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2018 Healthcare Academy Simon says "Let's Talk"

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**2018 HEALTHCARE ACADEMY
SIMON SAYS "LET'S TALK"**

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

With the mission of "Shining a Light on Mental Wellness" ARDX Foundation partnered with Stop Abuse to deliver an educational summer program to "**tell our stories**" about mental health and wellness.

ARDX Foundation's START (Smart Teens Accepting Responsibility Today) Summer Interns were mentored and trained to facilitate the 2018 Healthcare Academy program. In partnership with Stop Abuse we delivered a one-hour program on the following mental health topics; Feeling Sad, Bullying, Self-Esteem and Sexual Abuse.

At the beginning of each session, before we started the presentations, we asked the youth to fill in a "pre-survey" and at the very end of each session, we gave these same youth time to fill in a "post-survey."

Evaluation forms were created, and results were analyzed by Dr. Robert Campbell, Jr., Assistant Professor of Epidemiology, EVMS School of Health Professions.

The START Summer Interns used age appropriate language to talk about these key topics, they shared educational videos and they also shared powerful personal stories. These personal stories captivated each group.

Executive Director and Founder of Stop Abuse powered by Spectrum Puppets, introduced to each group various marionettes including Otis (a Pug), Lori (girl from the "Simon Says Just Tell" show) and Simon, the main character of the Stop Abuse educational musical marionette production, "Simon Says Just Tell."

Each group loved meeting the marionettes and Simon was their favorite. Each week Simon gave them a lesson on using their inner voices to safely navigate their world with a special focus on sexual abuse & inappropriate touching. We ended each program with Simon leading the youth in his trademark song, "This is my body." (A song that the youth continued to sing long after the program concluded.)

Our goal this summer was to educate, train and impact over 500 youth on key mental health topics to empower them to use their "inner voice" and to share their stories to address the "**STIGMA**" associated with each topic.

With the combination of the START Summer Interns and Simon, this program was fun, educational and entertaining.

"I asked the students, and they said that they liked that they got to express their feelings. They also liked the puppets: especially the song and when the dog peed. They learned to not pick on someone just because someone is different and that being very sad is a medical condition." Teacher – Chesterfield Academy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The team of ARDX Foundation's START Summer interns, the START Program Manager, the ARDX Foundation Executive Director in partnership with the Executive Director of Stop Abuse made a difference this summer.

This program delivered an amazing learning experience for our youth this summer. We delivered our program to over 500 youth and empowered them to **tell their stories** about their own mental health. These youth had the opportunity to **share their stories, ask questions** and **learn from others** on how to deal with these very important topics and Simon taught them about inappropriate touching. They will always remember the START Interns encouraging them to tell an adult about their feelings and experiences, and not to give up until they were heard.

In summary, the results were very impressive. An overall average of 82% of youth learned something new on the topics presented each week. The "before" and "after" each mental health informational presentation results are summarized below:

- On average, 59% of youth believed they would have been able to talk to someone about topics discussed **before** participating in this program.
- On average, 93% of youth believed they would have been able to talk to someone about topics discussed **after** participating in this program.

Our objectives for the program were achieved:

- (1) Educate the youth about mental health by sharing personal stories and videos.
- (2) Teach the youth to courageously express themselves, allowing them to talk about these topics.
- (3) Use their inner voice and their experiences to engage adults to support their mental wellness.

Our three START Summer Interns also learned the power their own stories. Through their stories, they empowered the youth to tell their stories. These youth listened very carefully when each START Intern shared their personal stories about dealing with depression and/or why they had to change schools because of bullying. After the START interns told their stories, the youth opened up and shared their own stories of dealing with anger, going to therapy and taking medicine for their own wellness. Other youth shared the many reasons why they felt sad, such as the youth that had parents in the military and grandparents that no longer lived with them. When we presented our program on "Bullying" we did not have enough time to hear all the bullying stories. It appeared that most youth had experienced Bullying at one time or another.

Each session was successful for various reasons, and the START Interns really connected with the youth at the YMCA Armed Services summer program. This was a best practice to deliver all three topics to the same group of youth. These youth got to know the Interns and were looking forward to seeing Simon each week.

These youth showed us how to ignore the STIGMA, tell their stories and demand to be heard. Their actions are changing our culture and our narrative about mental health and wellness. We should all take time to listen to our youth.

SCHEDULE

START/Healthcare Academy_Stop Abuse Schedule - July 2018						
		Themes	Time	Program Name	# Youth	Notes:
Monday	9-Jul	Feeling Sad	1:00 PM	Chesterfield Academy	30	4th and 5th graders
Tuesday	10-Jul	Feeling Sad	2:30 PM	Armed Services YMCA	50	K - 6th graders
Tuesday	17-Jul	Bullying	2:00 PM	Armed Services YMCA	50	K - 6th graders
Thursday	19-Jul	Bullying	9:00 AM	Jacox Elementary School	118	K - 5th graders
Thursday	19-Jul	Bullying	1:00 - 2:30	Envision Lead Grow Program	110	5th - 9th grade girls
Monday	23-Jul	Self Esteem	2:00 PM	Oakmont Community Development Corp	25	K - 5th graders
Tuesday	24-Jul	Self Esteem	10:00 AM	Armed Services YMCA	40	K - 6th graders
Tuesday	24-Jul	Self Esteem	1:00 PM	Chesterfield Academy	30	1 st and 3 rd graders
Thursday	26-Jul	Self Esteem	10:00 AM	P. B. Young Elementary School	60	K - 5th graders
Total						513

“I liked that they drew awareness to the fact that it is necessary to tell an adult if they are feeling depressed or if someone is touching them inappropriately. The program approached these topics in a kid friendly way. I also liked that the girl shared her story about depression, because it made the students feel more comfortable about telling their own stories. Overall, this was a valuable program.” *Mr. Edmonds, Chesterfield Academy*

SURVEY RESULTS

Armed Services YMCA:

Week 1:

56% learned something new about **Feeling Sad** and inappropriate touching

50% indicated **before** participating in this program, they would have been able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

88% indicated **after** participating in this program would definitely and possibly be able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

Week 2:

76% learned something new about **Bullying** and inappropriate touching

56% indicated **before** participating in this program, they would have been able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

94% indicated **after** participating in this program would definitely and possibly be able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

Week 3:

76% learned something new about **Self Esteem** and inappropriate touching

56% indicated **before** participating in this program, they would have been able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

94% indicated **after** participating in this program would definitely and possibly be able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

Chesterfield Academy:

Week 1:

89% learned something new about **Feeling Sad** and inappropriate touching

48% indicated **before** participating in this program, they would have been able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

82% indicated **after** participating in this program would definitely and possibly be able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

Week 3:

96% learned something new about **Self Esteem** and inappropriate touching

51% indicated **before** participating in this program, they would have been able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

87% indicated **after** participating in this program would definitely and possibly be able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

After seeing the Bullying video, all the girls at Envision Lead Grow stood up and clapped at the end of the video when the girls held hands to support each other.

Envision Lead Grow Program:

Week 2:

72% learned something new about **Bullying** and inappropriate touching

61% indicated **before** participating in this program, they would have been able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

99% indicated **after** participating in this program would definitely and possibly be able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

Jacox Elementary:

Week 2: (Two groups of youth back to back)

Session I:

88% learned something new about **Bullying** and inappropriate touching

73% indicated **before** participating in this program, they would have been able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

95% indicated **after** participating in this program would definitely and possibly be able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

Session II:

89% learned something new about **Bullying** and inappropriate touching

63% indicated **before** participating in this program, they would have been able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

91% indicated **after** participating in this program would definitely and possibly be able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

Oakmont Community Development Corp:

Week 3:

100% learned something new about **Self Esteem** and inappropriate touching

67% indicated **before** participating in this program, they would have been able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

100% indicated **after** participating in this program would definitely and possibly be able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

PB Young Elementary:

Week 3:

80% learned something new about **Self Esteem** and inappropriate touching

54% indicated **before** participating in this program, they would have been able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

97% indicated **after** participating in this program would definitely and possibly be able to talk to someone about the topics discussed

“Thank you so much for visiting with us at Jacox. The kids enjoyed the presentation and hopefully will think before showing negative behavior in the future. Thanks for planting the seeds of positive thinking and treating each other kindly.” J. Forbes, Library Media Specialist