

# HEALTHY ADOLESCENT RELATIONSHIP PROJECT UPDATE

June 8, 2010

Thank you for making or facilitating referrals to the **Healthy Adolescent Relationship Project (HARP)** at the **University of Denver!** We wanted to pause to give you **an update** on how things have been going. Over the next 2 years as this study continues, we plan to send you periodic updates. Between updates, please feel free to contact us directly if you have any questions or feedback.

## REFERRALS TO DATE

To date, we have received **25 referrals from a Denver, Arapahoe, and Adams Counties**. Of those referrals, we have been able to schedule the first interview with **21 teens** (a few referrals didn't work out because of issues such as the age criterion or out-of-state placements).

## DO TEENS UNDERSTAND INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDY?

As of June 7, **14 teens have completed the first interview**. During the interview, teens meet one-on-one with a graduate-level interviewer for 2-3 hours. We begin the interview by reviewing assent information with the teens. This includes telling the teen exactly what to expect during the study and her rights as a research participant. We use a "quiz" to ensure that teens understand the assent information. During the quiz, we ask the teens to answer a series of questions about the assent information (for example, "do you have to answer every question we ask?" correct answer: no!). We are pleased to report that the 14 teens tested to date have passed the quiz with flying colors, suggesting that the assent process gives teens information about the study and research process in a way that they understand.

## WHAT HAVE TEENS SAID ABOUT PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY SO FAR?

At the end of each interview, we ask teens to fill out a "Response to Research Participation Questionnaire (RRPQ)" privately. The RRPQ includes 5 scales, three of which tap positive aspects of the research experience, such as perceptions of personal benefits and empowerment in the research process. Sample items include 'I found participating in this study personally meaningful'; 'I was treated with respect and dignity'; 'I felt I could stop participating at any time'. Two scales tap negative aspects of the research, including costs and unanticipated, negative emotional reactions. We are very pleased to report that teens report significantly higher (better!) scores for the positive aspects of the study relative to the negative aspects of the study. **This is very good news!** In addition, several teens added written comments to the RRPQ indicating positive responses to participation, saying things such as:

- **"You really did a good job. It really helped me out. Thank you for this and having me."**
- **"I like it here."**
- **"I liked the person who worked with me. She was very understanding and helpful..."**

## WE'RE LISTENING! HARP PROTOCOL UPDATES

Based on feedback from caseworkers about teens on their caseloads who they believed could benefit from this project, we have **expanded the age range for eligible participants to 12-19 years of age**. We will, of course, take the age of participants into consideration in terms of group composition. In addition, we are working to **condense the curriculum for the groups from 15 to 12 meetings**. Please send other feedback our way – **we're listening!**

## WHAT NEXT?

The first round of prevention groups will begin during the week of June 14. This is terrific news and we look forward to updating you on the progress of these groups. At this point, **we are looking for new referrals to fill additional groups.** We are pleased to have interviewed 14 teens to date, but we hope to improve on the rate at which we can interview teens and get groups going. Thank you in advance for keeping HARP in mind and sending referrals our way.

## MAKING REFERRALS

All of the information you need for making referrals (including consent forms, a screening overview, and contact information) is available at [www.mysite.du.edu/~adeprinc/harp.html](http://www.mysite.du.edu/~adeprinc/harp.html).

Remember, there are **several potential benefits** for teens participating in HARP, including:

- Prevention groups are offered to teens at no cost. Groups will be facilitated by University of Denver graduate students under the supervision of a licensed clinical psychologist. Both prevention programs are designed to help teens develop healthy relationship skills. Teens receive **\$10/prevention group meeting to offset transportation costs.**
- Teens receive 4 research evaluations (before as well as immediately, 2 months, and 6 months after the prevention program). Teens will be compensated \$40 for their time for each assessment session and \$10 for transportation costs (**up to \$200**).

## THANK YOU!

In sum, thank you for the referrals you've made or facilitated to date. We look forward to continuing to work with you and we thank you in advance for making future referrals to HARP. If you have any questions regarding HARP, please contact us at (303) 871-4103 or [harp@du.edu](mailto:harp@du.edu).

**On behalf of everyone at HARP, thank you for helping us with this important research!**

Best wishes,

*Anne P. DePrince, Ph.D.*

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## THANK YOU NOTES

**Thank you to many people who have consulted with us, facilitated or made referrals, or otherwise supported implementing HARP, including (but not limited to):**

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