

ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT
healthy
relationships
Parent-Child
Communication
Financial Literacy
Healthy Life Skills
educational & career
SUCCESS

Adulthood Preparation Subjects Resource Guide

ADOLESCENT
PREGNANCY
PREVENTION

May 2021



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Introduction



ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT
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Purpose of Adulthood Preparation Subjects (APSs) Resource Guide

In March 2010, Title V of the Social Security Act was amended to include a new Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP). PREP funds are to be used to educate adolescents on both abstinence and contraception to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and at least three of the six APS (see the Adulthood Preparation Subjects box). The APSs are intended to support programming that provides youth with skills to avoid sex, return youth to a risk-free lifestyle, and reduce risks associated with sexual activity.

This APS Resource Guide provides information based upon research conducted to formulate conceptual models for the six APSs and is intended to serve as a resource for PREP implementation. Each APS section in this guide may be considered stand-alone, although some topics and conceptual models have overlapping components. Each section includes the relevant conceptual model and definition, key topics, examples of implementation activities, tips for integration, curricula resources, and other online resources to provide PREP grantees with further guidance.

The guide draws from the report on [***Conceptual Models for Adulthood Preparation Subjects \(APS\) within PREP***](#) developed by Mathematica and its partner, Child Trends, through a contract with the [***Family and Youth Services Bureau \(FYSB\)***](#) and the [***Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation***](#) within the [***Administration for Children and Families***](#) at the [***U.S. Department of Health and Human Services \(HHS\)***](#). Although PREP legislation required grantees to address APSs, little research

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Adulthood Preparation Subjects

- ▶ **Adolescent Development**, like the development of healthy attitudes and values about adolescent growth and development, body image, racial and ethnic diversity, and other related subjects.
- ▶ **Educational and Career Success**, like developing skills for employment preparation, job seeking, independent living, financial self-sufficiency, and workplace productivity.
- ▶ **Financial Literacy**.
- ▶ **Healthy Life Skills**, like goal setting, decision making, negotiation, communication and interpersonal skills, and stress management.
- ▶ **Healthy Relationships**, including, marriage and family interactions.
- ▶ **Parent-Child Communication**.

Source: U.S. Congress, Social Security Act, Section 513. Available at https://www.ssa.gov/OP_Home/ssact/title05/0513.htm

has been done on how to integrate APSs with other PREP programming or on programs' experiences combining APSs with adolescent pregnancy prevention programs. Moreover, there has been no rigorous research to date on how combining content on APSs and adolescent pregnancy prevention influences program effectiveness. The purpose of the APS Conceptual Models study was to begin to fill this gap by reviewing existing research literature and gathering practice knowledge from grantees to inform how to design and implement programming on APSs.

PREP grantees can use the APS conceptual models and unified framework to (1) understand APSs, (2) choose APSs, (3) develop APS content, and (4) target specific outcomes. These models can also support other youth serving programs in understanding and implementing prevention education programming that includes APSs (Clary et al., 2021).

- 1 Understand APSs.** Each conceptual model is designed to help PREP grantees define the APS; understand the topics and content areas that fall under it; and design, implement, and integrate programming for the APSs within their existing programming.
- 2 Choose APSs.** Grantees can use this guide to determine which APSs they want to include in their PREP programming. Grantees can compare the topics they cover related to sexual health and their current APSs with the topics listed in the APS conceptual models. Grantees can then choose to cover their current APS topics in more depth or cover topics they do not already include in their programming.
- 3 Develop APS content.** Once APS topics are chosen, grantees can use the conceptual models to design and deliver that content within their

PREP programs. The conceptual models can serve as tools to support grantees with addressing APSs in a comprehensive and purposeful way.

- 4 **Target specific outcomes.** Grantees who have identified specific outcomes of interest can use the conceptual models to identify how programming on specific APSs might support their intended outcomes.

Overview of Conceptual Models (Clary et al., 2021)

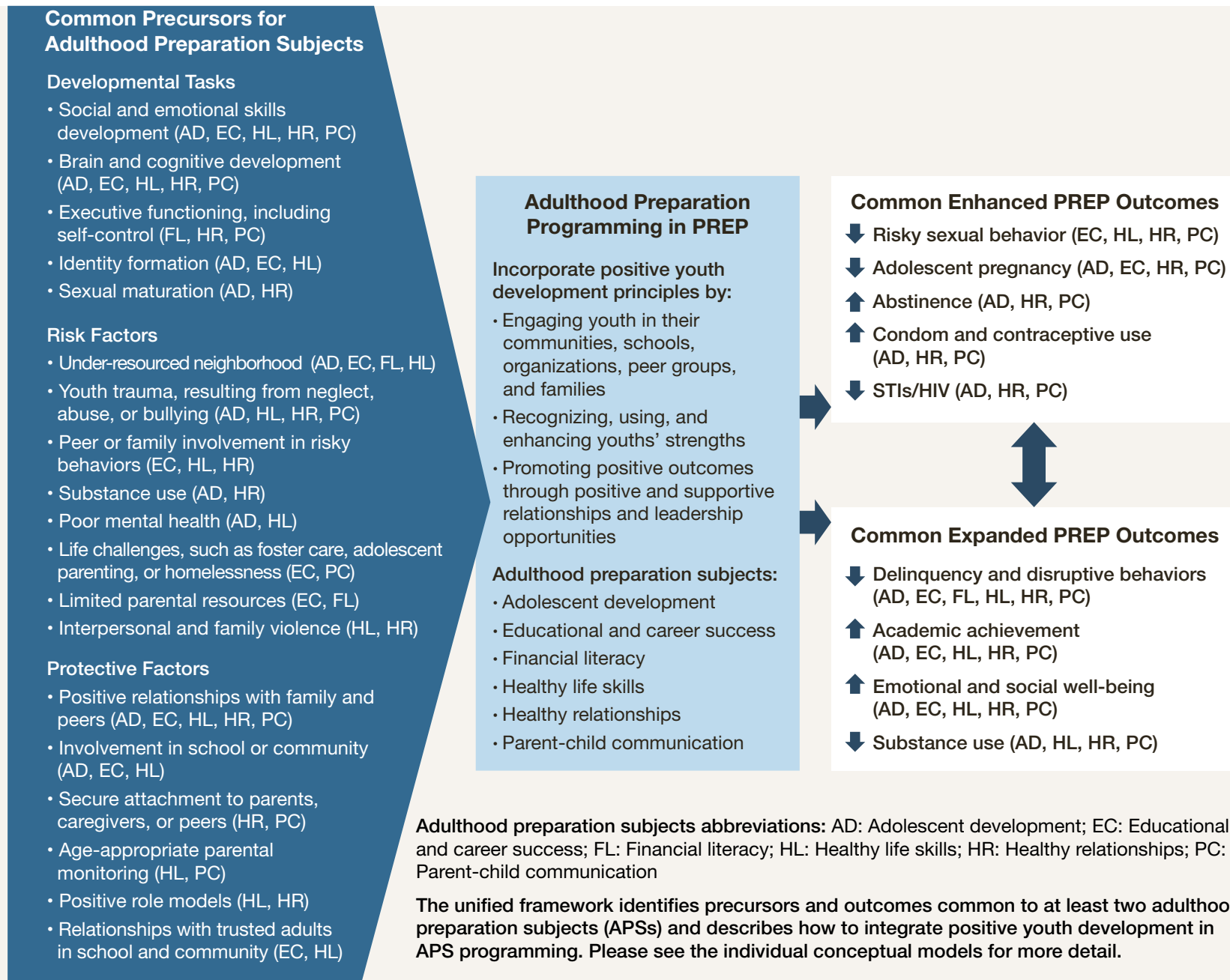
The report on the Conceptual Models presents seven distinct models: six APS conceptual models and a unified framework ([Figure 1](#)). Each APS conceptual model contains six components:


- 1 **Working definition:** A definition that describes the subject and what it means in the context of PREP.
- 2 **Theory of change:** A theory of change that articulates why including APSs may help prepare youth for the transition to adulthood.
- 3 **Precursors:** A list of precursors that may affect youth before or as they enter the program. Precursors include developmental tasks relevant to adolescents and the specific subject, as well as risk and protective factors that may affect how practitioners provide programming to adolescents.

- 4 **Topics:** A set of topics that PREP programs should consider including as part of the APS.
- 5 **Program design and implementation:** Several program design and implementation considerations that grantees can use to think about how to, and who should, deliver the APS programming.
- 6 **Outcomes:** Two sets of outcomes—those that focus on changes to the core abstinence and the prevention of teen pregnancy and STIs outcomes targeted by PREP (enhanced outcomes) and non-sexual or reproductive health outcomes (expanded outcomes) in the models.

The unified framework is a consolidated model that identifies the commonalities between the precursors and outcomes in the individual APS conceptual models. (For definitions see p. 125-126, <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/report/conceptual-models-adulthood-preparation-subjects-within-personal-responsibility>.) It was developed to show the overlap between the APSs. The unified framework is intended to help PREP grantees understand how the addition of APS content, including use of a positive youth development (PYD) approach, can improve outcomes for participating youth. Grantees may use the unified framework to support selection of APSs to meet the needs of their targeted population of youth or to learn how APSs are related.

Figure 1
Unified Framework Model





Considerations for Using Conceptual Models and Implementing APSs

Although the conceptual models and unified framework are useful tools for PREP grantees, there are limitations to the guidance the models can provide. This is due in part to the variety of populations, settings, and potential approaches used by PREP grantees. No models could cover all possibilities or provide guidance for all situations that PREP grantees and providers will need to consider. The models are also not intended to identify elements with evidence of effectiveness or to identify optimal amounts of programming. As such, these models may not serve as detailed implementation guides. Instead, the models provide an overview and a range of possibilities so grantees can adapt them for their selection of curricula and programming expansion.

At the same time, although grantees should work within their context, they should also ensure that their selected APSs are well covered. Although the models cannot and do not quantify amounts of time to spend on each topic, grantees should cover the APSs with enough breadth and depth, and provide enough programming, to reasonably improve youth outcomes plausibly. Assessing student understanding of the APSs and offering opportunities for youth to practice the skills covered are additional ways to monitor whether the programming is accomplishing its intended goals. Providing only a light touch on each APS is unlikely to result in the intended outcomes. In addition, research on evidence-based programming has concluded that sufficient amounts of programming are needed to have an impact, but additional research is needed to quantify what sufficient programming is in the context of PREP and the APSs (Hammond et al. 2007; Lundgren and Amin 2015; Child Trends 2014). The program design and implementation section in each model recommends strategies grantees should consider, many of which involve tailoring programs. These strategies have different levels of evidence that they are effective, but they present potential ways for programs to prepare and deliver APS programming that fits the settings and needs of their youth. Key points from these sections are on the following pages.

Target population. Grantees should consider tailoring their program based on multiple dimensions of their target population. A few examples include

- ▶ Age,
- ▶ Developmental level,
- ▶ Geographic location (i.e., rural vs. urban),
- ▶ Areas with high teen birth rates,
- ▶ Youth in foster care, and
- ▶ Youth in homeless status.

To ensure that programming is resonant and inclusive, grantees should use and model gender-neutral and inclusive language in programming and materials.

Setting. Grantees might work in school systems, where they provide in-school or after-school programming, or in other community settings, like YMCAs or homeless shelters. Logistical aspects of APS programming like the schedule and length of sessions might have to be adjusted to fit the setting.

Other grantees might work in specialized settings, including alternative schools, residential or transitional-living settings, and juvenile justice settings, or serve a specialized population not specific to a setting, such as pregnant and parenting youth.



Engage youth. For APS programming to be effective, it should be interactive and participatory and involve building skills and providing opportunities to practice those skills safely in real-life situations and experiences.

Engage parents and caregivers. Parents and caregivers are uniquely influential in youth's lives, and along with other trusted adults, they can support and protect youth during their transition to adulthood. To the extent feasible, APS programming encourages and provides opportunities to explore diversity and healthy attitudes through discussion and inclusion among parents/caregivers and youth.

Staff development. Currently, the same staff often deliver both sexual health and APS content under PREP. This can be advantageous because staff can cover overlapping topics, connect topics across APSs, and have more time to get to know and connect with the youth they serve. Many skills necessary for this work like those related to facilitation and classroom management are relevant to both PREP programming and the APSs. However, staff will also need content knowledge about the APS and, in some cases, APS-specific skills like modeling Healthy Relationships. Grantees should not assume that training required for their PREP curriculum for the prevention of pregnancy and STIs among youth is sufficient for delivering APS programming.

Instead, staff who deliver APS programming should have the skills and knowledge to teach the relevant APS materials and to answer participant questions about the topics. These skills can be developed through training and professional development. Grantees can also bring in guest speakers to cover specific topics or provide supplemental curricula and/or activities. Using guest speakers can be especially helpful for topics or activities that require specialized expertise, such as discussing credit and debt for the Financial Literacy APS or covering mental health topics for the Adolescent Development APS. Other key topics for professional development that support implementation of APS programming include using a trauma-informed approach and incorporating PYD principles.

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ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT

Adolescent Development is the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional maturation that occurs for youth roughly between ages 10 and 19.



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[PURPOSE OF GUIDE](#) [CONCEPTUAL MODEL](#) [DEFINITION AND THEORY OF CHANGE](#) [EXAMPLE TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES](#) [INTEGRATING TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES](#) [ONLINE RESOURCES](#)

Purpose of the Guide

This guide is an adjunct to the report on [Conceptual Models for Adulthood Preparation Subjects \(APS\) within PREP](#). It is designed to offer suggestions for implementing adolescent development training in PREP programs. It also includes information on curricula that cover Adolescent Development ranging from those dedicated to the topic to those that include one or two sessions on the topic. The report on the Conceptual Models reminds us that programs with increased implementation dosage related to Adolescent Development (both sessions offered and attended) are likely to see better outcomes related to the topic. When planning to integrate Adolescent Development into an existing prevention education curriculum, grantees should first consider what is already part of the curriculum they are implementing and then reinforce their material with topics and strategies included in this guide.

On [page 10](#) is the conceptual model for Adolescent Development. This model includes the following four components:

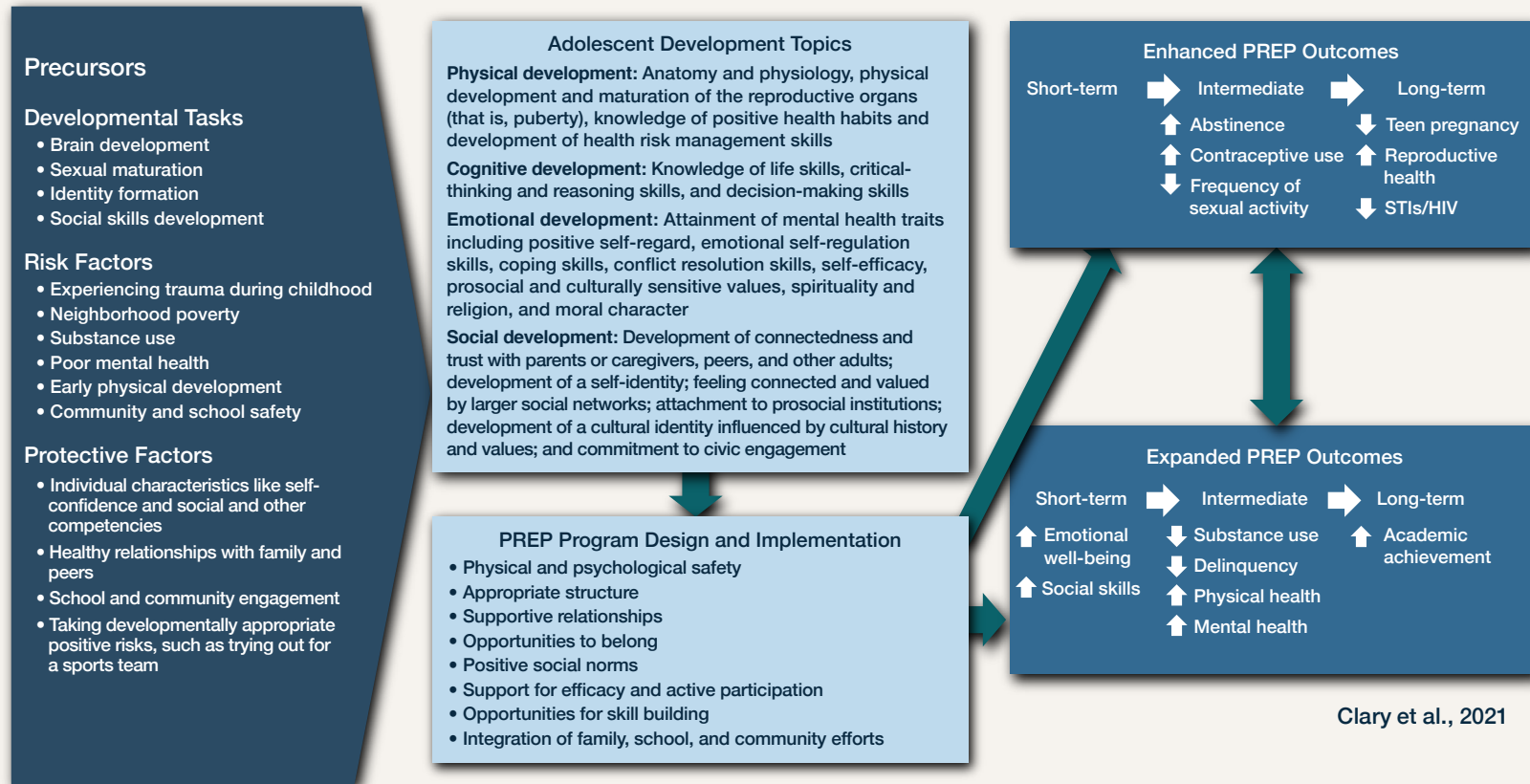
- ▶ **Precursors**—The developmental tasks relevant to Adolescent Development and the risk and protective factors that influence youth and may affect the implementation of this APS.
- ▶ **Topics**—The set of subjects that programs should consider including in their curricula.
- ▶ **Program Design and Implementation**—Strategies for implementing Adolescent Development.
- ▶ **Outcomes**—Both ones that focus on sexual health outcomes (enhanced outcomes) and non-sexual outcomes (expanded outcomes).

The conceptual model for Adolescent Development will enable practitioners to understand what topics are included as part of this APS and how they are related to the goals of the Adolescent Development model to affect youth sexual attitudes and behavior and their growth and functioning.

Figure 2
Conceptual Model for Adolescent Development

Adolescent development is the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional maturation that occurs for youth roughly between ages 10 and 19. Age-appropriate programs and education can support the development of positive social behaviors and relationships; emotional well-being; academic achievement; healthy attitudes and values about adolescent growth and development, body image, racial and ethnic diversity, and related subjects.

Theory of Change: Healthy adolescent development is defined as meeting the appropriate developmental milestones in the areas of physical, cognitive, social, and emotional well-being. Youth development programs aim to build strengths and respond effectively to challenges in these domains. By focusing on outcomes that improve youth assets, PREP programs can support youths' development across domains, which will help youth to improve academic achievement, social skills, and physical and mental health and reduce risky behaviors such as delinquency, substance use, and unprotected sex. Increased protective factors and decreased risk factors will support attainment of positive PREP outcomes, such as reducing sexual risk behaviors, among participating youth.



Working Definition and Considerations

Adolescent Development encompasses the physical, cognitive, social, and emotional maturation that occurs between the ages of 10–19. Supportive, age-appropriate programs and educational supplements can promote positive social behaviors, relationships with peers, partners, and adults; emotional well-being and self-awareness; academic achievement; healthy attitudes and understanding of adolescent growth and development, including body image, racial and ethnic diversity; and related subjects. These topics all contribute to a youth’s understanding of themselves, their environments, and their actions (Clary et al. 2021). Maturation during the adolescent years helps youth to understand both positive and negative consequences of their actions, develop empathy towards others, and plan for the future.

Programs should consider subpopulations of adolescents whose needs may differ based on personal characteristics, such as race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, or disability status (Clary et al., 2021).

Experiences of trauma may also affect youths’ ability to process events and social cues, maintain attention, recall information, and ability to make decisions (Peterson, 2018; Suwetty et al., 2019). Survivors of human trafficking are especially impacted by trauma and more likely to exhibit behaviors like anxiety, depression, distrust, and other behaviors that could be addressed in an Adolescent

Development curriculum. Other risk factors that influence Adolescent Development are neighborhood poverty, substance use, and mental health issues. Individuals implementing PREP programs may need to tailor programs and the presentation of Adolescent Development to account for these factors.

To support the development of healthy adolescents, PREP programs should specifically support adolescents’ development in the following:



Physical



Cognitive



Emotional



Social

Examples of Topics and Activities

The conceptual model provides a variety of Adolescent Development topics to cover, program design and implementation considerations to keep in mind, and potential outcomes to measure. [Table 1](#) on page 12 describes the topics and design considerations in greater detail and provides brief examples of activities that programs may consider incorporating.

Table 1
Examples Topics and Activities to Incorporate Adolescent Development into PREP Programming

Selected Design and Implementation Considerations	Topic	Example Activities
Physical and psychological safety	Physical Development. Anatomy and physiology, physical development, and maturation of the reproductive organs (puberty) knowledge of positive health habits, and development of health risk management skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Ask a doctor/nurse: Everyone has questions about their bodies, bring in a health care provider to anonymously answer questions and provide guidance on health and hygiene practices. ▶ Have a self-care day: This is an inclusive technique to promote and normalize hygiene and mental health awareness without focusing on anatomy, which could be uncomfortable for gender nonconforming teens.
Appropriate structure	Cognitive Development. Knowledge of life skills, critical thinking and reasoning skills, and decision-making skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Create clear and consistent rules and expectations with age-appropriate monitoring. ▶ Provide opportunities for adolescents to learn physical, intellectual, psychological, emotional, and social skills that prepare them to make positive decisions about abstinence and the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections, as well as educational and career opportunities. ▶ Encourage youth autonomy and participation, including opportunities for youth leadership and encourage youth to achieve meaningful change in their community.
Supportive relationships		
Opportunities to belong	Emotional Development. Attainment of mental health traits, including positive self-regard, emotional self-regulation skills, coping skills, conflict resolution skills, self-efficacy, prosocial and culturally sensitive values, spirituality and religion, and moral character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide safe facilities that encourage health-promoting practices like mental health services that increase safe peer interactions and decrease confrontational interactions. ▶ “Ask a therapist”: Bring in a therapist to expose youth to mental health services. ▶ Body mapping: This can help youth identify where in their body they carry their emotions and how to regulate and alleviate tension and stress.
Positive social norms		
Support for efficacy and active participation	Social Development. Development of connectedness and trust with parents or caregivers, peers, and other trusted adults; development of self-identity; feeling connected and valued by larger social networks; attachment to prosocial institutions; development of a cultural identity influenced by cultural history and values; and commitment to civic engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Encourage caring relationships, social support, and mentorship. ▶ Offer opportunities for meaningful inclusion of all youth, positive identity formation, and support for cultural and bicultural competence. ▶ Encourage youth to prioritize personal values that contribute to identity building. ▶ Identify opportunities for youth to participate in program development. This will create a sense of ownership, encourage leadership, and peer mentoring. ▶ Offer opportunities to connect with trusted adults in the community; this will establish a norm of trusting, stable relationships. This will also offer an advocate for the youth regarding employment opportunities and service availability.
Opportunities for skill building		
Integration of family, school, and community efforts		

How and Where to Integrate Adolescent Development Topics and Activities into Program Implementation

Choose Supplementary Curricula with a Focus on Adolescent Development

Some evidence-based and evidenced-informed curricula promote positive social behaviors, emotional well-being, academic achievement, and healthy attitudes. The two example curricula listed in Table 2 have modules on appropriate topics.

Table 2
Examples of Curricula Providing Adolescent Development Topics*

Supplemental Adolescent Development Criteria	Developmental Skills (Topics)			
	Physical	Cognitive	Emotional	Social
Botvin LifeSkills Training —Elementary through high school program teaching healthy alternatives and skills to reduce risky behaviors.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Full of Ourselves: Advancing Girl Power, Health, and Leadership —A program designed for girls in grades 3–8 to address issues of body preoccupation and covers reducing risk for disordered eating, assertiveness, goal setting, and decision-making.	✓	✓		✓

*FYSB does not endorse any curricula. The information included in example curricula are not opinions of FYSB, nor its training and technical assistance contractors.

Offer Supplemental Activities

Even if a program’s selected curriculum covers Adolescent Development topics, it may be appropriate to offer supplemental activities to incorporate physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development topics. Moreover, if the curriculum includes topics related to the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections among youth, consider incorporating physical development topics. These can include reproductive anatomy, STI awareness and testing, and health risk assessment.

Incorporate Videos, Brochures, and Fact Sheets

Those implementing PREP programs should consider incorporating videos, brochures, and fact sheets that can be shared digitally or handed out to participants. The Office of Adolescent Development in the Department of HHS offers a variety of resources about PYD ([Office of Adolescent Health Positive Youth Development](#)) and the National Institute of Mental Health offers resources on child and adolescent mental health ([National Institute of Mental Health Adolescent Mental Health](#)).

Identify Opportunities to Facilitate Development

All of those working with youth should look for activities that will help build their self-esteem. This includes strength identification and strength-based activities. Strengths and positive attributes should be attributed to the individual focusing on goals, planning, and community pride. Similarly, facilitators should amplify opportunities for self-improvement and growth. Activities should be rooted in setting short-term and long-term goals, including communal support and healthy rewards systems, not problem-oriented programming.



Incorporate Mentors into Programming

Mentors should model growth and community engagement. College students or young adults who can model successful transitions into adulthood should be incorporated into program activities. Teachers and community members should represent sustainable systems of support for youth. Involvement in schools or community partnerships can be sustained even after the duration of your program. This can be achieved through volunteering and service outreach opportunities. In addition, it can be useful to offer community leaders planning roles in youth programming to ensure involvement and built-in mentorship.

Consider Gender Differences and Cultural Sensitivity

When appropriate and possible, adjust programs to account for gender differences and cultural sensitivity. Use gender-neutral and inclusive language throughout curriculum and program materials. Encourage diversity and healthy attitudes through discussion and inclusion among participants and leadership that reflects the populations you aim to serve.

Prioritize Program Monitoring and Evaluation

Involve youth in the monitoring and evaluation of programs and curricula to encourage accountability and garner meaningful feedback that can contribute to the implementation of follow-up and subsequent programming. Focus on process and outcome analysis to identify program successes and opportunities for growth. Finally, implement follow-up programming that takes advantage of what is learned through evaluations. Refresher sessions can be altered to the needs of specific groups, including expanding content where necessary. This can also increase sustainability of programs with opportunities for continuing engagement.

Be Mindful of Emerging Trends

Focusing on reproductive and physical anatomy may be uncomfortable for gender-nonconforming individuals. In consideration of this, facilitators should focus on the whole person rather than using gender-specific terminology. Those implementing programs should be aware that trauma impacts youth's ability to make decisions, recognize unhealthy behaviors, and identify positive trusted adult figures. As such,

facilitators should consider using a trauma-informed approach to program delivery.

Online Resources

Resources from [The Exchange](#)

- ▶ [Positive Youth Development Online Training](#)
- ▶ [Positive Youth Development Tip Sheet](#)
- ▶ [Adolescent Self-Regulation Tip Sheet](#)
- ▶ [Empowering Youth to Make Healthy Decisions](#)
- ▶ [Transforming Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention with Brain Science](#)

Other Resources

- ▶ [The Teen Years Explained: A Guide to Healthy Adolescent Development](#)
- ▶ [Office of Health and Human Services, Adolescent Development Explained](#)
- ▶ [American Academy of Pediatrics, parent page](#)
- ▶ [UC Berkley's Thanks! A Strengths-Based Gratitude Curriculum for Tweens and Teens](#)

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educational & career SUCCESS

Educational and Career Success includes the development of hard and soft skills for school and workplace productivity, preparation for postsecondary education and employment, job seeking and retention, career planning, independent living, lifelong learning, and career adaptability support future.



Purpose of the Guide

This guide is an adjunct to the report on the [*Conceptual Models for Adulthood Preparation Subjects \(APS\) within PREP*](#). This section is designed to offer suggestions for implementing Educational and Career Success training in PREP programs. It also includes information on curricula and other resources that provide information on Educational and Career Success. The report on Conceptual Models reminds us that programs with increased implementation dosage on Educational and Career Success topics (both sessions offered and attended) are likely to see better outcomes related to Educational and Career Success. When planning to integrate Educational and Career Success topics into an existing curriculum, grantees should first consider what is already included in the curriculum they are implementing and then reinforce that material with topics and strategies included in this section.

On [page 18](#) is the conceptual model for Educational and Career Success. This model includes the following four components:

- ▶ **Precursors**—The developmental tasks relevant to Educational and Career Success and the risk and protective factors that influence youth and may affect the implementation of this APS.
- ▶ **Topics**—The set of subjects that programs should consider including in their curricula.
- ▶ **Program Design and Implementation**—Strategies for implementing Educational and Career Success.
- ▶ **Outcomes**—Both ones that focus on sexual health outcomes (enhanced outcomes) and non-sexual outcomes (expanded outcomes).

The conceptual model for Educational and Career Success will enable educators to understand what topics are included (e.g., academic support, enriched learning, education planning/assistance, and job and career planning) and how implementing these topics will lead to the specified sexual behavior and non-sexual goals.

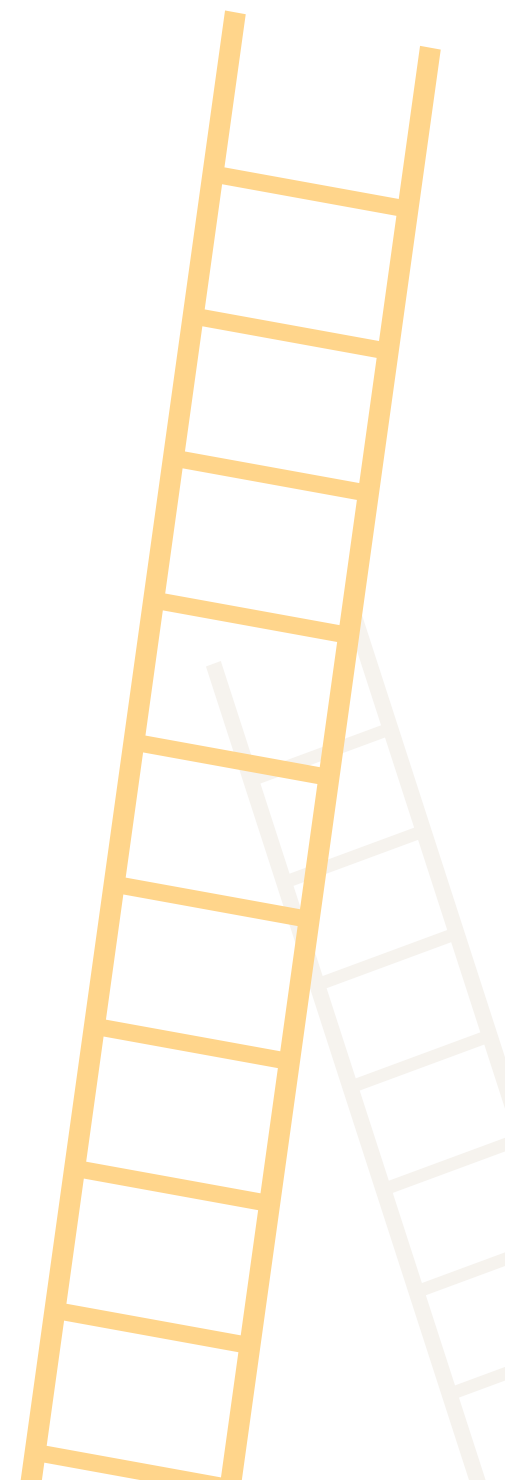
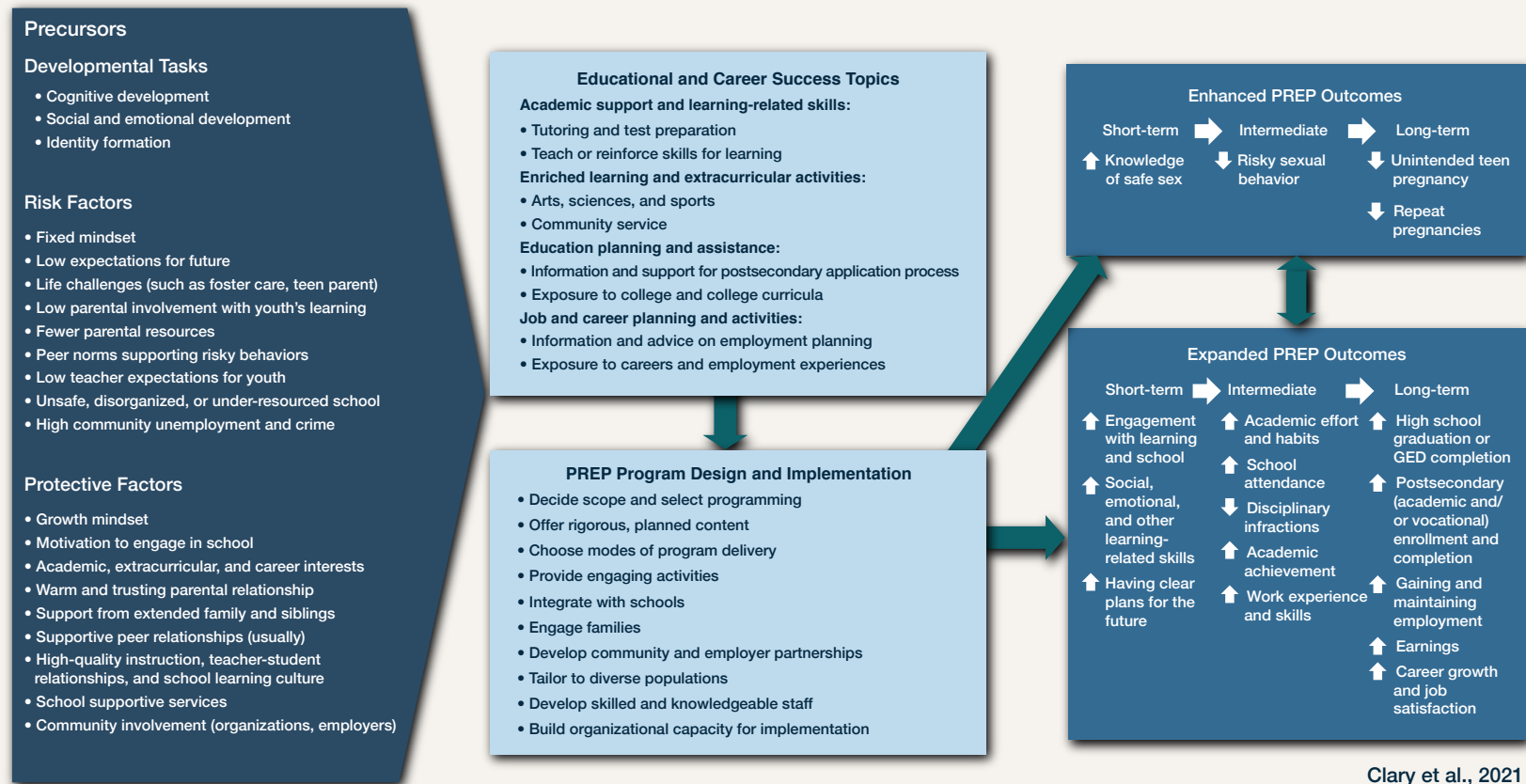


Figure 3
Conceptual Model for Educational and Career Success

Educational and Career Success: Obtaining at least a high school diploma or the equivalent is a starting point for long-term career success. Encouraging youths' academic performance and school attendance and engagement may foster improvements in grades and school retention for youth in traditional and alternative education settings. Long-term success can involve multiple paths to completing postsecondary education or training and finding stable and well-paying employment. The development of hard and soft skills for school and workplace productivity, preparation for postsecondary education and employment, job seeking and retention, career planning, independent living, lifelong learning, and career adaptability support future educational and career success.

Theory of Change: Programs can help youth in both traditional and alternative education settings overcome barriers and build on strengths to achieve educational and career success. After contextual factors are accounted for, educational and career success starts with youths' attitudes and behaviors toward learning. Increased engagement in learning can lead to increased knowledge, skills, and academic achievement. Youth can follow different paths to achieve key outcomes, including graduating from high school, enrolling in and completing postsecondary education or training, and starting a career or steady, well-paying employment that promotes self-sufficiency. Programs may offer youth activities to foster educational and career success, including academic activities to increase knowledge, enrichment activities to stimulate interest and motivation in learning, and activities to help youth plan their future education and careers. Programs may increase effectiveness by influencing youths' family, peer, school, and community contexts, and accounting for youths' circumstances and strengths.





Working Definition

Educational and career success begins with obtaining at least a high school diploma. Encouraging youth's academic performance, school attendance, and engagement may foster improvements in grades and school retention for youth in traditional and alternative education settings. Long-term success can involve multiple paths to completing postsecondary education or training and finding stable and well-paying employment. The development of hard and soft skills for school and workplace productivity, preparation for postsecondary education and employment, job seeking and retention, career planning, independent living, lifelong learning, and career adaptability support future educational and career success (Clary et al., 2021). Programs that can work with youth's family, peers, and community may be more effective.

To support the development of Educational and Career Success, PREP programs should specifically support the development of adolescents'

- 1 Knowledge of educational and career topics,
- 2 Skills to support their academic and career development, and
- 3 Access to educational and career opportunities.

The conceptual model provides several Educational and Career Success topics to cover, program design and implementation considerations to keep in mind, and potential outcomes to measure. [Table 3](#) on page 20 describes the topics and design considerations in greater detail and provides brief examples of activities that programs may consider incorporating.

Table 3
Examples of Topics and Activities to Incorporate Educational and Career Success into PREP Programming

Selected Design and Implementation Considerations	Topic	Example Activities
<p>Decide the scope of educational and career programming and carefully select programming to cover the topics.</p> <p>Offer rigorous, challenging, and planned content.</p> <p>Choose appropriate modes of program delivery.</p> <p>Provide engaging activities with opportunities for youth voice and autonomy.</p> <p>Integrate programming with schools.</p> <p>Engage families.</p> <p>Partner with community organizations and employers.</p> <p>Tailor programming to the diverse populations served by PREP.</p> <p>Develop skilled and knowledgeable staff.</p> <p>Build organizational capacity for implementation.</p>	<p>Academic support and learning-related skills. Programs can focus on academics in two areas: supplementing the instruction youth receive in schools or improving youth’s learning-related skills and attitudes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Offer tutoring, homework assistance, and test preparation support as a component of the program. ▶ Incorporate opportunities to practice study skills, self-management skills, self-regulation skills, and a growth mindset by including time for self-study and opportunities to earn certificates or certificates that stack to lead to a larger certification or outcome.
	<p>Enriched learning and extracurricular activities. Programs providing enriched learning and extracurricular activities have the potential for stronger effects on educational outcomes. They do so by increasing youth motivation and engagement, exploring, and developing their interests, and building social and emotional skills that youth can apply to academic learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Incorporate activities into your program that involve the arts (e.g., drama, music, and dance), sciences and engineering (e.g., environmental science, architecture), and sports and physical disciplines (e.g., tai chi, track and field, and basketball). ▶ Incorporate activities into your programs that also focus on community service and service learning. ▶ Offer programs designed for youth to earn a micro-credential, which are a competency-based digital form of certification.
	<p>Education planning and assistance. Programs can help youth navigate their high school education and plan for education after high school.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Offer programs that support youth potential for postsecondary education like teaching about the college application process or linking youth with colleges that offer an opportunity to earn college credit (e.g., bridge programs, dual-enrollment classes). ▶ Provide programming that can help youth plan and track progress on steps needed to graduate from high school. ▶ Offer programs that can refer youth to educational supports inside/outside of the school district.
	<p>Job and career planning and activities. Programs can help youth plan for employment and future careers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Incorporate activities into your program that provide career advice like career exploration, mentoring, employer presentations, and career fairs. ▶ Provide programming that focuses on building skills related to employment success like completing a job application, writing a resume, and interviewing. ▶ Offer youth opportunities to learn about different career options like entrepreneurship and self-employment. ▶ Offer youth networking opportunities, vocational training, apprenticeships, internships, community service, or work study activities where they can gain extensive career-related exposure and experience.

How and Where to Integrate Educational and Career Success Topics and Activities into Program Implementation

Choose Curricula that Include Educational and Career Success Topics

Two examples of nationally available programs that focus on Educational and Career Success and may be offered in some communities that have PREP programs are found in Table 4.

Table 4
Examples of Curricula Providing Educational and Career Success Models*

Supplemental Adolescent Development Criteria	Academic Support/ Learning-Related Activities Skills Physical	Enriched Learning & Extracurricular Activities	Education Planning & Assistance	Job and Career Planning & Activities
<u>Career Academies</u> —Schools within schools designed to prepare students for college and careers by linking students with peers, teachers, and community partners.	✓			✓
<u>Upward Bound</u> —Federally funded program that prepares high school students for college. The program is usually offered by an institution of higher learning and consists of traditional academic instruction and includes tutoring, mentoring, cultural enrichment, work study, and counseling.	✓	✓	✓	

*FYSB does not endorse any curricula. The information included in example curricula are not opinions of FYSB, nor its training and technical assistance contractors.

Provide Academic Support

Those implementing programs can provide academic support through several mechanisms. If PREP programming is delivered during the school year, facilitators can offer students time to complete their homework and onsite tutoring and assistance with homework before or after regular PREP sessions. The Carrera program incorporates homework and tutoring as an integral part of their curriculum, but PREP staff can also use this approach with other curricula either in the school or community setting.

Incorporate Mentors

PREP staff can incorporate a mentoring component into the program. Both peer and adult mentors can provide a means for youth to learn how to identify and achieve their career goals by learning from individuals who have already addressed these issues. Selecting mentors with diverse backgrounds can help youth develop a broader perspective on career options and opportunities. Additionally, peer mentors can become role models for program participants. Because of their closeness in age and experiences, participants may more readily identify with peer mentors. Attending a college class with a recent graduate is another way youth can learn about the college experience. Developing a relationship with these individuals may lead to assistance in navigating the world of higher education applications and financial assistance.

Work with Partners

Programs can explore partnering with community organizations whose work is relevant to Educational and Career Success. Partners may be able to offer service-learning opportunities for students that provide real-world experience in potential careers. Representatives from such organizations can also come to PREP sessions to discuss different careers in their field as well as the pathways to secure such careers.

Online Resources

Resources from *The Exchange*

- ▶ [Educational and Career Success Tip Sheet](#)
- ▶ [Teaching Real Life Skills Podcast](#)

Other Resources

- ▶ [Association for Career and Technical Education's guide for middle school career exploration](#)
- ▶ [U.S. Department of Education: Preparing for College](#)
- ▶ [College Board Preparing Students for College](#)
- ▶ [Federal Student Aid Financial Aid Toolkit](#)
- ▶ [U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences, What Works Clearinghouse](#)
- ▶ [IES What Works Clearinghouse: Dropout Prevention](#)
- ▶ [Pearson Career Success Platform](#)
- ▶ [Rethinking High School: Preparing Students for Success in College, Career, and Life](#)
- ▶ [U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration](#)
- ▶ [U.S. Department of Labor Workforce Opportunity Act](#)
- ▶ [Preparing high school students for successful transitions to postsecondary education and employment](#)

Financial Literacy

Financial Literacy is having the knowledge and skills needed to understand the financial terminology and concepts that enable adolescents to acquire and manage financial resources successfully.



Purpose of the Guide

This guide is an adjunct to the report on the [*Conceptual Models for Adulthood Preparation Subjects \(APS\) within PREP*](#). This section is designed to offer suggestions for implementing Financial Literacy training in PREP programs. It also includes information on curricula that have Financial Literacy components and stand-alone Financial Literacy curricula. The report on the Conceptual Models reminds us that programs with increased implementation dosage on Financial Literacy topics (both sessions offered and attended) are likely to see better outcomes related to Financial Literacy. When planning to integrate Financial Literacy into an existing curriculum, grantees should first consider what is already part of the curriculum they are implementing and then reinforce that material with topics and strategies included in this section.

On [page 25](#) is the conceptual model for Financial Literacy. This model includes the following four components:

- ▶ **Precursors**—The developmental tasks relevant to Financial Literacy and the risk and protective factors that influence youth and may affect the implementation of this APS.
- ▶ **Topics**—The set of subjects that programs should consider including in their curricula.
- ▶ **Program Design and Implementation**—Strategies for implementing Financial Literacy.
- ▶ **Outcomes**—Both ones that focus on sexual health outcomes (enhanced outcomes) and non-sexual outcomes (expanded outcomes).

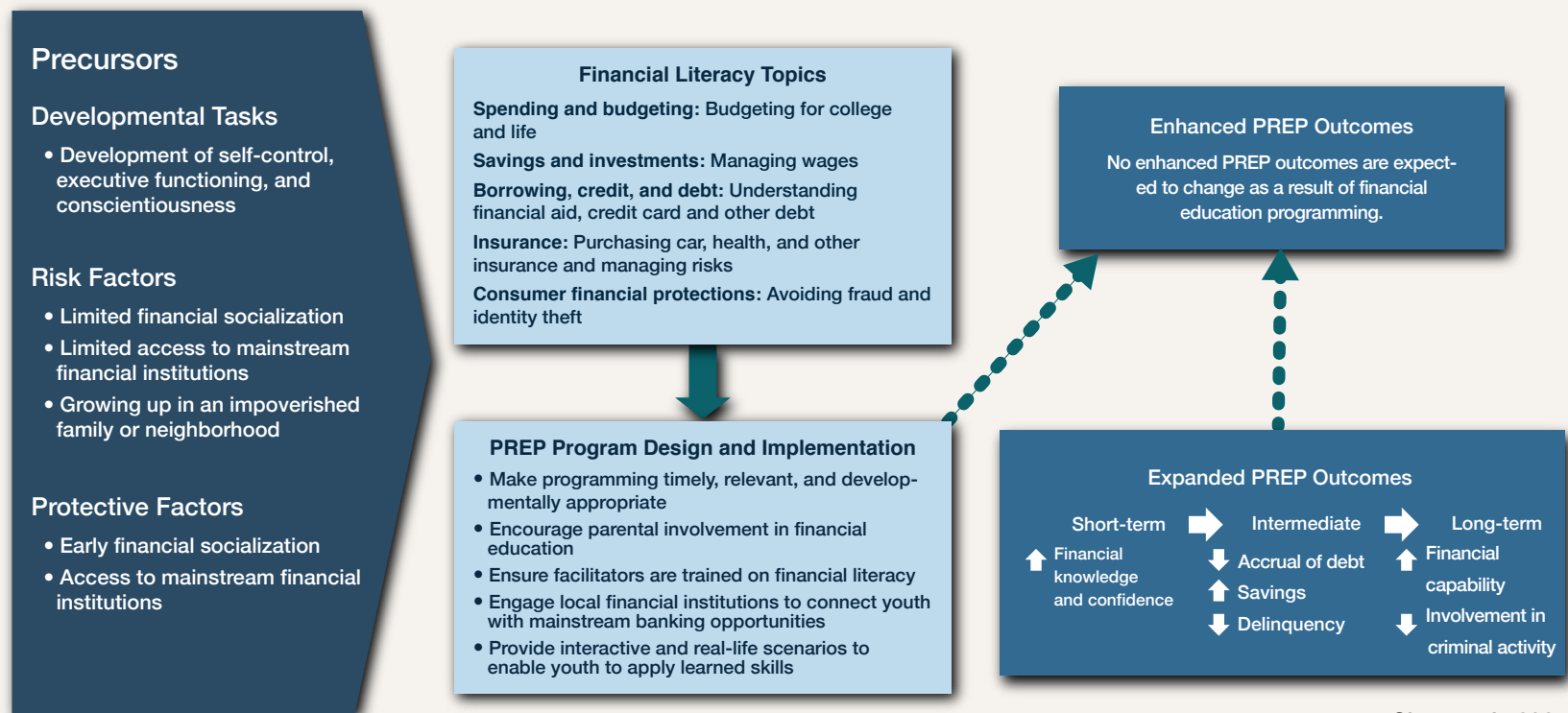
The conceptual model for Financial Literacy will enable practitioners to understand what is included as part of Financial Literacy education programs and how the topics are linked to outcomes. Note that Financial Literacy is not expected to impact PREP-related sexual health outcomes directly.



Figure 4
Conceptual Model for Financial Literacy

Financial literacy is having the knowledge and skills needed to understand the financial terminology and concepts that enable adolescents to acquire and manage financial resources successfully. Short-term financial literacy skills include opening a bank account, saving, managing credit, and preparing and tracking personal budgets. Medium- and long-term financial literacy skills include knowledge of financial services, interest rates, insurance, debt and credit management, and future planning, including planning for college. Financially literate adolescents understand the implications of their spending on their current and future financial well-being and are able to make careful choices about how to acquire and spend their money and other resources.

Theory of Change: Providing youth with financial education and enabling their access to mainstream financial institutions can lead to greater financial capability (the ability to act on financial knowledge). At a stage when youths are beginning to make financial decisions and access financial products, PREP programs promote the development of financial capability by offering targeted financial education and support, through which youth can increase their savings and acquire less debt. Providing financial education and support in conjunction with pregnancy prevention programming may encourage youth to focus on planning for the future and avoiding actions that could prevent them from reaching their long-term goals.



Clary et al., 2021

Working Definition

Financial literacy is having the knowledge and skills needed to understand the financial terminology and concepts that enable adolescents to acquire and manage financial resources successfully. Short-term financial literacy skills include opening a bank account, saving, managing credit, and preparing and tracking personal budgets. Medium- and long-term financial literacy skills include knowledge of financial services, interest rates, insurance, debt and credit management, and future planning, including planning for college. Financially literate adolescents understand the implications of their spending on their current and future financial well-being and can make careful choices about how to acquire and spend their money and other resources (Clary et. al, 2021).

To support the development of Financial Literacy, PREP programs should specifically support the development of adolescents’

- 1 Knowledge of financial topics,
- 2 Skills to make and follow through on financial decisions (financial capability), and
- 3 Access to mainstream financial institutions.

Examples of Topics and Activities

The conceptual model provides a variety of Financial Literacy topics to cover, program design and implementation considerations to keep in mind, and potential outcomes to measure. [Table 5](#) on page 27 describes the topics and design considerations in greater detail and provides brief examples of activities that projects may consider incorporating into their program. Note that several of the activities focus on connecting Financial Literacy education to PREP programming.



Table 5
Examples of Topics and Activities to Incorporate Financial Literacy into PREP Programming

Selected Design and Implementation Considerations	Topic	Example Activities
<p>Timely, youth-relevant, and developmentally appropriate programming. Programs that focus on financial decisions youth are about to make.</p> <p>Parental involvement. Activities that encourage youth to talk with their parents about the financial education content provided during the program.</p> <p>Trained facilitators. Training on providing financial education content and feeling confident providing such programming.</p> <p>Representatives from local financial institutions. Connecting youth with mainstream banking opportunities and encouraging them to get on a path toward financial capability.</p> <p>Real-life application of skills. Interactive and real-life scenarios to enable youth to apply the skills learned in this APS.</p>	<p>Spending and budgeting. This topic addresses how to develop a spending plan that aligns with one's resources, priorities, and available income.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Develop scenarios in which youth get a job and then have to plan, using locally based information on income and expenses, what happens financially (and otherwise) if they or a partner accidentally becomes pregnant. ▶ Give youth a hypothetical salary and budget and ask them to plan how they will care for a hypothetical baby within that budget. ▶ Create a board game that addresses “needs” versus “wants.” Youth get jellybeans to distribute to cover costs such as housing, utilities, communication, savings, insurance, gifts, furnishings, recreation, food, transportation, personal care, clothing, and laundry.
	<p>Savings and investments. This topic covers basic investment products, such as savings and checking accounts, how to select investment options at different times in one's life, how to buy and sell investments, and how agencies protect investors and regulate financial markets and products.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Partner with a local bank to help youth open checking or savings accounts or have a representative of a bank or credit union speak about their financial products and how they may benefit youth. ▶ Help youth determine a financial goal, calculate how much money they need to set aside for that goal to reach it by a specific timepoint, and strategies to be able to meet that goal.
	<p>Borrowing, credit, and debt. This broad category covers types of credit and debt, benefits of various credit options, how to obtain and manage credit, and strategies to avoid or correct debt problems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Have youth calculate interest paid on auto loans with various amounts down and interest rates, evaluate the immediate and long-term differences between various student loan programs, and explore the impact debt and poor credit can have on partnerships.
	<p>Insurance. Topics in this area include insurance options, how and when to use them, purchasing and managing insurance, and types of risk and risk management.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Give youth various auto insurance policies to review and discern what is and is not covered. ▶ Have youth calculate the additional costs for health insurance if a baby is added to a health plan.
	<p>Consumer financial protections. This topic includes how to identify and protect yourself from identity theft and financial fraud, and what to do if you think you have been victimized.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Teach youth how to check their credit reports. ▶ Have youth explore real stories of victims of identity theft and financial fraud and explore various ways personal information can be compromised, particularly via the internet.

For more ideas, see the [Quick Guide to Financial Literacy](#) from You for Youth through the U.S. Department of Education.

How and Where to Integrate into Financial Literacy Topics and Activities into Program Implementation



Incorporate a Financial Literacy Program into PREP Curricula

Most PREP programs do not include activities that directly address Financial Literacy. As such, educators can incorporate an effective Financial Literacy program at the beginning or end of other evidence-based programs so as not to interfere with the core components of the evidence-based program. Although there are several financial education programs available for youth, few of them have been rigorously evaluated. The example programs in [Table 6](#) have been evaluated with positive outcomes, and the skills that each program covers are identified in the table.

In addition to the examples of evidence-based and informed programs listed below, the following two literature reviews of Financial Literacy programs for youth may offer suggestions for financial curricula to use:

- ▶ [A review of youth financial education: Effects and evidence](#)
- ▶ [A review of financial-literacy education programs for children and adolescents](#)

Table 6
Examples of Curricula Addressing Financial Literacy*

Curricula with Financial Literacy Modules	Skills (Topics)				
	Spending & Budgeting	Savings & Investment	Borrowing, Credit, & Debt	Insurance	Consumer Financial Protection
<u>Financial Fitness for Life</u> —A K–12 curriculum focused on personal finance decision-making. It is comprised of 15–22 lessons depending on the grade range and is intended for the school setting.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<u>Financing Your Future</u> —A personal finance program available on DVD for high school teachers and students.	✓	✓	✓		
<u>High School Financial Planning Program</u> —A seven-unit program that can be offered in a variety of settings to youth in grades 8–12	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<u>Junior Achievement Financial Literacy Programs</u> —A series of Financial Literacy programs for elementary, middle, and high school students.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<u>Money Talks</u> —A free downloadable program, developed with input from adolescents, focused on increasing youth financial knowledge and improving financial behavior.	✓	✓	✓		✓
<u>My Classroom Economy</u> —A free, downloadable classroom-based program for grades K–12 based on a simulated microeconomy that adds additional concepts with advancing grade levels.	✓	✓	✓	✓	

*FYSB does not endorse any curricula. The information included in example curricula are not opinions of FYSB, nor its training and technical assistance contractors.

Review the List of Resources

A variety of Financial Literacy resources are listed below, some of which can help educators develop their own Financial Literacy content. The [Consumer Financial Protection Bureau–Youth Financial Education](#) offers free tools and programs to teach Financial Literacy that is integrated with other curricula. Similarly, the [Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Teacher Online Resource Center](#) provides a variety of materials for teachers, including four age-appropriate curricula for grades Pre-K to 12, interactive student activities, videos, and a youth banking center. Other resources are geared toward youth. For instance, [My Money–Resources for Youth](#) is a product of the Congressionally chartered Federal Financial Literacy and Education Commission and provides games, activities, websites, and information about money for youth such as how to save money, what to think about when shopping and buying, and how to a budget. [Treasury Direct Kids](#) also provides a variety of kid-friendly resources, including games, videos, and web pages that cover money, treasury debt, bonds, and saving. PREP facilitators can offer sessions to explore these resources with participating youth. Additional website resources are found in Table 7.

Table 7
Additional Financial Resources

Resources	Target Audience
Resources for Teachers —Website that provides information about and links to a collection of federal guides, curricula for teaching Financial Literacy, and train the trainer videos.	Educators
Jump Start Financial Smarts for Students —A coalition of national and affiliated state coalitions that provide materials to advance youth Financial Literacy.	Educators
Financial Capability and Literacy —Federal website that provides links to resources and websites for educating youth about financial topics.	Educators
Federal Trade Commission —Provides basics of consumer protection regarding managing money, using credit and loans, and identity protection.	Youth and Educators
You For Youth–Quick Guide to Financial Literacy —A resource of the U.S. Department of Education that has suggestions for activities to teach basic knowledge, skills, and behaviors regarding earning, saving, borrowing, investing, insuring, budgeting, and planning.	Educators

Partner with Community Organizations

Partner with an organization in the community implementing a Financial Literacy program and develop a strategy to offer this program to PREP youth. Local financial institutions may be willing to work with PREP programs to provide youth with real-world experience in obtaining bank accounts and small loans, planning for higher education financing, and learning how to prevent fraud.

Ensure Relevance of Programming

Program staff need to be sure that Financial Literacy programs demonstrate relevance to participating students to engage and motivate them. Some youth have had less exposure to these concepts than others, so staff will need to provide requisite background and use examples that are meaningful to these youth.

Integrate with Topics Related to Sexual Health and Relationships

Although the conceptual model does not assume that provision of Financial Literacy topics will impact sexual behavior outcomes, facilitators can explore the interactions between Financial Literacy and decisions related to family planning, costs of caring for children, and potential impact on relationships. In other words, decisions related to marriage and childbearing have financial implications. Educators should include discussions about the financial implications of marriage and childbearing into their programming. Understanding how to manage money and obtain credit will not lead to improved decision making to prevent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections among youth, but these Financial Literacy topics are important considerations when planning a family.

Online Resources

Resources from [*The Exchange*](#)

- ▶ [Financial Literacy Tip Sheet](#)
- ▶ [Teaching Real Life Skills Podcast](#)

Other Resources

- ▶ Bateson, L. A. (2009). A follow-up study of Ohio State University Extension's Youth Financial Literacy Program Real Money, Real World, Behavioral Changes of Program Participants. *Human and Community Resources*. Ohio State University.
- ▶ Batty, M., Collins, J. M., & Odders-White, E. (2015). Experimental evidence on the effects of financial education on elementary school students' knowledge, behavior, and attitudes. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 49(1), 69–96.
- ▶ Danes, S. (2004) *Evaluation of the NEFE High School Financial Planning Program® 2003–2004*. University of Minnesota.
- ▶ Varcoe, K. P., Martin, A., Devitto, Z., & Go, C. (2005). Using a financial education curriculum for teens. *Financial Counseling and Planning* 16(1), 63–71.

Healthy Life Skills

Healthy Life Skills are the competencies that enable people to solve problems and deal in positive ways with challenges they face in their everyday lives. These skills include social, emotional, and cognitive skills, as well as physical and sexual health skills.



Purpose of the Guide

This guide is an adjunct to the report on the [Conceptual Models for Adulthood Preparation Subjects \(APS\) within PREP](#). It is designed to offer suggestions for implementing Healthy Life Skills training in PREP programs. PREP practitioners should read report on the Conceptual Models and then use the suggestions contained in this guide. Although some curricula are mainly focused on pregnancy prevention topics, others include a variety of Healthy Life Skills. The report on the Conceptual Models reminds us that programs with increased implementation dosage of Healthy Life Skills content (both sessions offered and attended) are likely to see better outcomes related to the topic. When planning to integrate Healthy Life Skills into an existing curriculum, grantees should first consider what is already part of the curriculum they are implementing and then reinforce their material with topics and strategies included in this guide.

On [page 34](#) is the conceptual model for Healthy Life Skills. This model includes the following four components:

- ▶ **Precursors**—The developmental tasks relevant to Healthy Life Skills and the risk and protective factors that influence youth and may affect the implementation of this APS.
- ▶ **Topics**—The set of subjects that programs should consider including in their curricula.
- ▶ **Program Design and Implementation**—Strategies for implementing Healthy Life Skills.

- ▶ **Outcomes**—Both ones that focus on sexual health outcomes (enhanced outcomes) and non-sexual outcomes (expanded outcomes).

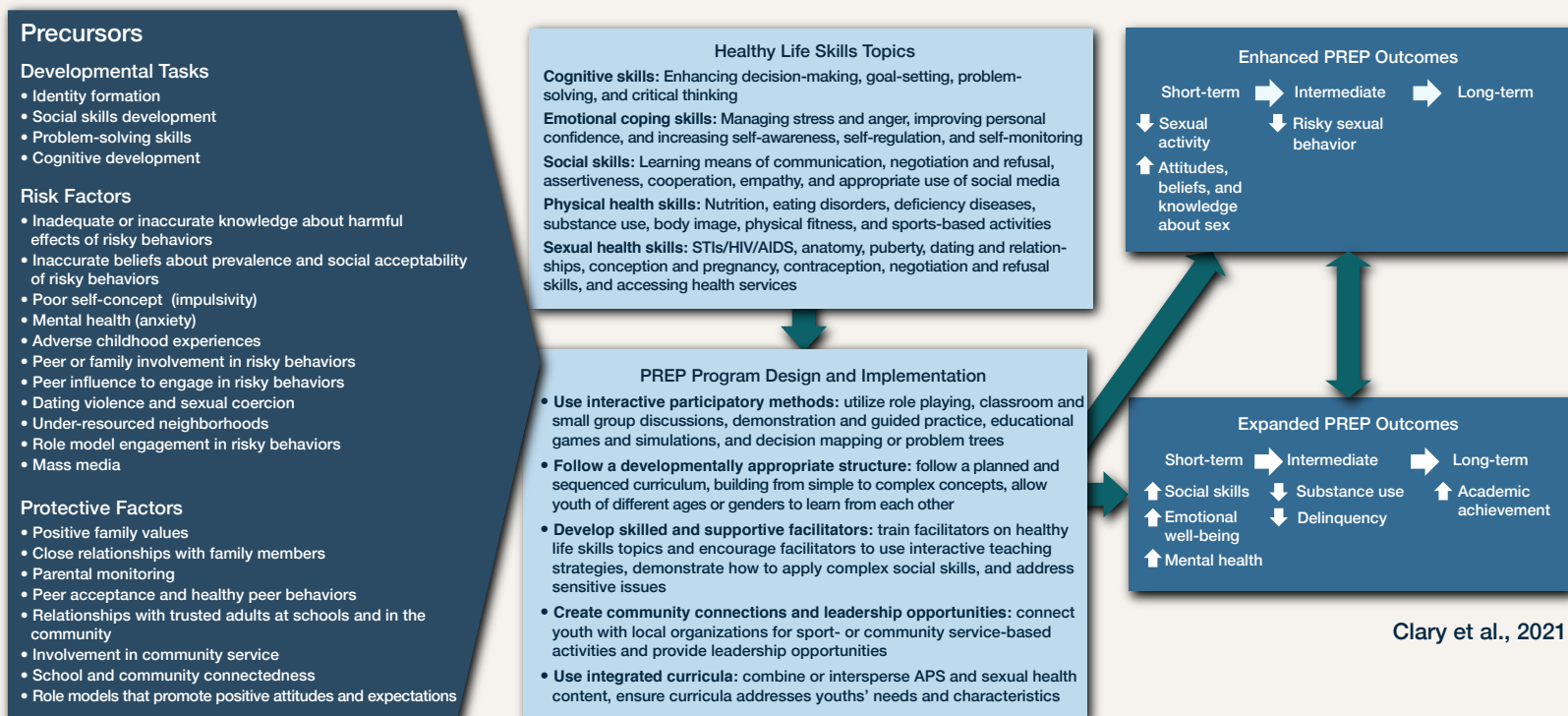
The conceptual model for Healthy Life Skills will enable practitioners to understand what is included as part of Healthy Life Skills and how they are related to the goals of the healthy life skill models to affect sexual attitudes and behavior as well as non-sexual functioning. The topics included as part of Healthy Life Skills (i.e., cognitive skills, emotional coping skills, social skills, physical health skills, and sexual health skills) are designed to increase both attitudes, beliefs and knowledge about sex and to avoid and reduce risky sexual behavior within the optimal health model, adolescent pregnancy, and STIs. These skills are also designed to improve social and emotional skills, mental health in the short term, and academic achievement. Importantly, the conceptual model will facilitate PREP staff in choosing which APS to implement by targeting the APS with outcomes in line with the goals of their program.

Although the conceptual models can and should be used to inform the selection of which APSs to select and the specific topics that may be covered, the report correctly notes that these models are not designed to be detailed implementation guides. Each grantee will need to integrate the selected APS into the chosen curriculum that is appropriate to the population and setting where the program occurs.

Figure 5
Conceptual Model for Healthy Life Skills

Healthy life skills are the competencies that enable people to solve problems and deal in positive ways with challenges they face in their everyday lives. These skills include social, emotional, and cognitive skills, as well as physical and sexual health skills. Social skills focus on communication, negotiation and refusal, assertiveness, cooperation, and empathy. Emotional skills comprise self-regulation and development of personal confidence. Cognitive skills include decision making, goal setting, problem solving, and critical thinking. Physical and sexual health skills focus on making healthy life choices and can reinforce social, emotional, and cognitive skills. Adolescents can practice and build these skills in the classroom and at school—as peer leaders—and in the community, by providing service to others. Using these skills can enable adolescents to improve their emotional well-being, mental health, and social skills; decrease their involvement in risky behaviors; and improve their academic achievement.

Theory of Change: Healthy life skills programs develop youths' social, emotional coping, cognitive, and physical and sexual health skills—tied to relevant developmental, risk, and protective factors—and enable them to make positive choices. Using interactive teaching and learning methods, PREP programs can help youth to improve their social skills by developing effective communication, negotiation, refusal, assertiveness, cooperation, and empathy skills. In addition, programs can help youth increase their emotional coping skills so that they can increase their self-regulation and improve their personal confidence. Programs can also help youth enhance their cognitive skills, such as decision-making, problem-solving, and critical-thinking skills; physical health skills, such as nutrition and physical fitness decisions; and sexual health skills, such as knowledge of sexual and reproductive health, negotiation and refusal skills, and accessing of health services. Improved life skills can lead to improved emotional well-being, mental health, social skills, and academic achievement, and reduced involvement in risky behaviors such as substance use and delinquency. These positive outcomes can in turn lead to increased abstinence, improved condom and other contraceptive use, reduced risky sexual behavior (such as unprotected sex), and a decrease in adolescent pregnancy and STIs/HIV.



Working Definition and Theory of Change

Healthy Life Skills are the competencies that enable people to solve problems and deal in positive ways with challenges they face in their everyday lives. These skills include social, emotional, and cognitive skills, as well as physical and sexual health skills.

Healthy Life Skills programs develop youth's social, emotional coping, cognitive, and physical and sexual health skills—tied to relevant developmental, risk, and protective factors—and enable them to make positive choices. Using interactive teaching and learning methods, PREP programs can help youth improve their social skills by developing effective communication, negotiation, refusal, assertiveness, cooperation, and empathy skills. In addition, programs can help youth increase their emotional coping skills so that they can increase their self-regulation and improve their personal confidence. Programs can also help youth enhance their cognitive skills like decision-making, problem solving, and critical thinking skills; physical health skills like nutrition and physical fitness decisions; and sexual health skills like

knowledge of abstinence and the prevention of teen pregnancy and STIs, negotiation and refusal skills, and accessing health services. Improved life skills can lead to improved emotional well-being, mental health, social skills, and academic achievement, and reduced involvement in risky behaviors such as substance use and delinquency. These positive outcomes can in turn lead to optimal health outcomes, beginning with risk-free choices like avoiding sexual risk or returning to a sexually risk-free lifestyle, or incremental movement toward optimal health through reducing the number of partners, improved condom and other contraceptive use, reduced risky sexual behavior like unprotected sex, and a decrease in adolescent pregnancy and STIs/HIV (Clary, et. al, 2021).



When looking across all APS subjects, Healthy Life Skills rest on several common developmental tasks, including social emotional skills development, brain and cognitive development, and identity formation. There are also common risk factors that affect healthy life skills, including under-resourced neighborhoods, youth trauma, peer or family involvement in risky behaviors, poor mental health, and interpersonal and family violence. Healthy life skills development is associated with positive relationships with family and peers, involvement in school or community, age-appropriate parental monitoring, positive role models, and relationship with trusted adults. The common outcomes likely to result from implementation of Healthy Life Skills training include avoiding risky behaviors, reduced risky sexual behavior, reduced delinquency and disruptive behavior, and improved academic achievement.

To support the development of Healthy Life Skills, PREP programs should

- 1 Improve youth social, emotional coping, and cognitive skills; and
- 2 Help youth reinforce their positive self-concept and self-efficacy, set realistic goals, and identify pathways for achieving goals.

Examples of Topics and Activities

We offer a variety of approaches to promoting Healthy Life Skills for adolescents. The types of implementation strategies are appropriate across several of the skill areas. For instance, role playing, discussion, demonstration and guided practice lend themselves to implementing instruction on subtopics for all the skill areas. In contrast, creating community connections and leadership opportunities is more in line with developing social and emotional skills. In addition, each of the activities should incorporate all the following design and implementation strategies as they represent good teaching strategies:

- ▶ The programs should follow a developmentally appropriate structure;
- ▶ Training for the facilitators who present the topics should include healthy life topics, interactive teaching strategies, application of complex social skills, and how to address sensitive topics; and
- ▶ To the extent possible, all the APS Healthy Life Skills topics should be integrated with the curricula being implemented.

Table 8 offers some illustrative examples of activities for each subtopic of the Healthy Life Skills APS.

Table 8
Examples of Topics and Activities to Incorporate Healthy Life Skills into PREP Programming

Selected Design and Implementation Considerations	Skills (Topics)	Example Activities
Decision mapping Classroom discussion	Cognitive skills. Decision-making	Present a dilemma like deciding whether to go to a movie with friends or complete an assignment that is due in a week and have youth use decision mapping to illustrate the advantages and disadvantages of each choice. Present decision to whole class. Students should discuss how they reached that decision.
Service-learning Classroom and small group discussion	Emotional coping skills. Self-regulation and self-efficacy	Offer students an opportunity to receive funding for a service project on a social issue that concerns them (e.g., drug and alcohol prevention, violence prevention, school safety). Students write proposals with teachers' assistance and give presentations. After selection of one or more funded projects, the remaining students join the funded projects to carry out the project. After concluding the project, the team presents to the class.
Classroom discussion Video	Social skills. Developing empathy and preventing bullying	Ask students what is bullying and whether they have seen someone bullied. Show one of the bullying videos found here: https://www.bark.us/blog/5-best-anti-bullying-videos-on-youtube-for-tweens-and-teens Then ask what students learned about bullying: How did the youth who were bullied feel? How would you feel? How could you be an ally?
Demonstration Classroom discussion Role playing	Physical health skills. Substance use prevention	Facilitators will demonstrate assertive, passive, and aggressive communication styles. Groups will discuss the three styles and how they make individuals feel. The facilitator then presents scenarios in which a youth is confronted with "an invitation" to join another youth in engaging in a risky behavior (e.g., trying alcohol, trying an e-cigarette). Youth can take turns role playing the targeted youth, a friend interacting with the youth, and a coach who makes observations and asks questions about youth communication styles (e.g., what was the result, how a friend responded, what it felt like).
Demonstration Guided practice Role playing Discussion	Sexual health skills. Negotiation and refusal skills	Facilitators present the refusal model (i.e., say no; repeat the refusal; suggest an alternative; use body language that says "no"; repeat "no" in a firm tone of voice as much as needed). Provide feedback to youth as they practice refusal techniques. Present a scenario in which the youth use the refusal strategies. Discuss with youth the outcome.

How and Where to Integrate Healthy Life Skills Topics and Activities into Program Implementation

Choose Curricula with a Focus on Healthy Life Skills

[Table 9](#) presents example curricula and programs that address Healthy Life Skills. These curricula can be used to fill in the gaps for PREP curricula that contain few Healthy Life Skills. They can either be used in entirety or program directors can choose those modules to address areas of need.

Table 9
Examples of Curricula Providing Healthy Life Skills Topics*

Curricula	Skills (Topics)				
	Cognitive	Emotional Coping	Social	Physical Health	Sexual Health
American Indian Life Skills Development/Zuni Life Skills Development —A school-based suicide prevention curriculum to reduce suicide risk and improving protective factors among American Indian youth 14 to 19 years old.	✓	✓	✓		
Botvin LifeSkills Training —An elementary through high school program teaching healthy alternatives and skills to reduce risky behaviors.	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Boys and Girls Clubs of America Health and Wellness Programs —Community-based programs that develop the capacity of school-aged youth to engage in positive behaviors to nurture their well-being, set personal goals, and grow into self-sufficient adults.		✓		✓	✓
IPSY Life Skills Program —A comprehensive school-based program for 5–7 grade students to prevent adolescent use of legal substances based on the World Health Organization’s life skills approach.	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Reconnecting Youth: A Peer Group Approach to Building Life Skills —A school-based prevention program for students ages 14–19 years that teaches skills to build resiliency against risk factors and control early signs of substance use and emotional distress.	✓	✓	✓		

*FYSB does not endorse any curricula. The information included in example curricula are not opinions of FYSB, nor its training and technical assistance contractors.

Incorporate Mentors into Programming

The theory of change for Healthy Life Skills is based on social learning theory and problem behavior theory. Social learning theory posits the critical role of instruction, observation, and interaction with adults and peers for youth to learn. Problem behavior theory indicates that harmful behaviors like substance use, risky sexual activity, and delinquency are influenced by youth's values, beliefs, and attitudes. The implication from these theories is that incorporating mentors who model successful transition to both adolescence and adulthood will help reinforce positive values and attitudes. The takeaway message is that including mentors with varying life experiences, from older students to teachers to community members, will help reinforce the lessons learned in the program.

Engage Youth Through Social Media

As an adjunct to the Healthy Life Skills programming, grantees are encouraged to use social media to engage youth. According to the Pew Research Center, most youth use platforms like Instagram and YouTube (Anderson & Jiang, 2018). The [Social Media Toolkit](#) on [The Exchange](#) provides suggestions for ways that grantees can adopt social media to reach youth. For instance, interview program participants or mentors about Healthy Life Skills success stories and place the interviews on YouTube or Instagram.

Online Resources

Resources from [The Exchange](#)

- ▶ [Healthy Life Skills Tip Sheet](#)

Other Resources

- ▶ [Bullying Awareness Lessons, Activities, and Resources](#)
- ▶ [Delay Tactics and Refusal Skills](#)
- ▶ [Refusal Skills](#)
- ▶ Lafromboise, T. D., & Lewis, H. A. (2008). The Zuni Life Skills Development Program: A school/community-based suicide prevention intervention. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 38(3), 343–353.
- ▶ Nelson, J. A., & Eckstein, D. (2008). A service learning model for at-risk adolescents. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 31(2), 223–237.

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Anderson, M., & Jiang, J. (2018). Teens, social media & technology 2018. Pew Research Center. <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2018/05/31/teens-social-media-technology-2018/>.

healthy relationships

Healthy Relationships are based on trust, honesty, listening, and respect and allow adolescents to feel supported, connected, and independent.



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[PURPOSE OF GUIDE](#) [CONCEPTUAL MODEL](#) [DEFINITION AND THEORY OF CHANGE](#) [INTEGRATING TOPICS AND ACTIVITIES](#) [ONLINE RESOURCES](#)

Purpose of the Guide

This guide is an adjunct to the report on the [Conceptual Models for Adulthood Preparation Subjects \(APS\) within PREP](#). It is designed to offer suggestions for implementing Healthy Relationships training in PREP programs. It also includes information on curricula that cover Healthy Relationships—both curricula dedicated to the topic and those that include one or two sessions on the topic. The report on the Conceptual Models reminds us that programs with increased implementation dosage related to Healthy Relationships (both sessions offered and attended) are likely to see better outcomes related to the topic. When planning to integrate Healthy Relationships into an existing curriculum, grantees should first consider what is already part of the curriculum they are implementing and then reinforce their material with topics and strategies included in this guide.

On [page 42](#) is the conceptual model for Healthy Relationships. This model includes the following four components:

- ▶ **Precursors**—The developmental tasks relevant to Healthy Relationships and the risk and protective factors that influence youth and may affect the implementation of this APS.
- ▶ **Topics**—The set of subjects that programs should consider including in their curricula.
- ▶ **Program Design and Implementation**—Strategies for implementing Healthy Relationships.
- ▶ **Outcomes**—Both ones that focus on sexual health outcomes (enhanced outcomes) and non-sexual outcomes (expanded outcomes).

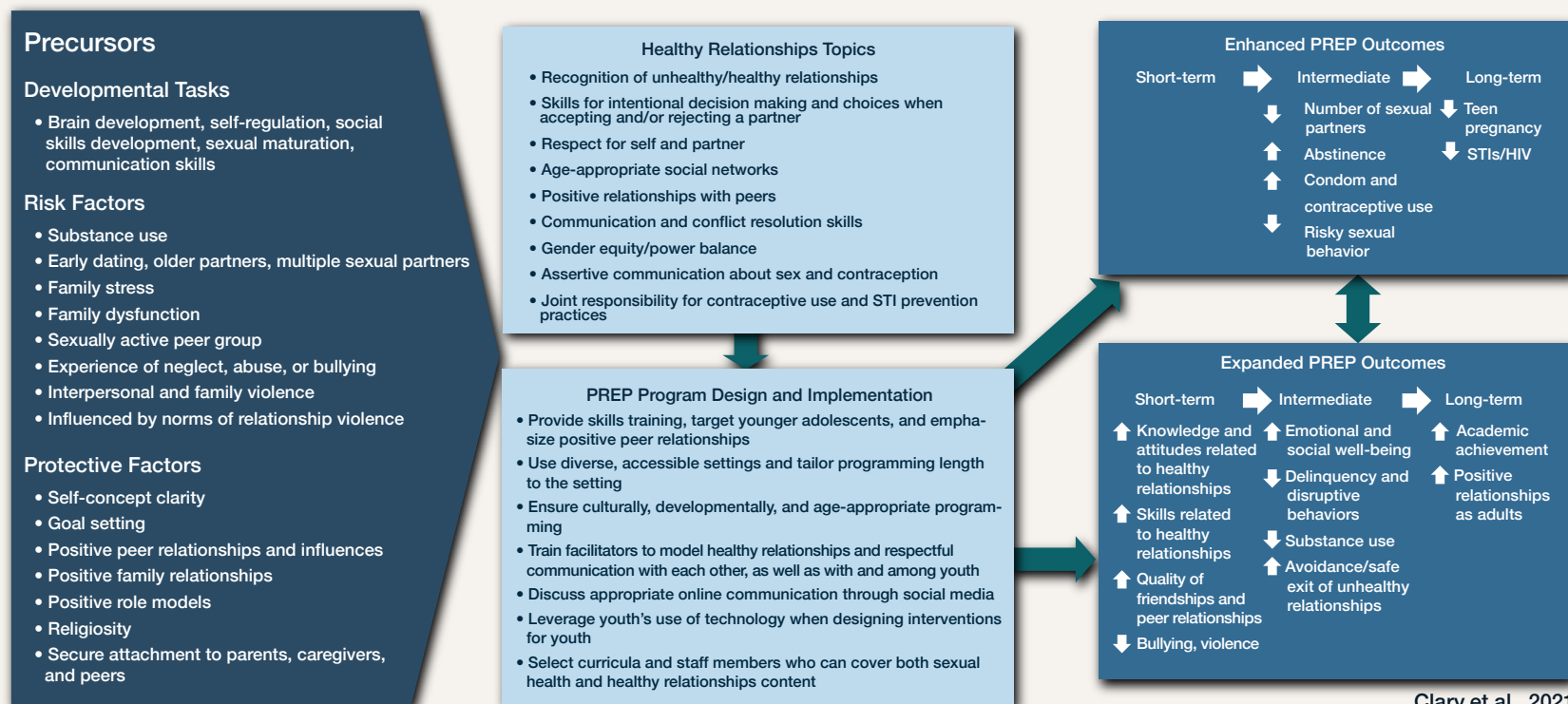
The conceptual model for Healthy Relationships will enable practitioners to understand what topics are included as part of this APS and how they are related to the goals of the Healthy Relationships model to affect sexual attitudes and behavior as well as non-sexual functioning.



Figure 6
Conceptual Model for Healthy Relationships

Healthy relationships are based on trust, honesty, listening, and respect and allow adolescents to feel supported, connected, and independent. In healthy relationships, adolescents must communicate and establish boundaries. They can learn to communicate, demonstrate empathy, manage conflict, and resist peer pressure. They can learn to recognize the characteristics of healthy (and unhealthy) relationships and develop skills to form healthy relationships and avoid unhealthy ones, including those that involve physical violence, emotional and verbal abuse, and coercion. Adolescents experiencing healthy relationships are less likely to engage in risk-taking behaviors. Such relationships can include peer and romantic relationships, but having healthy relationships with parents, family members, and other adults (guardians and caregivers) is also important and provides a foundation for the skills and behaviors needed to establish healthy relationships and boundaries with peers and partners.

Theory of Change: To foster healthy relationships throughout adolescence and promote them in young adulthood, PREP programs should support the development of adolescents' (1) knowledge of the characteristics of healthy (and unhealthy) relationships, (2) beliefs that they can create healthy relationships and avoid unhealthy relationships, and (3) skills to form healthy relationships and avoid or remove themselves from unhealthy ones. PREP programming can help build this knowledge, and these beliefs and skills. When these three objectives are achieved in PREP programming, they should be reflected in adolescents' immediate behaviors, and ideally carried forward into young adulthood. Strengthening adolescents' knowledge, beliefs, and skills regarding healthy relationships could help improve overall reproductive health outcomes (for example, decrease in number of sexual partners, increase in abstinence), and outcomes related to fostering healthy relationships (for example, increased quality of friendships and peer relationships, emotional and social well-being, and positive relationships as adults).



Clary et al., 2021

Working Definition

Healthy relationships are based on trust, honesty, listening, and respect.

Adolescents tend to feel supported, connected, and independent when they are engaged in healthy relationships. In healthy relationships, adolescents must communicate and establish boundaries. To build healthy relationships, adolescents need to learn to communicate, demonstrate empathy, manage conflict, and resist peer pressure. They also need to learn to recognize the characteristics of healthy (and unhealthy) relationships and develop skills to form healthy relationships and avoid unhealthy ones, including those that involve physical violence, emotional and verbal abuse, and coercion. Adolescents experiencing healthy relationships are less likely to engage in risk-taking behaviors. Such relationships can include peer and romantic relationships, but having healthy relationships with parents, family members, and other adults (guardians and caregivers) is also important and provides a foundation for the skills and behaviors needed to establish healthy relationships and boundaries with peers and partners.

To support the development of Healthy Relationships, PREP programs should specifically support the development of adolescents’

- 1 Knowledge of the characteristics of healthy (and unhealthy) relationships,
- 2 Beliefs that they can create healthy relationships and avoid unhealthy relationships, and
- 3 Skills to form healthy relationships and remove themselves from unhealthy ones.

Examples of Topics and Activities

The conceptual model provides a variety of Healthy Relationship topics to cover, program design and implementation considerations to keep in mind, and potential outcomes to measure. [Table 10](#) on the next page describes the topics and design considerations in greater detail and provides brief examples of activities that programs may consider incorporating.

Table 10

Examples of Topics and Activities to Incorporate Healthy Relationships into PREP Programming

Selected Design and Implementation Considerations	Topic	Example Activities
<p>Discuss appropriate online communication through social media as it relates to healthy relationships and specifically to relationship formation and behavior.</p> <p>Train facilitators to model healthy relationships with each other and with the youth in the program.</p> <p>Ensure that activities include skills training and are culturally, developmentally, and age appropriate.</p> <p>Leverage youth's use of technology when designing interventions.</p> <p>Select curricula and staff members who can cover both sexual health and Healthy Relationships content.</p>	<p>Healthy and unhealthy relationships. This topic includes providing the knowledge base to recognize the qualities of healthy and unhealthy relationships and skills that allow participants to form healthy relationships and remove themselves from unhealthy ones.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Brainstorm qualities of healthy and unhealthy relationships. ▶ Review and discuss case studies that feature different relationships. ▶ Use role playing scenarios to practice skills related to healthy relationship formation and exiting unhealthy relationships.
	<p>Intentional decision-making and partner selection. This topic includes discussions about the characteristics of mature love and other types of intense attraction to encourage youth to determine and articulate their own values and future goals specifically as it relates to relationships and partner selection.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Conduct a self-assessment activity to determine values and goals related to relationships. ▶ Use real-life examples from books and media to discuss characteristics of relationships. ▶ Use a goal-setting activity related to intentional decision-making about partnerships.
	<p>Respect for self and partner. This topic includes discussions of how to care for oneself and one's partner and the impact of social media on healthy relationships broadly and respect more specifically.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use real-life examples to engage youth and provide discussions of how to develop and maintain healthy relationships with one another and their partners. ▶ Host a "date night" that allows students to practice fun and safe dating skills without the influence of drugs or alcohol.
	<p>Age-appropriate social networks. This topic includes components that encourage youth to form positive and healthy social networks that are appropriate to their developmental stage and potentially information about how to use digital technology safely to support healthy relationships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Include role playing activities that highlight the potential risk of dating older partners and having friends who are older. ▶ Include self-assessment opportunities for young people to determine when they are developmentally ready to pursue an intimate relationship and support delay of these relationships until an adolescent is mature enough.

(Table 10 continued on next page)

Table 10 (continued)

Examples of Topics and Activities to Incorporate Healthy Relationships into PREP Programming

Selected Design and Implementation Considerations	Topic	Example Activities
<p>Discuss appropriate online communication through social media as it relates to healthy relationships and specifically to relationship formation and behavior.</p> <p>Train facilitators to model healthy relationships with each other and with the youth in the program.</p> <p>Ensure that activities include skills training and are culturally, developmentally, and age appropriate.</p> <p>Leverage youth's use of technology when designing interventions.</p> <p>Select curricula and staff members who can cover both sexual health and Healthy Relationships content.</p>	<p>Positive relationships with peers. This topic includes supporting the development of healthy communication and prosocial behaviors with peers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Establish ground rules and group norms to develop camaraderie among the group. ▶ Provide opportunities within the group for meaningful connection between participants. ▶ Use case studies to discuss and provide examples of positive prosocial behaviors amongst peers.
	<p>Communication and conflict resolution. This topic includes building skills and self-efficacy to communicate effectively and manage conflict within relationships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use role playing scenarios to practice communication skills. ▶ Incorporate an improv-like game to encourage listening and responding. ▶ Review videos of different communication styles and discuss the difference.
	<p>Gender equality/power balance. This topic includes incorporating components that promote gender-equitable norms within relationships and society.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use real-life examples to talk about gender equality and power balance. ▶ Use case studies to review various scenarios and examples of what might reflect gender equality.
	<p>Joint responsibility for contraceptive use and STI/HIV prevention practices. This topic emphasizes the importance of both partners involvement in decision-making about contraceptive use for both pregnancy and STI/HIV prevention.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Include practical negotiation skills specific to contraception and STI/HIV prevention potentially through role playing scenarios, videos, or storytelling. ▶ Allow participants to develop their own skits to address conversations between partners about contraceptive use and STI/HIV prevention practices.
	<p>Assertive communication about sex and contraception. This topic includes a focus on clear, assertive communication on specific topics including consent, refusal of sex, and exiting unhealthy relationships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide an opportunity to practice refusal skills and consent through skits or scenarios. These could be pre-formulated or developed by students. ▶ Practice saying words specific to sex and contraception potentially through participant presentations.

How and Where to Integrate Healthy Relationships Topics and Activities into Program Implementation

Select a Stand-Alone Curriculum or Materials that Address Healthy Relationships

Some curricula are designed to stand alone to promote Healthy Relationships. Grantees can supplement existing curricula with additional lessons that cover topics related to Healthy Relationships. These could be included as supplementary activities throughout each curriculum or at the end of implementation.

There are four curricula* that have some evidence of success in supporting the development of healthy relationships:

- ▶ **Project TALC (Teens and Adults Learning to Communicate)**—a 24-session social learning program designed to provide coping skills to HIV-positive parents and their adolescent children. The program seeks to reduce adolescents' emotional distress, problem behaviors, and pregnancy.
- ▶ **Safe Dates**—was found to improve communication and anger management



skills and decrease gender stereotyping. The curriculum consists of ten 50-minute lessons. More information is available here: https://www.violencepreventionworks.org/public/safe_dates.page.

- ▶ **The Fourth R**—was found to reduce physical dating violence and increase condom use (among males). There are different curriculum for different grades and a variety of supplemental healthy relationship activities and material available at: <https://youthrelationships.org>.
- ▶ **Relationships Smarts Plus**—was found to increase knowledge of healthy relationships and decrease verbal and physical conflict. The program consists of 13 one-hour lessons and is aimed at youth aged 12-16 years old.

*FYSB does not endorse any curricula. The information included in example curricula are not opinions of FYSB, nor its training and technical assistance contractors.

[Loveisrespect](#), a project of the National Domestic Violence Hotline, focuses on engaging, educating, and empowering youth to prevent and end abusive relationships, offers Healthy Relationship activity guides for both middle school ([Love is Respect Middle School Educators Toolkit](#)) and high school educators ([Love is Respect High School Educator Toolkit](#)) as well as a number of handouts and quizzes that can be used to supplement existing programming, including toolkits for both high school educators and middle school educators ([Love is Respect Supplementary Resources](#)).

Note that many curricula focus on reducing individual risk of adolescent pregnancy and STI/HIV, and incorporating Healthy Relationships may allow a program to talk about the risk of these outcomes in a more contextual way that recognizes the broader setting within which many unplanned pregnancies and STI/HIV infections occur.

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2017). Preventing intimate partner violence across the lifespan: A technical package of programs, policies and practices. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/ipv-technicalpackages.pdf>

Clary, E., Zaveri, H., Moore, K. A., Scott, M. E., Jones, C., Eddins, K., Adamek, K., Around Him, D., Arkin, M., & Griffith, I. (2021). *Conceptual models for Adulthood Preparation Subjects in PREP* (OPRE Report #2021-21). Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Address Additional Topics

Facilitators are encouraged to consider addressing additional topics that are relevant depending on current events and new research related to adolescent sexual health and adolescents more broadly. For example, including conversations about Healthy Relationships in the context of digital interactions is critical given the increased use of digital devices for communication especially among youth.

Online Resources

Resources from [The Exchange](#)

- ▶ [Think Twice About Sexting Infographic](#)
- ▶ [Adolescent Self-Regulation Tip Sheet](#)
- ▶ [Healthy Relationships Tip Sheet](#)
- ▶ [Making the Connections: Reducing Teen Pregnancy Risk by Promoting Healthy Relationships Webinar](#)
- ▶ [Peer Mentoring: Harnessing Positive Influence Tip Sheet](#)
- ▶ [Healthy Relationships and Collaboration Podcast](#)
- ▶ [Healthy Relationships: Assess, Improve, Take Action](#)

Parent–Child Communication

Parent–Child Communication is the exchange of information, opinions, concerns, or advice, either verbal or nonverbal (such as hugging, sharing quality time, and parental modeling) between parents (or caregivers) and children.



Purpose of this Guide

This guide is an adjunct to the report on the [*Conceptual Models for Adulthood Preparation Subjects \(APS\) within PREP*](#). It is designed to offer suggestions for how to implement Parent–Child Communication in PREP programs. It also includes information on evidenced-based curricula and other resources that include information on Parent–Child Communication. The report on the Conceptual Models reminds us that programs with increased implementation dosage (both sessions offered and attended) are likely to see better outcomes related to the APS. In addition, no one PREP curriculum will cover all the APS topics. When planning to integrate APS into an existing curriculum, grantees should first consider what is already part of the curriculum they are implementing and then reinforce their material with topics and strategies included in this guide.

On [page 50](#) is the conceptual model for Parent–Child Communication. This model includes the following four components:

- ▶ **Precursors**—The developmental tasks relevant to Parent–Child Communication and the risk and protective factors that influence youth and may affect the implementation of this APS.
- ▶ **Topics**—The set of subjects that programs should consider including in their curricula.
- ▶ **Program Design and Implementation**—Strategies for implementing Parent–Child Communication.
- ▶ **Outcomes**—Both ones that focus on sexual health outcomes (enhanced outcomes) and non-sexual outcomes (expanded outcomes).

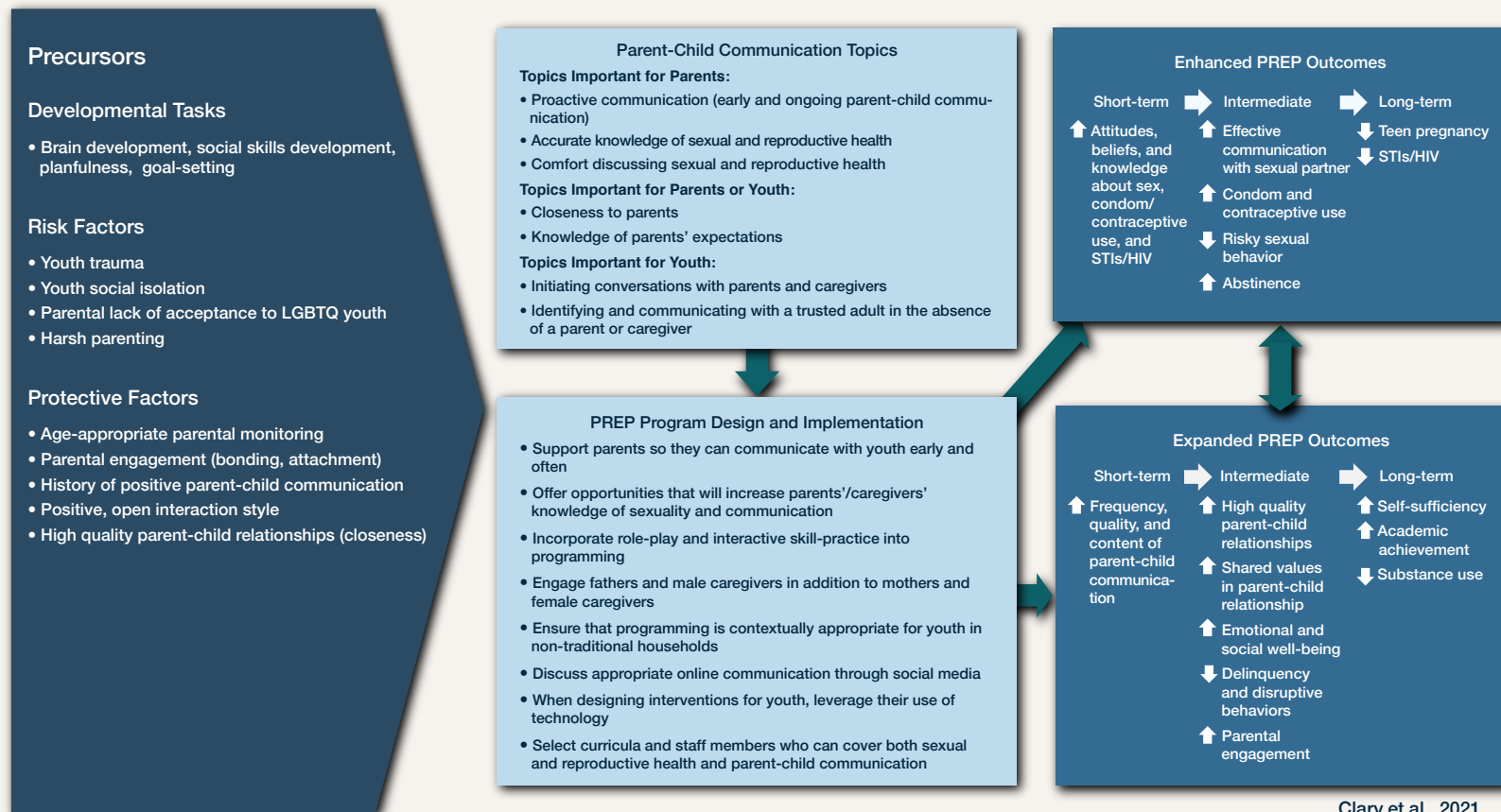
The conceptual model for Parent–Child Communication will enable practitioners to understand what topics are included as part of this APS and how they are related to the goals of the Parent–Child Communication model to affect sexual attitudes and behavior as well as non-sexual functioning.



Figure 7
Conceptual Model for Parent–Child Communication

Parent-child communication is exchanges, between parents (or caregivers) and children, of information, opinions, concerns, or advice, either verbal or nonverbal (such as hugging, sharing quality time, and parental modeling). Effective communication begins during infancy and involves trust, empathy, honesty, sharing of accurate information, and willingness to listen and participate in a two-way conversation. Ongoing, positive parent-child communication has a critical influence on youth development, feelings of connectedness, and resiliency.

Theory of Change: PREP programs should address parent-child communication as a component of the parent-child relationship. Providing youth and their parents and caregivers with education, guidance, and skills on how to communicate openly about sexual and reproductive health may lead to improvements in adolescents' enhanced and expanded outcomes. By teaching and encouraging positive and proactive communication, PREP programs may influence the beliefs and behaviors of youth, and their parents and caregivers, related to open, accurate, and age-appropriate communication about sexual and reproductive health, sexual behaviors, contraception, and decision making. Enhanced parent-child communication may help improve youth decision making about sexual and reproductive health, the quality of parent-child relationships, communication skills, emotional well-being, academic achievement, and self-sufficiency.



Clary et al., 2021

Working Definition



Parent–Child Communication encompasses a broad spectrum of interactions. The working definition of Parent–Child Communication is verbal or nonverbal exchanges between parents (or caregivers) and children. Such exchanges include information, opinions, affirmations, concerns, or advice. Positive parent–child communication begins during infancy and has a critical influence on youth development throughout childhood and adolescence. The conceptual model assumes that relatives or trusted adults include parents or caregivers.

Underlying the theory of change is the principle that parents and caregivers can strongly influence youth sexual behavior. By facilitating open communication between parents and youth about sexual health, PREP programming could be more effective. Some of the ways to affect the open communication that is posited as leading to improved sexual attitudes and behavior are to provide parents accurate knowledge about sexual health and both parents and youth the skills to achieve comfort in talking about sexual behavior. Better parent–child communication may also lead to more parental involvement, better parent–child relationships, and improved adolescent emotional well-being and academic achievement.

To promote Parent–Child Communication, PREP programs should address the topic by providing youth and their parents and caregivers with education, guidance, and skills on how to communicate openly about abstinence and the prevention of teen pregnancy and STIs by

- 1 Teaching and encouraging positive and proactive communication, and
- 2 Providing accurate and age-appropriate communication about adolescent health, sexual behaviors, contraception, and decision-making.

The conceptual model provides several Parent–Child Communication topics to cover, program design and implementation considerations to keep in mind, and potential outcomes to measure. [Table 11](#) on the next page describes the topics and design considerations in greater detail and provides brief examples that programs may consider incorporating.

Table 11

Examples of Topics and Activities to Incorporate Parent–Child Communication into PREP Programming

Selected Design and Implementation Considerations	Topics	Example Activities
FOR PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS		
<p>Support parents/caregivers to communicate early and often.</p> <p>Increase parent/caregiver knowledge of sexuality and communication.</p> <p>Incorporate role-play and interactive skill practice.</p> <p>Engage both fathers/male caregivers and mothers/female caregivers.</p> <p>Discuss appropriate online communication through social media.</p> <p>Select staff members who can cover abstinence, the prevention of teen pregnancy and STIs, and Parent–Child Communication.</p>	<p>Proactive communication occurs early (before or during adolescence) and often, and not just in response to behaviors (i.e., discussing sexual behaviors before engagement in them begins).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Provide parents/caregivers with guidance on how to engage in positive communication and non-judgmental listening with their youth (e.g., tool kits, pamphlets, resources on topics like the right time to talk to youth about sensitive topics, fears about communication about health, basic laws of consent). ▶ Incorporate activities that address online safety and healthy ways to communicate using social media. ▶ Create discussion starters on a range of topics for teens and parenting/caregiver groups. Consider delivering program content directly to parent/caregivers or combine with youth together, if appropriate. ▶ Provide opportunities to practice communication skills to help families initiate dialogue. ▶ Program facilitators can serve as role models; offer opportunities for skill-building and practice. ▶ Provide information on affirmative consent and how parents/caregivers can talk to teens.
	<p>Accurate knowledge of abstinence and the prevention of teen pregnancy and STIs refers to parents/caregivers being able to convey correct information about sexual health topics (e.g., proper avoidance of STIs and pregnancy) and, when needed, being able to help adolescents find services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Create, share, and maintain a list of local and online resources for parents/caregivers. ▶ Establish referral networks with community partners for parents, caregivers, and youth to access additional support services. ▶ Provide factual and medically accurate health information to parents/caregivers and youth. Establish a process to update review and update information annually. ▶ Ensure information provided is aligned with curricula and appropriate for the community and age range of the youth being served. ▶ Provide parents/caregivers with developmentally appropriate resources.
	<p>Comfort discussing abstinence and the prevention of teen pregnancy and STIs refers to parent/caregiver willingness to discuss (and their ease in discussing) sexual health topics with their adolescents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Use role playing scenarios to practice communicating about family values, aligned with curricula. ▶ Create discussion starters on a range of topics for youth and parenting/caregiver groups. ▶ Provide information on stages of adolescent development, and the adolescent brain.

(Table 11 continued on next page)

Table 11

Examples of Topics and Activities to Incorporate Parent–Child Communication into PREP Programming

Selected Design and Implementation Considerations	Topics	Example Activities
FOR PARENTS AND YOUTH		
<p>Incorporate role-play and interactive skill practice.</p> <p>Engage both fathers/male caregivers and mothers/female caregivers.</p> <p>Ensure programming is relevant for youth in non-traditional households.</p> <p>Discuss appropriate online communication through social media.</p> <p>Select staff members who can cover both abstinence and the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections among youth and Parent–Child Communication.</p>	<p>Closeness to parents refers to youth reports of warm and effective communication with their parents/caregivers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Create opportunities to engage both mothers and fathers; ensure mothers and fathers are comfortable with communication about sex and provide opportunities for skills practice. ▶ Provide programming for all types of family formations, including single parents, stepparents, foster parents, LGBTQ parents, grandparents, and other supportive adults. ▶ Engage pregnant and parenting youth in programming.
	<p>Knowledge of parents' expectations refers to youth awareness of their parents'/caregivers' expectations of appropriate attitudes and behaviors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Incorporate motivational interviewing techniques and practices to help parents/caregivers engage with youth. ▶ Leverage technology and social media as an opportunity to bridge sharing on abstinence and the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections among youth to both parents/caregivers and youth. Incorporate online safety measures and discuss healthy and appropriate ways to communicate.

(Table 11 continued on next page)

Table 11

Examples of Topics and Activities to Incorporate Parent–Child Communication into PREP Programming

Selected Design and Implementation Considerations	Topics	Example Activities
FOR YOUTH		
<p>Incorporate role-play and interactive skill practice.</p> <p>Engage both fathers/male caregivers and mothers/female caregivers.</p> <p>Ensure programming is relevant for youth in non-traditional households.</p> <p>Leverage technology use.</p> <p>Discuss appropriate online communication through social media.</p> <p>Select staff members who can cover both abstinence and the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections among youth and Parent–Child Communication.</p>	<p>Initiating conversations with parents and caregivers refers to skills that youth can use to start conversations about abstinence and the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections among youth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Incorporate the use of technology into programming by using digital and social media to deliver content and engage youth. ▶ Use a youth-centered design approach to ensure use and access to technology is relevant and offers privacy options. ▶ Develop homework assignments and implement “role-play” exercises to promote opportunities to empower youth with skill practice to initiate conversations with parents/caregivers/other allies. ▶ Provide information about affirmative consent. ▶ Provide information about minors’ sexual health rights. ▶ Engage youth in the design and implementation of activities. ▶ Adopt a PYD approach to programming. ▶ Cross-train program staff to deliver program curricula, APS topics, and other important topics for youth health and well-being and foster Parent–Child Communication (e.g., substance use, mental and emotional health, trauma, etc.).
	<p>Identifying and communicating with a trusted adult in the absence of a parent or caregiver can benefit youth who do not have a strong relationship or regular communication with a parent or caregiver.</p>	

How and Where to Integrate Parent–Child Communication Topics and Activities into Program Implementation

Select a Curriculum that Addresses Parent–Child Communication

Table 12 provides examples of programs that either have a focus on or contain components that address Parent–Child Communication. The parent communication topic included in each curriculum is indicated in the table. Below the table are some general guidelines to consider, and additional resources are provided at the end of this section.

Table 12
Examples of Curricula Providing Parent–Child Communication Modules*

Example Curricula with Parent–Child Communication Modules	Skills (Topics)						
	Proactive communication	Accurate knowledge of abstinence and the prevention of teen pregnancy and STIs	Comfort discussing sexual/reproductive health	Closeness to parents	Knowledge of parents' expectations	Initiating conversations with parents	Identifying and communicating with a trusted adult in absence of parent
<u>Guiding Good Choices</u> —A five-session program for parents and their middle school-aged children that aims to increase parent–child interactions and reduce child risk of engaging in harmful behaviors.	✓			✓	✓		
<u>Project TALC (Teens and Adults Learning to Communicate)</u> —A 24-session social learning program designed to provide emotional coping skills to HIV-positive parents and their adolescent children.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

*FYSB does not endorse any curricula. The information included in example curricula are not opinions of FYSB, nor its training and technical assistance contractors.

Equip Parents/Caregivers to Communicate Effectively with their Adolescent Children

This APS necessitates program staff working with parents and caregivers to help them effectively communicate with their adolescent children. Staff need to recognize that mothers often talk more with their children than fathers (Dilorio et al., 1999); because fathers can and should have an important role to play, especially with boys, staff are advised to engage with both mothers and fathers. Providing workshops and resources for parents and caregivers during evening and weekend hours should be an efficient way to reach the maximum number of parents. In addition to the components that staff may implement with parents and caregivers, programs can consider engaging with outside experts to train staff or provide workshops for parents.

Partner with Parents, Parent Groups, and other Trusted Adults

Programs can enlist parents of program members and parent groups and other adults to partner in implementing Parent–Child Communication instruction. Design programs to train interested parents in a parent–peer education model that enables parents to communicate with their adolescents about healthy choices and their values about sex. Parent volunteers can also help deliver sessions on Parent–Child Communication or other APSs. Finally, programs can engage parents and other trusted adults to review program curricula and materials, voice their concerns, ensure that the materials are a good fit and aligned with community values and cultures, and provide suggestions for improvements.

Create Structured Opportunities for Youth and their Parents/Caregivers/Allies to Talk

Because the goal of Parent–Child Communication is for parents and adolescents to talk, providing opportunities for parents and youth to dialogue is critical. Program staff should provide occasions for their participants and their parents/caregivers to be together in stress-free situations where spontaneous talking is natural. One possibility is to partner with a local organization to launch a service-learning project that includes family/adult caregiver participation. Working together on a structured activity can facilitate communication. Programs can also promote national observances that encourage Parent–Child Communication about sexuality.



Engage with Parents, Caregivers, and Trusted Adults to Support Vulnerable Populations

As with other APSs, it is important to engage with parents and caregivers who are parenting vulnerable populations. Helping parents communicate with adolescents whose needs are unique will require special attention. Techniques to facilitate Parent–Child Communication around sexual health with youth who have disabilities will be different than those needed to work with parents of LGBTQ youth or youth who are pregnant and parenting. It is important to remind parents to also have frank and open conversations about sex with their youth with disabilities and that programs and information may need to be tailored to their needs. Discussions of Parent–Child Communication for parents of LGBTQ youth are beyond the scope of this resource, except that program staff need to be reminded that all resources and programming be sensitive to how language is used to be as inclusive as possible. Some general resources for working with vulnerable populations are on [The Exchange](#); although the resources do not specifically address Parent–Child Communication for vulnerable youth, they can provide suggestions for how to deliver programming to these youth.

Online Resources

Resources from [The Exchange](#)

- ▶ [Parent-Child Communication Tip Sheet](#)
- ▶ [Supporting Young Fathers' Engagement with their Children Tip Sheet](#)
- ▶ [Working with Parents of Teens Tip Sheet](#)

Other Resources

- ▶ [Talking with Teens](#)
- ▶ [Talking with Teens about Reproductive Health: How to Tackle the Tough Topics](#)
- ▶ [Responsible Fatherhood Toolkit: Resources from the Field](#)
- ▶ [TAG for Families](#)

References

Dilorio, C., Kelley, M., & Hockenberry-Eaton, M. (1999). Communication about sexual issues: Mothers, fathers, and friends. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 24(3), 181–189.



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