

TIP SHEET

Personal Responsibility
Education Program

More Than Schools: Implementing Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Programming in Non-traditional Settings

June 2023



School-based programming has been the core of adolescent pregnancy prevention (APP) programming for years. However, the COVID-19 public health emergency increased barriers for organizations seeking to work and partner with local school districts. Now more than ever, schools are over-burdened and overwhelmed with meeting academic requirements, juggling student needs, and dealing with staff shortages (Dorn et al., 2021; Mineo, 2021; NCES, 2022). Furthermore, recent state and local policies have limited, if not excluded, the type of sexual health programming that can be implemented in public schools (SIECUS, 2022). With these new challenges in mind, many practitioners are compelled to think more broadly and creatively about how and where APP programming can be implemented so youth have equitable access to information.

WHAT ARE THE NON-TRADITIONAL SETTINGS IN WHICH PROGRAMMING CAN BE IMPLEMENTED?

Moving beyond public schools to implement APP programming allows grantees to draw on community assets and work in other places where youth are engaged daily or often. Communities usually have a wide range of physical locations and social settings that can be well-suited but overlooked for working with youth. Examples of physical locations include churches or other faith-based institutions, public libraries, health clinics, recreation centers or other youth-serving sites, detention centers, or family shelters. Meanwhile, social settings that could support or deliver APP programming might include sports teams/programs, youth groups, afterschool programs, summer camps, or summer youth employment programs.

Although expanding to new settings may represent a significant change for some grantees, it can bring equally significant benefits such as the ability to:

- Establish and sustain new partnerships in the community.
- Increase the amount of flexibility and creativity in the length, type, and approach to program coordination and implementation.
- Expand the workforce of youth-supporting professionals trained in youth development, program implementation and facilitation, and prevention science, overall.
- Allow outreach and connection to special youth populations such as expectant and parenting youth, those placed in residential facilities, those disconnected from work or school, or those engaged in the juvenile justice system, all of whom may not be captured in schools.

It is important to recognize that, like public schools, other settings have challenges to consider. In non-traditional settings, organizations should be thoughtful in their recruitment, engagement, and retention strategies. In many of these settings, youth may not be mandated to attend or participate in activities held in non-traditional settings; therefore, extra effort and time will be required to reach the high volume of youth a school may offer. Organizations will need to work closely with the other youth-serving professionals in those settings, parents and other caregivers, and youth themselves to maximize the benefit of implementation in a non-traditional setting.



EXAMPLE PROGRAMS CONDUCTED IN NON-TRADITIONAL SETTINGS

- [YOUR Blessed Health](#) is a **church- and faith-based** HIV prevention program engaging youth, church members and leaders, and those in the broader community. Its multicomponent approach complements skill- and knowledge-building exercises with efforts to change church norms and create enabling environments for sexual health promotion (Griffith et al., 2010).
- [Coaching Boys Into Men](#) is a youth development and healthy relationships program implemented in **youth sports** settings and led by youth sports coaches. Coaches facilitate brief, weekly discussions with a three-pronged approach that includes raising awareness, promoting gender-equitable norms, and modeling appropriate behaviors (Miller et al., 2012).
- [Familias Unidas](#), implemented in **community-based** settings by experienced clinicians, involves strengthening parenting skills and family protective factors to prevent risk behaviors among Hispanic adolescents. This extensively studied program has also been adapted for internet-based implementation (Estrada et al., 2017).
- [Seventeen Days](#) is a 55-minute interactive film about contraception, sexually transmitted infections, and romantic relationships directed toward sexually active female adolescents. Although the video intervention was originally delivered in **health clinics** (Downs et al., 2004), it is also accessible in a multitude of settings, including community colleges, recreation centers, or online (Downs et al., 2016).

TIPS ON IMPLEMENTING APP PROGRAMS BEYOND THE SCHOOL SETTING

Implementing programming in new settings can be a great benefit for your program and youth in your community but can also require extra thought, effort, and planning. Below are some tips to keep in mind.



Tip 1. Create a community asset map to identify people, places, and programs that engage youth.

Community asset mapping is a process of documenting the protective factors, strengths, and resources of a community and can help build and mobilize effective partnerships. This activity can easily identify untapped settings in great need of your programming or settings where programming could be easily integrated. Potential resources on community asset mapping include [Community Asset Mapping: Integrating and Engaging Community and Health Systems](#) and the [Mapping Community Assets Workbook](#).



Tip 2. Based on your community asset map, identify one or two assets with which your organization has the capacity to work.

To help select these potential partners and ensure a smooth partnership, ask yourself the following questions:

- Who are the key players focused on youth well-being?
- What partnerships should we establish?
- What would make this partnership mutually beneficial?
- Do we have any existing relationships we can leverage?



Tip 3. Think about the context of the new setting and the priorities of the new partners with which you may work.

To demonstrate your program's relevance and value, it is important to help partners connect it directly to the needs of the youth in their settings. Some questions to ask yourself include the following:

- What kind of programming will be best suited for this setting?
- How can we ensure our offerings are culturally relevant?
- What are the demographics, needs, and strengths of the youth in this setting?
- How many youth does this partner serve/interact with?
- Is anyone else providing programming in this type of setting who we can learn from?



Tip 4. Seek out other, possibly underused, youth-supporting professionals to whom you can offer training in evidence-based programming.

Examples of such professionals include coaches, librarians, pastors, entrepreneurs and youth employers, camp counselors, and more. Engaging such professionals can bring their unique and beneficial skill sets to your work with youth. However, it is also important to ensure they are aligned and well-versed with the content and mission of your selected programming.



Tip 5. Be prepared to be flexible!

Important factors—like leadership structures, staff roles/responsibilities, and approaches to youth engagement—are different across settings, which you will need to take into consideration. Consider delegating a liaison within each setting to build rapport, maintain consistent communication, and integrate your team/program into that setting's culture and dynamic.



Tip 6. Connect with other organizations implementing programming in non-traditional settings.

Sharing best practices, strategies, lessons learned, and resources is one of the best ways to grow your capacity working in non-traditional settings. You are not alone in this work; search for other examples in different communities to refine your approach!

RESOURCES

[TPP Evidence Review: Find and Compare Programs](#)

This resource allows users to filter programs by setting, including non-traditional settings such as alternative schools, community-based organizations, the juvenile justice system, and more.

[Lessons from the Field: Strategies for Forming Strong Partnerships](#)

In this resource, two Personal Responsibility Education Innovative Strategies (PREIS) grantees working in non-traditional settings share insights, strategies, and experiences around building and maintaining effective partnerships.

[Child Welfare Capacity Building Collaborative](#)

This collaborative includes numerous resources relevant to organizations considering non-traditional implementation to engage youth in the child welfare system.

[Elements of the Logic Model: Critical Questions to Ponder](#)

This guide includes questions to help users develop a clear, actionable logic model, which may be especially useful when adjusting a program for non-traditional settings or identifying new partners.

[Approaches for Addressing Sexual and Reproductive Health with System-Involved Youth](#)

This resource provides best practices for engaging and implementing programs with quality and sensitivity for youth involved in the child welfare or juvenile justice systems.

[Youth.Gov: Implementing and Adapting](#)

This resource introduces several elements of program implementation and adaptation, including fidelity and sustainability.

[Community Asset Mapping](#)

This resource describes how to engage small groups of youth in community asset mapping exercises.



REFERENCES

- Dorn, E., Hancock, B., Sarakatsannis, J., & Viruleg, E. (2021). *COVID-19 and education: The lingering effects of unfinished learning*. McKinsey & Company. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>
- Downs, J. S., Ashcraft, A. M., & Murray, P. J. (2016). Video for adolescent pregnancy prevention: Promises, challenges, and future directions. *American Journal of Public Health, 106*(S1), S29–S31. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2016.303428>
- Downs, J. S., Murray, P. J., de Bruin, W. B., Penrose, J., Palmgren, C., & Fischhoff, B. (2004). Interactive video intervention to reduce adolescent females' STD risk: A randomized controlled trial. *Social Science & Medicine, 59*(8), 1561–1572. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2004.01.032>
- Estrada, Y., Molleda, L., Murray, A., Drumhiller, K., Tapia, M., Sardinias, K., Rosen, A., Pantin, H., Perrino, T., Sutton, M., Cano, M. A., Dorcius, D., Muhammad, J. W., & Prado, G. (2017). eHealth Familias Unidas: Pilot study of an internet adaptation of an evidence-based family intervention to reduce drug use and sexual risk behaviors among Hispanic adolescents. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, 14*(264). <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph14030264>
- Griffith, D. M., Campbell, B., Allen, J. O., Robinson, K. J., & Stewart, S. K. (2010). YOUR Blessed Health: An HIV-prevention program bridging faith and public health communities. *Public Health Reports, 125*(S1), 4–11. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F00333549101250S102>
- Miller, E. M., Tancredi, D. J., McCauley, H. L., Decker, M. R., Virata, M. C. D., Anderson, H. A., ... & Silverman, J. G. (2012). “Coaching Boys into Men”: A cluster-randomized controlled trial of a dating violence prevention program. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 51*(5), 431–438. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2012.01.018>
- Mineo, L. (2021, March 29). *Post-pandemic challenges for schools*. The Harvard Gazette. <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2021/03/ed-school-dean-looks-at-post-pandemic-challenges-for-schools/>
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). (2022, March 3). *U.S. schools report increased teacher vacancies due to COVID-19 pandemic, new NCES data show* [Press release]. https://nces.ed.gov/whatsnew/press_releases/3_3_2022.asp
- SIECUS. (2022). *2022 sex ed state law and policy chart*. SIECUS. <https://siecus.org/resources/2022-sex-ed-state-law-and-policy-chart/>

This tip sheet was developed by RTI International and its subcontractor partners under contract #HHSP233201500039I Task 3 with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau.

Suggested Citation:

Offiong, A., & Beckwith, S. (2023). *More than schools: Implementing adolescent pregnancy prevention programming in non-traditional settings*. Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau.