

Serving Teen Parents in a Community Setting: Implementation of the MotherWise Program

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Thriving Families



UNIVERSITY of
DENVER

ARTS, HUMANITIES
& SOCIAL SCIENCES
Department of Psychology



Disclosures, Conflict of Interest

- With Scott Stanley and Marline Pearson, Galena Rhoades co-developed *Within My Reach* and receives royalties and payment for trainings in the curriculum
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Objectives

1. Identify specific needs teen parents have.
2. Describe successful strategies for implementation of a program for teen parents.
3. Explain evidence of effectiveness for the MotherWise program.





Mission and Need

- Pregnancy is associated with increased risk for mental health, relationship, and family problems
- Mission: Empower women and their families to thrive during this critical stage





Prevention Program

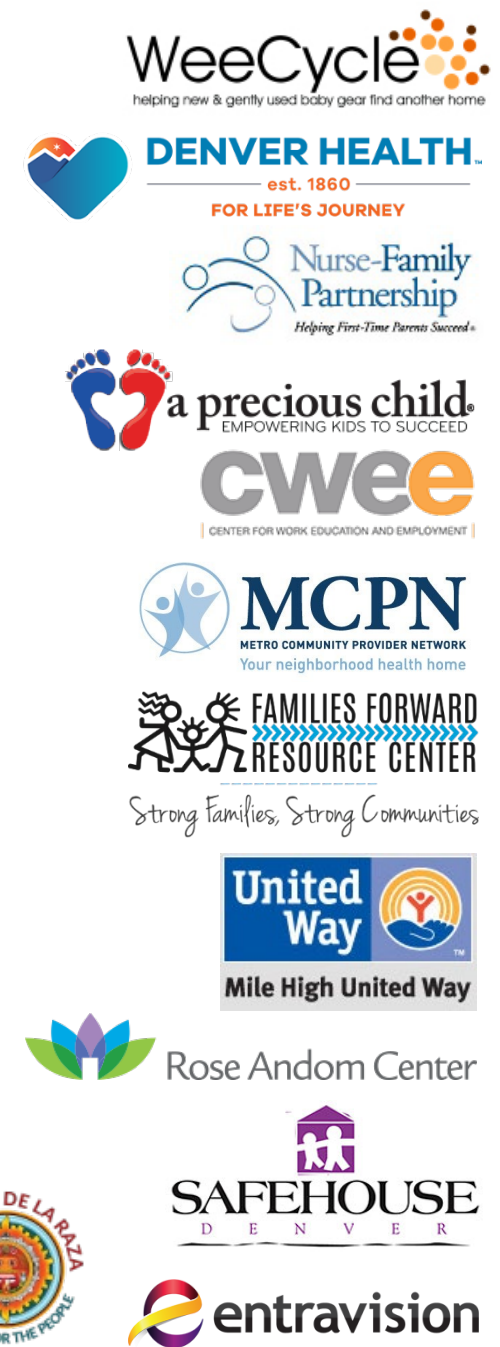
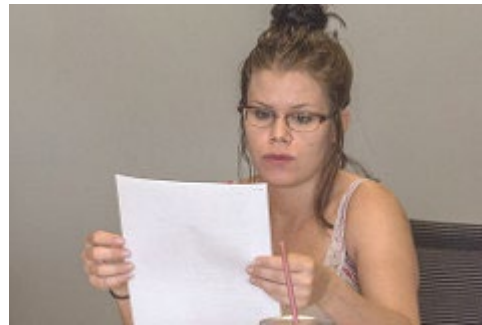
- Evidence-based curriculum: **WITHIN My REACH™**
 - Healthy, safe family relationships
 - Communication skills
 - Decision making
 - 6 weeks, 4-hour sessions
- Infant care and parenting
- Case management, coaching
- All services available in English and Spanish
- Participation support
 - Childcare
 - Transportation (Uber)
 - Meals





Enrollment and Attendance

- Referrals from hospitals, community partners, advertising
- More than 3,000 served since 2016
- 81% attend at least one workshop; 79% of them graduate



A Book In Hand



Children's Hospital Colorado

uchealth



entravision



Impacts (Randomized Controlled Trial)

- Health:
 - Reduces preterm birth by 55%
 - Improves baby's birth weight
 - Increases preventive healthcare utilization
 - Increases use of long-acting contraceptives
 - Decreases unintended pregnancy
- Mental Health
 - Reduces maternal depression, particularly for Black women



Impacts (Con't)

- Relationships
 - Improves relationship and conflict management skills
 - Decreases acceptability of relationship violence
 - Increases relationship happiness
- Child
 - Decreases the number of relationship transitions (family instability) a baby experiences by age 3

Published Papers and Reports on MotherWise

- Allen, M. O. T., Rhoades, G. K., & Mazzoni, S. E. (in press). Individual-oriented relationship education and postpartum depression: The impact of the MotherWise program. *Couple and Family Psychology: Research and Practice*.
- Baumgartner, S. & Paulsell, D. (2019). MotherWise: Implementation of a healthy marriage and relationship education program for pregnant and new mothers. In (Vol. OPRE Report # 2019-42). Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Mazzoni, S. E., Allen, M. O. T., Peña, R., Hyer, J., & Rhoades, G. K. (in press). Impact of prenatal group healthy relationship education on postpartum contraception. *Women's Health Reports*.
- Patnaik, A., & Wood, R. G. (2021). Healthy marriage and relationship education for expectant and new mothers: The one-year impacts of MotherWise. In (Vol. OPRE Report #2021-183). Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Patnaik, A., Gonzalez, K., & Wood, R. G. (2022). Healthy marriage and relationship education for expectant and new mothers: The 30-month impacts of MotherWise. In (Vol. OPRE Report #2022-240). Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- Patnaik, A., Wood, R. G., & Gonzalez, K. (in press). Impacts of healthy marriage and relationship education for expectant and new mothers. *Family Relations*.
- Rhoades, G. K., Allen, M. O. T., Peña, R., Hyer, J., & Mazzoni, S. E. (2022). Relationship education for women during pregnancy: The impact of MotherWise on birth outcomes. *Family Process*, 61, 1134–1143.



Expansion to Teen Parents

- Love Notes SRA curriculum
 - Adaptations for teen parents
- Same structure of program: 6 weeks of classes: 2 virtual meetings/week or 1 in-person meeting/week, case management



Virtual Love Notes Evaluation

Shauna Rienks, Michael Holcombe

University of Denver Butler Institute for Families

- 82 enrolled in Love Notes between October 1, 2021 and September 30, 2022, all English speaking
- Age range: 14-26 years old
- REDCap surveys at/near intake and at/near the last workshop
- $N = 49$ completed pre and post (only those in virtual Love Notes (not Florence Crittenton) included)



Key Findings

Shauna Rienks, Michael Holcombe
University of Denver Butler Institute for Families

- Demographics (pre)
 - 60% Latine; 25% Black or African American
 - 79% Straight, 15% Bisexual, 4% Pansexual, 1% Lesbian
- A few significant changes from pre to post on attitudes, relationship or wellbeing measures
- Positive feedback at last workshop:
 - Feel **more confident** in their skills to be an effective parent: **84%**
 - Know how to **handle conflict** with their partner/spouse: **82%**
 - **Would recommend** the program to others : **82%**



Quotes from Love Notes Participants

- “This program helps a lot of moms. I'm very thankful for MotherWise.”
- “Honestly, this was my favorite part of my days every Tuesday and Thursday. I loved everything about this class.”
- “I loved everything about this class and I learned so many new things that have really helped me and my partner. I can't wait to use a lot of this knowledge to teach my son about consent and healthy relationships.”
- “I love that they teach about red-flags, boundaries...So important for young women or anyone in general to know.”



Lesson Learned and Next Steps

- High case management needs
- Virtual vs. in-person services (see Huntington, Allen, & Rhoades, in press)
- Expansion: Spanish-speaking newcomers to Denver = 50%+ increase in enrollment

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