

# An Evaluation of a Sexual Health Education Program for Adolescents in a Residential Treatment Program in the Philadelphia Area

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## BACKGROUND

The US is currently experiencing an epidemic; millions of American adolescents are affected by sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), teen pregnancy and intimate partner violence (IPV), costing the country both socially and economically:

- Adolescents 15-24 years of age account for **50%** of the 20 million new STD cases each year
- US birth rates are significantly higher than countries in Europe
  - **6.8** times higher than teens living in the UK
  - **13.9** times higher than teens living the EU
- In 2010 18.7% of adolescents ages 11-17 experienced IPV for the first time
- Adolescents who are diagnosed with an STD, are teen parents and IPV victims are at greater risk of experiencing physical, reproductive, social and behavioral health problems
- Collectively STDs, teen pregnancy and IPV cost \$33.7 billion annually

**Sexual Health Education Programs** are a national priority with the primary focus to help reduce incidence rates of STDs, teen pregnancy and IPV in adolescents. These programs are evidence based and are more effective than traditional abstinence-only programs.

## STUDY PURPOSE

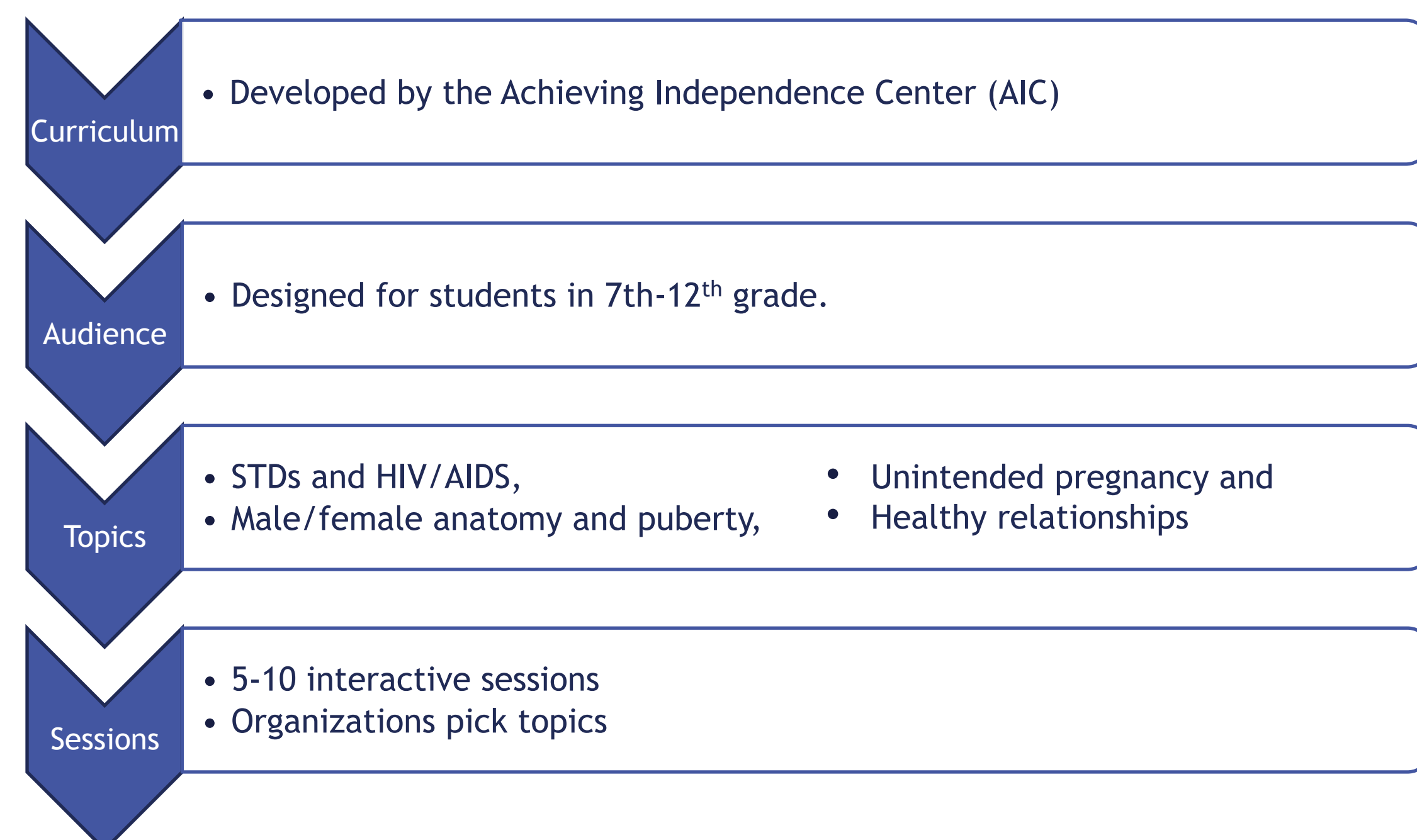
Provide feedback to Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania from students who have participated in their Sexual Health Education program.

## MIXED METHOD STUDY DESIGN

### Participants

- Female residents living at a residential treatment facility 12-18 years of age

### Program design



### Pre/Post Tests

- Administered to all residents who were present for the first and last education session
- Analyzed for common themes and changes in knowledge

### Focus Group

- One cohort of 4 participants
- Transcribed and analyzed for themes using grounded theory

### Key Informant Interview

- Conducted over the phone with the program educator
- Transcribed and analyzed for themes using grounded theory

## RESULTS

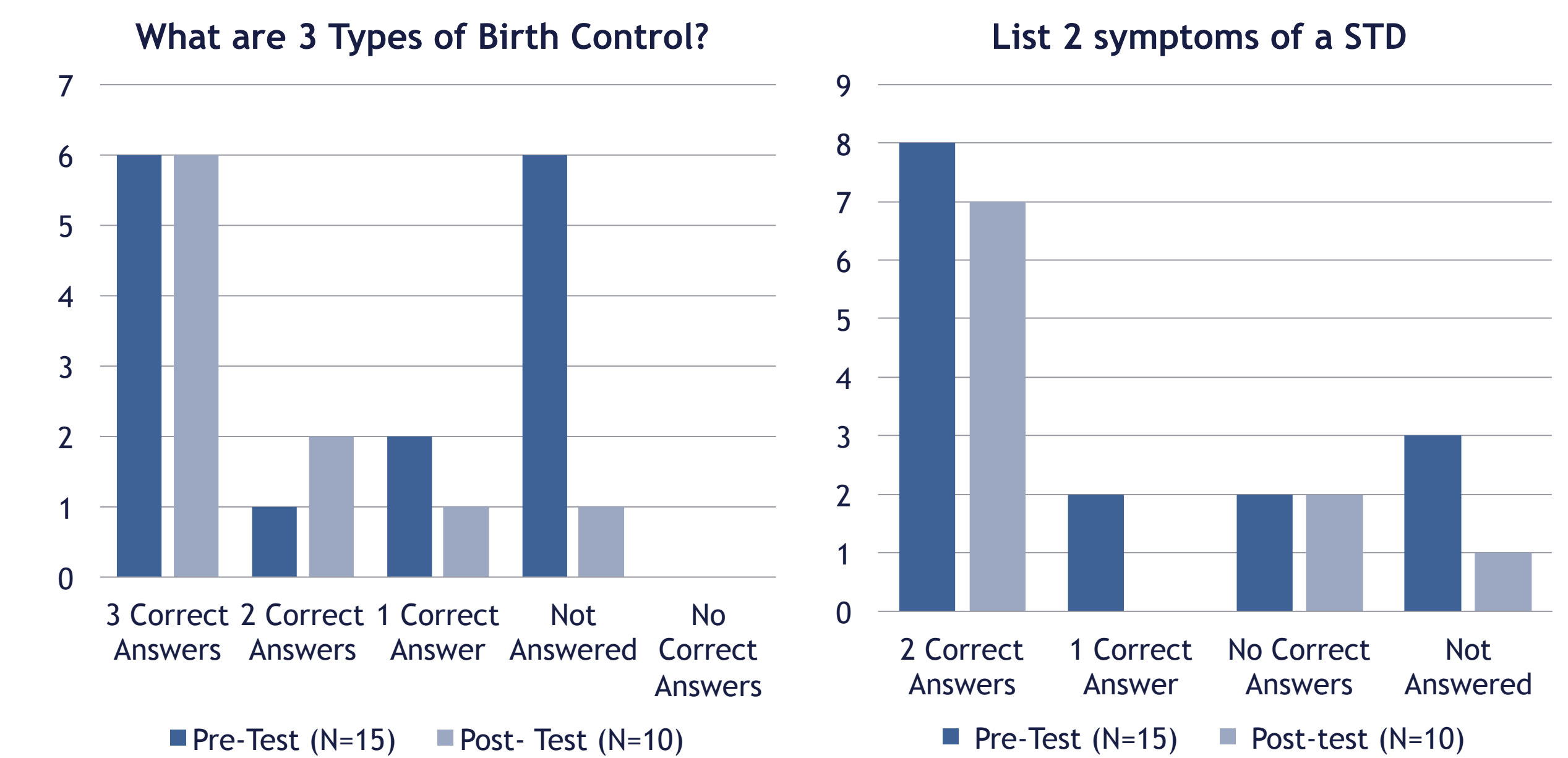
### PRE/POST TEST

Overall Increase in Knowledge

30% increase in the ability to correctly name types of STD protection

20% increase in the ability to correctly list 3 forms of birth control

Less questions left blank on post-test compared to pre-test



### Focus Group Themes

Program Strengths	Program Improvement	Overall Impact (Life Lessons)	Resources
<p><b>Smaller Group Settings</b></p> <p><i>"Not only do I not like being around a lot of people, but I feel as so less people is less distractions and everybody seems to be more calm."</i></p>	<p><b>Interactive Sessions</b></p> <p><i>"I feel as though, the condom thing it's not as bad as you say it was. Because...it did help people learn how to use it."</i></p>	<p><b>Pre Post Test</b></p> <p><i>"I thought it was a good testing theory, because in the beginning we didn't know anything. And then in the end we saw how much we learned."</i></p>	<p><b>Being Prepared</b></p> <p><i>now before doing something, it is going to make me stop and think...about all the negative stuff. Knowing that it might not happen, but it's a chance."</i></p>
		<p><b>Better than School</b></p> <p><i>"It's better than the ones at school. Because at school, you've got immature people ... and you just don't want to ask questions because you might be too embarrassed."</i></p>	<p><b>Pamphlets</b></p> <p><i>"I would prefer a pamphlet. Because I would not want no body in my business."</i></p>
			<p><b>Electronic Versions</b></p> <p><i>"You may not always be around that pamphlet. I always have my phone 24/7"</i></p>

### Key Informant Interview Themes



## RECCOMENDATIONS

1. Include a chapter on healthy relationships in each cohort, no matter the session length.
2. Develop a way to ask participants about possible triggers.
3. Continue developing an updated curriculum with modern materials.
4. Ensure that all participants receive the full intervention.
5. Develop a smart phone app with educational information on STDs, safe sex, and resources on where one can find testing and treatment

## NEXT STEPS

- Develop a smart phone app:
  - Current research shows adolescents prefer to get health information from electronic sources
  - Use focus groups and other Planned Parenthood affiliate apps for direction
- Research IPV
  - Look at an adolescents view on IPV
  - How can we improve educational programs to fit the needs and views of adolescents