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ADOLESCENT FEMALES HIGH RISK BEHAVIORS: EARLY INTERVENTION MEASURES FOR HEALTHY OUTCOMES

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Purpose: The purpose of this investigation was to explore the lived experiences of middle school aged, female adolescents in relation to healthy lifestyle choices.

Subjects: Twelve adolescent females, ages 12 - 16, participated in this investigation. Participants attended a suburban middle school in the Southeastern portion of the United States. Five participants were African American. Four participants were Caucasian. Three participants were Latina.

Theoretic and Research Foundation: Using Betty Neuman's Model and Grounded Theory, participants were offered a means to discuss in group the stresses found in their lives.

Intervention: Participants attended 4 sessions offered after school at their middle school. Focus of the interventions included journaling, making (and consuming) healthy snacks, group discussion and experiential activities. Key elements were addressed weekly. Activities had a theme, such as getting a hula hoop around a group without letting go of hands as a way to show individual cooperation and group outcome, getting out of a human knot to show strategies for conflict resolution.

Findings: Pre-Post Attitudinal Changes toward external supports - 86%, Knowledge Base Regarding Healthy Life Choices - 37%

Biography

Mary Bemker is an individual with a deep commitment to nursing and mental health. Dr. Bemker oversaw the development and operation of RN to BSN, MSN and DNP programs, growing these programs from a startup of seven students to 1000+ within a three year period. She led the effort to get all three programs CCNE accredited within a two year span, which was accomplished. In addition, Dr. Bemker was a part of three additional, successful accreditation efforts. She served as a nurse leader in a joint effort between her organization and a national nursing association/webinars. Dr. Bemker has a private practice where she specializes in PTSD/ trauma, addictions, eating disorders and family issues. She holds professional licenses in KY, IN, MN and NV.

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