

Evaluation of Why Know Abstinence Education Core Curriculum and Road to Excellence Programs

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Each of Why Know program's relate to these objectives:

- Sharpen **critical thinking** skills to analyze choices and how they impact their future.
- Instill factors that build **resiliency** to overcome past failures and injustices.
- Empower teens to identify and evaluate a positive **support system** of peers and adults.
- Possess a **vision for their future** and steps to achieve it.
- Increase teens' sense of **self-worth**.

Core Curriculum – Why Know Public School Curriculum

- Five-day, age-appropriate abstinence education to 57 area schools and 12,000 middle and high school students per year.
- Holistic education designed to encourage critical thinking, goal setting and refusal skills to equip teens to avoid risky behaviors.
 - STDs, pregnancy, healthy relationships, peer and media influences, dating and marriage, decision-making, setting standards.
- Primary sex education in the Southeast Tennessee and Northwest Georgia.

Road to Excellence Leadership Development Groups

- 600 students in 30 groups meet weekly for education, accountability and support in living a healthy, abstinent lifestyle and being leaders in their schools and communities.
- 23 lessons, designed for weekly use, meet during school class time or lunch, voluntary.
- Equips students with positive adult and peer support and tangible life-skills to produce long-term behavioral change in students.
- Students follow group contract; outstanding results in abstinent behavior.
- Focus on academics, community service, coping skills, avoiding violence and conflict resolution, and remaining abstinent.

Target Population of Study

- Chattanooga's urban middle and high schools. 64% of African-American teens sexual intercourse vs. 44% of Caucasian teens.
- STDs and pregnancy double to five-times higher in target locations.
- “Cluster” factors: more single parent households, low literacy, high poverty rates, increased violence, low graduation rates.

THE METHOD: Core Curriculum, RTE, Booster Programs and
Community / Parent Education

Research Goals

- Increase the number of students committed to sexual abstinence outside of marriage.
- Decrease risk behaviors, such as drug and alcohol use, among targeted teens.
- Increase teens' understanding of the social, psychological, and health gains to be realized by abstaining from premarital sexual activity.

Research design

Pre / Post / Post-post design for Core Curriculum

- Administer a Pre-intervention test
- Teach the five-day Core Curriculum and administer Post-test
- Six to Nine months later – administer Post-Post test
- Road to Excellence Leadership Development Groups
 - Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale – widely used in social science research (1960) administered at start and close of school year.
 - Qualitative feedback
 - Weekly support reports – tracks sexual behavior
 - Qualitative questionnaire at start and close of the school year
 - Observation from faculty of student behavior.

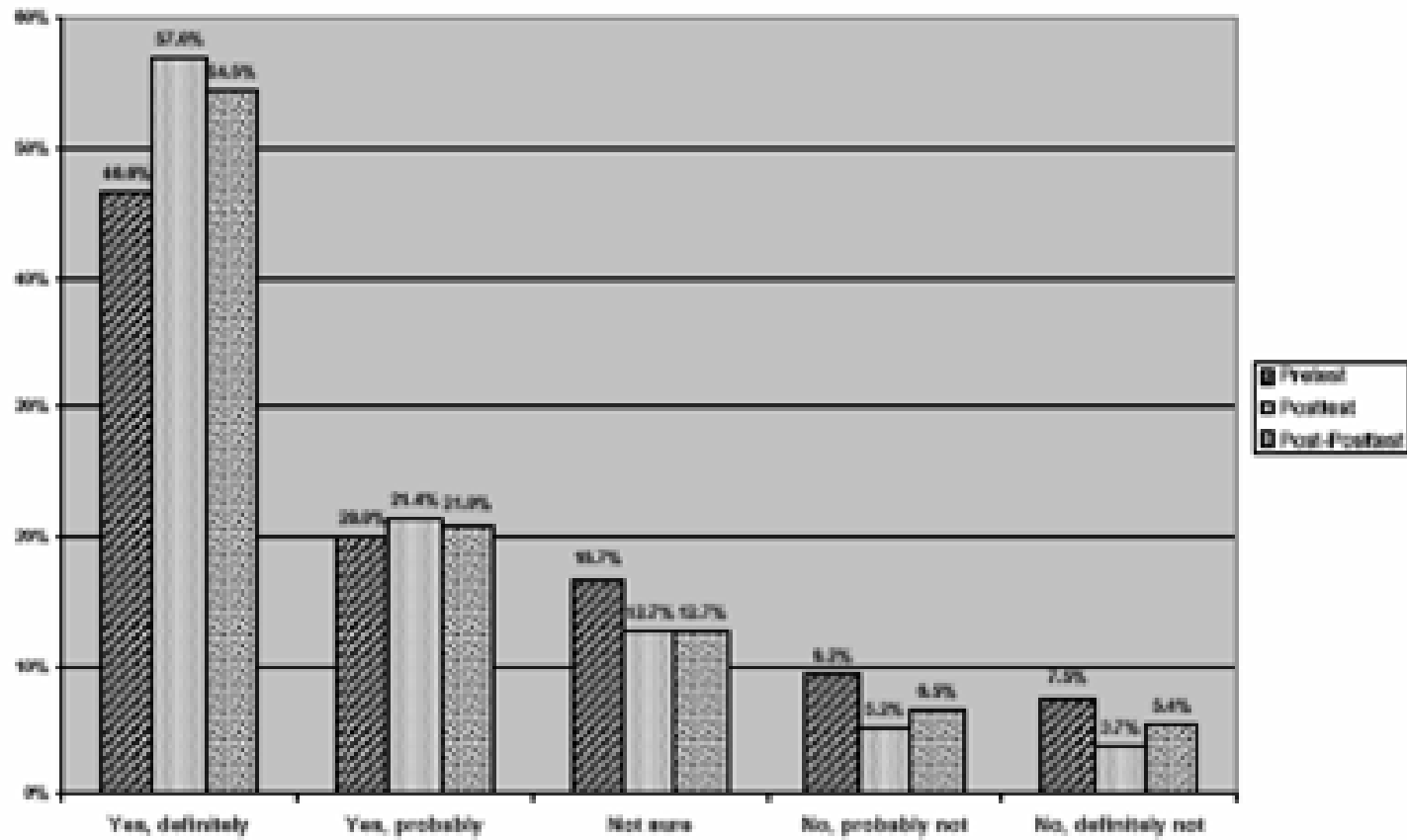
Characteristics of Core Curriculum Participants

- Roughly balanced by gender (54% Female, 46% Male)
- Mostly middle school students (77% middle school, 23% high school)
- Mostly African-American (89% African-American, 9% White, 2% Hispanic)

Findings Related to Goal One—Increase the number of students committed to sexual abstinence outside of marriage

- Six of ten questions show significant improvement in attitudes regarding abstinent lifestyle after completing core curriculum.
- Pretest data unavailable for other four questions.
- Some regression in attitudes between post-test and post post-test.
- Total change scores indicate that the regression in attitudes observed long-term is minor for most indicators.
- Comparing the regression in the four indicators lacking pretest data suggests that there was little difference between them and the other six indicators.

Figure 3- it is Important to be married before I have sex



Findings Related to Goal Two—Decrease risk behaviors, such as drug and alcohol use, among targeted teens

- The core curriculum increases students recognition that alcohol and drug use makes it more likely that teens will engage in sex.
- The percentage of participants responding that they could say no to engaging in risky behaviors such as alcohol and drug use decreased after completing the core curriculum.

Findings Related to Goal Three—Increase teens' understanding of the social, psychological and health gains to be realized by abstaining from premarital sexual activity

- Results indicate effectiveness.
- Regression in attitudes.

Comparison With Last Year's Results

- The total change achieved by the program, measured as the difference between the pretest scores and the post-posttest scores, is higher for most questions in this year's data than the last.
- Although this year's data indicate greater retention of core curriculum information, the short term response was higher last year for some of the questions dealing with sexual abstinence outside of marriage.

Associations with Race

- Attitudes toward risky behavior

Few associations at pretest (three of ten questions show statistical significance).

Many associations at post post-test (eight of ten show statistical significance).

- Information and Awareness—

Little evidence of association with race.

Associations with Gender

- Attitudes toward risky behavior

Significant association for every question at each administration of the questionnaire.

- Information and Awareness—

Significant association for five of eight questions at pretest, declining to three of eight at post-test, and then climbing to six of eight at post post-test.

Characteristics of Road to Excellence Participants

- Females outnumber males two to one.
- Nearly half from grades six through eight.
- Three-fourths with previous RTE experience.

I can say no if someone tries to get me to have sex

	Previous Road to Excellence	No Road to Excellence	% Difference
Yes, Definitely	65%	67%	2%
Yes, Probably	14%	13%	1%
Not Sure	15%	10%	5%
No, Probably Not	5%	4%	1%
No, Definitely Not	2%	6%	4%

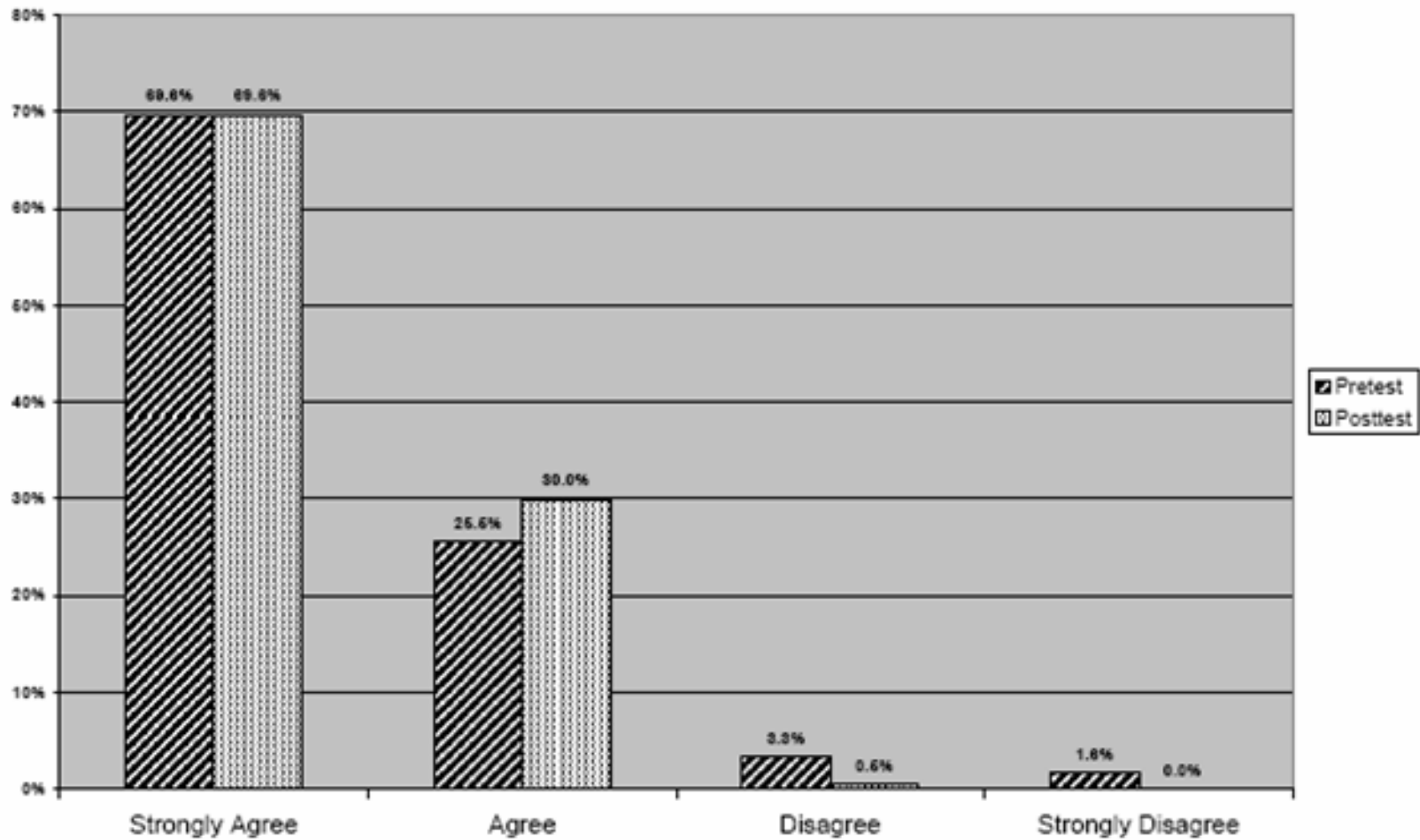
Starting today, I will wait until I am married to have sex.

	Previous Road to Excellence	No Road to Excellence	% Difference
Yes, Definitely	33%	38%	5%
Yes, Probably	17%	17%	1%
Not Sure	30%	26%	4%
No, Probably Not	12%	8%	4%
No, Definitely Not	8%	11%	3%

Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale Results

Table 19—Rosenberg Statistically Significant Items	
2005-2006	2004-2005
I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	At times I think I am no good at all.
I feel I do not have much to be proud of.	I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
I wish I could have more respect for myself.	I certainly feel useless at times.
I feel that I am a person of worth.	I feel that I am a person of worth.

Figure 18- On the whole, I am satisfied with myself



Conclusions

Core Curriculum

- Longevity of program effects
- Magnitude of change
- Goal Two—Risky Behaviors
- Associations with Race and Gender

Road to Excellence

- Participation by age and gender
- Magnitude of change
- Effect of previous RTE experience
- Self-confidence vs. self-deprecation