

Sexual Health for Youth: Student-Lead Education in Juvenile Correctional Facilities

Introduction

STIs, such as chlamydia and gonorrhea, affect the young women of juvenile detention centers at disproportionate and alarming rates¹. In 2006, the chlamydia infection rates among 15-19 year old females of Alameda County was the highest for any subgroup at 3,583 per 100,000, ten times the overall county infection rate of the same year². Chlamydia, known as the “Silent Epidemic” is typically asymptomatic at first, but in time can lead to permanent and irreversible scarring of reproductive organs. This can cause serious complications including infertility and chronic pelvic pain in women. According to a 2010 CDC study, 17% of sixteen year old females in the juvenile correction facility tested positive for this scarring but silent disease.³

Like chlamydia, gonorrhea is often asymptomatic but can lead to chronic pelvic pain Pelvic Inflammatory Disease and infertility. In Alameda County, it is especially prevalent among African Americans who comprise almost 70% of the county’s detainees in juvenile detention facilities⁴. African American gonorrhea infection rates were 428 per 100,000, roughly 27 times that of Asian Pacific Islanders and 20 times that of Caucasians². Approximately 5% of 18 year old females tested positive for gonorrhea within juvenile detention facilities, twice the percentage of their male counterparts.³

Currently, the Chlamydia Screening Project (ClasP) is the only organization in Alameda County that provides some sort of screening for these STIs. ClasP, however, focuses only on screenings without a comprehensive focus on education. Sexual Health for Youth (SHY), however, promises to remedy this shortage. By providing education to participants, it allows young women to understand why they should be tested and why safe-sex practices are so crucial. These classes will create a safe space to help destigmatize sexual health, while providing the resources for these women to receive testing and healthcare.

¹ Katz, Alan R. MD, MPH. “Prevalence of Chlamydial and Gonorrheal Infections among Females in a Juvenile Detention Facility, Honolulu, Hawaii.” *Journal of Community Health* 29:4 (2004): 265-69

² Martin, Jane, and Gay Calhoun. *Sexually Transmitted Disease Morbidity Report: Making Sense of Sexually Transmitted Disease*. Rep. Oakland, CA, 2007.

³ “STDs in Persons Entering Corrections Facilities.” *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*. Center for Disease Control. Web. 17 Feb. 2012.
<http://www.cdc.gov/std/stats/03/corrections.htm>

⁴ Posadas-Guzman, Julie, JD. *The Alameda County Juvenile Justice Center: “Early Blueprint” - Its Commitments for Gender-Responsive Services for Girls in Detention*. Rep. Youth Justice Institute.

Purpose

The mission of this organization will be to provide sexual health resources to the segment of the population at greatest risk for STIs: African American young women in juvenile detention facilities, aged 15-19. This organization will partner with a juvenile detention center to 1) provide student-lead education about sexual health and 2) encourage screenings of young women by our partner organization, ClaSP for two relevant STIs: chlamydia and gonorrhea. Classes will be by a pair of female volunteers and be focused on creating an open space for discussion and diminishing the stigma surrounding sexual health and STIs. Funding will go towards purchasing teaching materials. This project will promote sexual health through education about safe sex and by informing participants' about their own STI statuses.

Project Plan: Tasks and Timelines

May

- **Finalize location:** Currently, I have contacted the Laura Douglass, the State Program Coordinator for ClaSP, who has expressed her enthusiasm and support for this project. Working with her, I will reach out to Alameda County as well as Contra Costa County juvenile halls. ClaSP already functions to bring screenings inside of these juvenile halls. By partnering with ClaSP, we are able to use their previous reputation to foster connections between Sexual Health for Youth (SHY) and these juvenile halls. The ideal location would be the Alameda County Juvenile Hall, a detention facility with a capacity of 299 minors. The facility is located in San Leandro and is accessible by BART. ClaSP already has an established partnership here.
- **Finalize necessary clearances:** I have contacted prison mentorship programs and inquired about what clearances are necessary (background testing and a tuberculosis test). I will ensure these are the only requirements. Since volunteers will be students, the University Health Center will administer the tuberculosis testing

June

- **Writing the Curriculum:** Curriculum will be written in conjunction with Maria-Elena Young of Adolescent Health Collaborative. The curriculum will be written over the course of six weeks, meeting with her twice a week for two hours each time to edit for both content and delivery. The course will consist of three separate two-hour classes, held every Friday for three weeks. Three weeks were chosen because it is the average detention period for the young women⁵. Two student teachers will lead a focus group of 8-10 young women talking about what is safe sex, and why is it important.
- **Class Structure:** The emphasis will be to create a supportive discussion atmosphere to make the young women more comfortable with the topics being discussed. To do this, the same group of young women will have the same student teachers for the entire course of the three weeks. The student teachers will teach three weeks in a row and then have the fourth week off to prepare and reflect for the next cohort. Since the course is three weeks long, the student teaching pairs will be divided into thirds and stagger their beginning. This means three student pairs will begin the first week. When they return the following week, these three pairs will teach their second lesson and while a different group of pairs teach their first class. The third week, group A will teach the third class, group B will teach the second, and group C will teach the first. This way, no matter when a young woman enters the facility, she can begin

⁵ Posadas-Guzman, Julie, JD. *The Alameda County Juvenile Justice Center: Girls Blueprint – Recommendations for Gender Responsive Services to Girls in Detention*. Rep. Youth Justice Institute

participating in the three part series that week. To help create a discussion atmosphere, classes will employ tactics suggested by Kate Cockrill, MPH and Program Director of the Social and Emotional Aspects of Abortion at Advancing New Standards of Reproductive Health. Her research uses book clubs and film clubs to facilitate discussions on abortion. Similarly, these classes will use discussion and multimedia presentations to spark discussion and new ways of thinking about why safe sex is important for their health.

Late August - Early September

- **Volunteer Recruitment:** Volunteers will be recruited mainly from the Berkeley Gender and Equity Center, through Career mail list serve for public service, and through the Career mail list serve for premeds. The recruitment process will begin late August when students return for fall semester. Twenty female undergraduates will be chosen; they will be interviewed and evaluated for their ability to handle diverse, sometimes sensitive situations. This process should take three weeks total. The first two weeks will be advertising and outreach to the different organizations. The third week will be interviews. The student volunteers will be chosen by September 10th so that the Decal may begin. As soon as volunteers are chosen, they will begin their background screening and tuberculosis testing.
- **Decal Course:** Volunteers chosen will then be enrolled in a Decal (Democratic Education at Cal) course. Decals are student run courses taken for units. I will teach the decal where we discuss planning, reflect on the experiences teaching the previous week, and discuss some of the larger public health issues affecting the juvenile correctional system. Additionally, the decal will be listed on the decal website which will serve as an additional source of advertising. By having a class, it ensures that volunteers are prepared for the classes and that their experience teaching is positive and reflective.

September

- **Volunteer Training:** Volunteers will begin meeting during the scheduled Tuesday class time 9/18. The first classes will be an introduction to the public health issue to prepare for classes and acquainted with one another. Additionally there will be four extended prep days, two Thursday nights (9/20 and 9/27) and two Sundays (9/23 and 9/30), Volunteers will meet our project partners and preparing the and master the lesson plans.

October:

- **Classes will begin:** The classes will be begin 10/5 and be conducted every Friday. Additionally, when a participant leaves the detention center, she will receive a "gift basket" containing a certificate of completion, condoms, lube and information about where to get birth control and STD testing at no cost in her area. At the end of the classes, they will also have the option to be screened by ClaSP for the two most prevalent STIs, gonorrhea and chlamydia

January

- **Midterm Evaluation:** Over winter break, we will evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and spend the first two weeks revising the lesson plans. Additionally, some of the volunteers recruited may not choose to stay for a second semester. The second part of January will be three weeks used to recruit more volunteers. This is also a chance to expand past the pilot size of twenty and recruit more volunteers if warranted
- **Creation of a Leadership Council:** The first week back, I will also begin interviewing for the leadership council consisting of a core group of 3-5 volunteers that seem interested in taking a more active role in the project. Since January will mark the beginning of my last semester at Cal, the last semester will be focused on transitioning to the new leadership so the project can be sustained long term.

April

- **Year end evaluation:** At the end of semester, I will work with Maria-Elena Young to revise the curriculum. I will also work with the Leadership Council to recruit volunteers for the summer months.

Sustainability: Continued sources of income will be needed only for the "Gift Baskets" given away at the completion of the program. If funding was not renewed from another source, then these baskets could be eliminated but the project would continue because the curriculum and supplies only need to be purchased once. Additionally, the creation of a

leadership council makes this project sustainable since there will already be people designated to continuing the project long after I graduate.

Resources and Qualifications

I volunteered for the past three years in a public health clinic to provide education, screening and vaccinations for Hepatitis B. I have outreached to well over 1,000 people of different backgrounds and ethnicities. This experience has also taught me how to effectively educate people especially when dealing with sexually transmitted diseases, such as hepatitis B. Additionally, I will be partnering with Adolescent Health Collaborative to write the sexual health curriculum. Kate Cockrill of UCSF's Advancing New Standards of Reproductive Health has already provided input about how to use multimedia and discussion to make teaching more effective. Laura Douglass, state ClaSP Coordinator, has consented to partnership and introduced me to county level liaisons. I have already spoken with the Decal Facilitator of Berkeley's Teach in Prison literacy program to figure out what clearances are required. Lastly, Cheri Pies, Clinical Professor of Public Health at UC Berkeley, has agreed to serve as advisor for the Decal and for this project.

Budget:

Category	Item	Description	Cost
Curriculum Writing	1. Adolescent Health Services Compensation	Paying for staff support for writing curriculum 4 hrs a week for 6 weeks at \$30/hr	\$720
Classroom supplies	2. Binders	Will be used to store curriculum materials. Will be 120 pages each. Will buy 100 binders. Will be used for 100 pages.	\$420
	3. Printing	Printing course curriculum to put in binders. Will be reduced to 75 pages for 120 binders at \$10/page	\$840
	4. Projectors	Will be used for making multimedia presentations and showing short film clips.	\$240
	5. Pens	300 at 20 pack cost of \$3	\$60
Transportation	6. GART Van	100 participants (assume 200 participants) at \$7.20	\$720
Promotional	7. Business cards	500 business cards for promotion	\$25
	8. Volunteer shirts	25 @ \$10.50	\$262.50
	9. Pamphlets	1000 @ \$0.60 for two sided color print	\$600
Graduation Gift Basket	10. Printing	Printing for graduation certificate for 1000 participants	\$100
	11. Male Condoms	For putting in the graduation gift basket; ten condoms per participant. 500 participants (estimate about 5,000 at \$25/100 pack)	\$1250
Volunteering Clearance	12. Gift container	500 paper containers 240 pack at \$0.60	\$300
	13. Tuberculosis Testing	500 volunteers with 20 volunteers	\$600
	14. Bacterial testing	500 volunteers with 20 volunteers	\$600

Total: \$7082.50