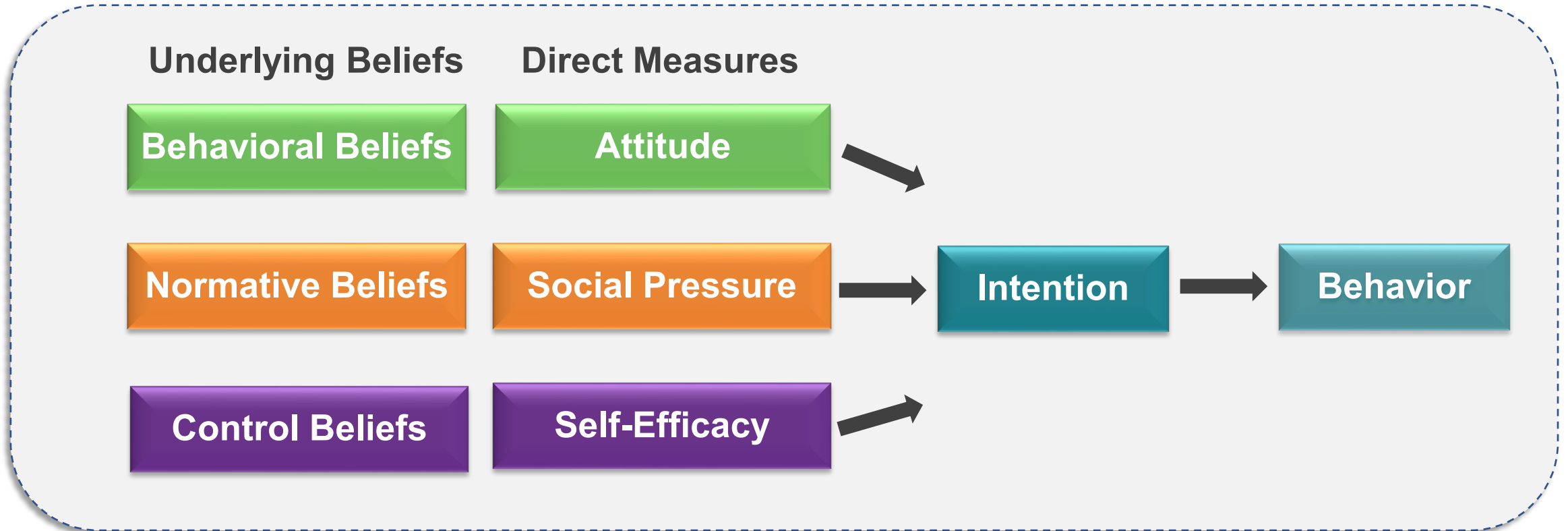
The Goal of SRAE

- The goal of the SRAE program is not to just **impart knowledge**
- The goal of the SRAE program is to **influence behavior change**
 - And to do so by **leading adolescents toward voluntarily choosing optimal health behaviors** for their personal well-being and future success

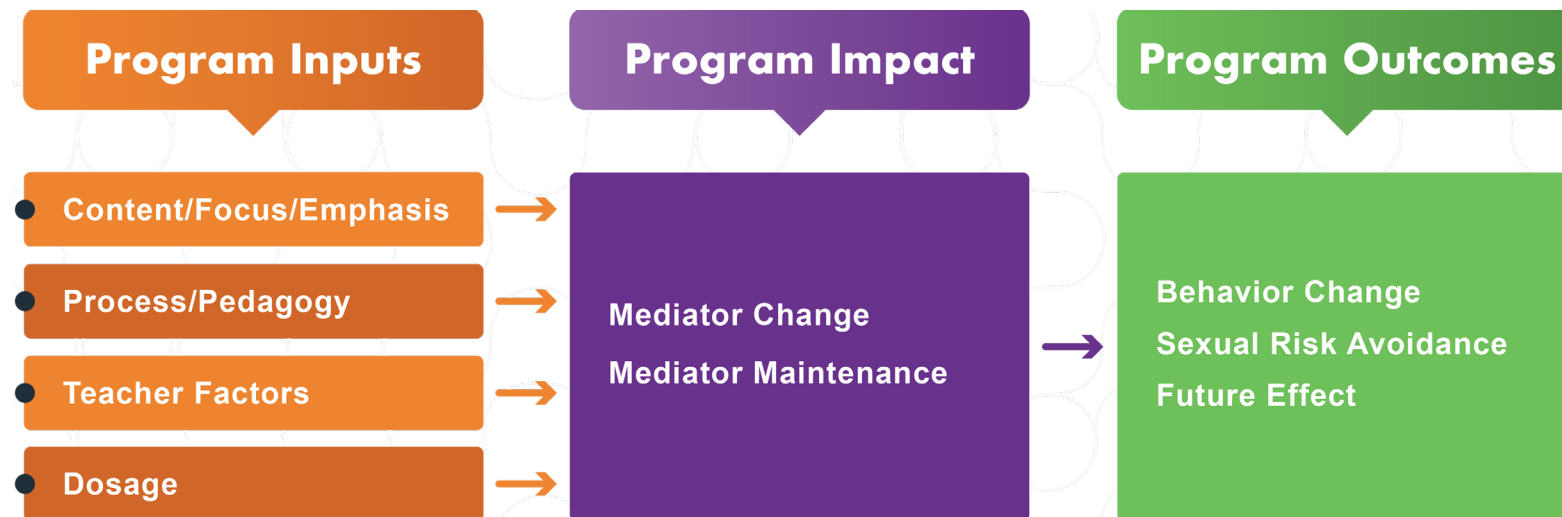
In order to influence behavior, must influence Behavioral Intentions

- The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) has been widely used for the prediction and modification of human actions.
- It posits that **intention is the precursor and main determinant of behavior**
- “Intentions are assumed to capture the **motivational factors that influence behavior**; they are indications of how hard people are willing to try, of how much of an effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behavior. As a general rule, the stronger the intention to engage in a behavior, the more likely should be its performance” (Ajzen, 1991, p. 181).

Theory of Planned Behavior



HOW do programs influence the motivational factors that influence behavior change?



- Program inputs are a beginning step, but focus cannot stop there.
- There must also be a **focus on the methodology** of how to influence and impact motivational factors (mediators of behavior).

Applying the Theory to Impacting Sexual Activity

Stan Weed, PhD has been evaluating SRAE/Abstinence education programs since a modest funding stream was introduced through Title XX under President Reagan's Administration.

Question: **Why do teens engage in early sexual activity? What motivates them to avoid or engage in 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 resist/abstain.

He statistically analyzed answers from hundreds of thousands of teens across America and **teens' responses to these certain constructs could actually *predict* whether a teen would engage in sexual activity or not.**

Stan Weed, PhD

Predictors/Mediators Impacting Sexual Activity – Conceptual Names

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

Behavioral Intentions/Commitment

See the Handout for a brief description of each Conceptually-named Behavioral Predictor

Key Predictors/Mediating Factors

Based on the research and the premise that key factors are operating in an adolescent's life, we know that these Predictors:

- Have a direct and strong impact on their risk behavior
- Are internal factors rather than external and are therefore relevant to all populations
- Are amenable to intervention and influence
- Can be specifically targeted by the intervention
- Can be reliably measured

Measuring an Educator's Impact on Key Predictors

- Dr. Weed's research indicates that when students score near a 4 or better on Likert Scales measuring these mediators, when 5 is the desired response, the students are much more likely to abstain in the future.
- **Behavioral Outcome Objective:** As a result of your program, a statistically significant higher percentage of program participants, as compared with similar non-program students, will intend to abstain, and will actually abstain, from sexual activity outside of marriage
 - as a result of an increase in these predictors: abstinence intentions, behavioral commitment, abstinence values, sexual independence from peers, abstinence efficacy, future impacts of sex, and
 - as a result of a decrease in this predictor: justification of sex.

Measurement of Key Predictors

Measurable Outcome Objective: As a result of your program, the program students will show statistically significant improvement from pre to post survey across measurable constructs/predictors (based on a Likert scale where 5 is best). The closer the participant is to the critical threshold on a Likert scale (nearly a 4), or beyond, the more likely a positive short-term and long-term behavioral result.

Stories from the Field -

Impact of Intentionally Focusing on Influencing Predictors in all Processes

Intersections, Inc. – Pago Pago, American Samoa

Curriculum: Heritage Keepers SRAE Curriculum



- Discovered that by focusing on effectively applying scientifically derived predictors of teen sex to program implementation, the probability of strong and long-lasting protective behavioral outcomes is significantly increased!
- Used highly valid and reliable questions to monitor students' levels on key predictors before and immediately after program implementation
- Monitored the outcomes for each educator, which were then shared with the Educator for the purpose of ongoing improvement

Intersections, Inc Results from 2023

- Tafuna High School
- Nu'uuli High School
- Manulele Tausala Middle School
- CCCAS– Fagatogo

See the Handout of Results of impacting predictors with these students

- Demographic info: 629 students
100% Samoan
- 371 Males/258 Females, 133 MS/496 HS



Results Summary

- Targeting the predictors makes a difference on impacting teen behavior!
- The amount of movement will depend on where the student/class starts on each predictor.
- Considerable movement is a success, but if students are not moved past the critical threshold, it won't have a lasting impact on behavior. In that case, the students could benefit from more program/dosage.



Stories from the Field - Impact of Intentionally Focusing on Influencing Predictors in all Processes

- How the Curriculum was selected
- Breaking through cultural barriers through influence of predictors
- SRAE message aligns with cultural beliefs and building abstinence efficacy.



Stories from the Field - Impact of Intentionally Focusing on Influencing Predictors in all Processes

- Program Implementation
- School Campuses
- Church Groups
- Football Teams
- Youth Camps



Stories from the Field - Impact of Intentionally Focusing on Influencing Predictors in all Processes

- Hiring/Interviewing
- Training of Educators
- Mock Presentations



How can a Program Manager replicate the process?

- Interviewing/hiring process
- Training of Facilitators - beyond curriculum content to also focus on methodology of targeting these Predictors
- Implementation of the curriculum – with intentional focus on influencing Predictors
- Monitoring and feedback to Facilitators – continuous quality improvement on impacting Predictors with students
- Research of program effectiveness



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Questions?

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References

- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational behavior and human decision processes*, 50 (2), 179-211.

Some portions of this presentation are from:

- Regier, J. & Bryant, T. *Understanding Predictors of Behavior Change*. Presented during FYSB APP SRAE TTA Sept 2020
- Heritage Keepers® Curriculum Certification Training

Session Evaluation

Please complete a brief evaluation form for all workshop, forum and networking sessions by scanning the following QR code or visiting the following link:

<https://bit.ly/2024Evaluations>

