CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

A GROUP COUNSELING CURRICULUM FOR EMPOWERING ADOLESCENT GIRLS

A graduate project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements For the degree of Masters of Science in Counseling, Marriage, Family Therapy

by

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this project to my amazing mother and grandmother. Their love, support and strength inspires, encourages and empowers me to always believe in myself and reach for my dreams. I would not be able to get through my graduate program and pursue my goals without them. I am thankful to have such wonderful women in my life.

I would also like to thank my father and brother for their unconditional love and support throughout the time that I have dedicated so much effort to pursue my master’s degree. I am also grateful for my friends, family and cohort who made the process of getting through such a rigorous program enjoyable and less difficult.
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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this project is to provide a curriculum that could be used by mental health practitioners, school counselors and teachers to help empower adolescent girls. It provides a medium for adolescent girls to discuss and learn about important information and skills to enhance their capability for empowerment. Issues such as development, environmental factors, peer relationships, self-esteem and career exploration are incorporated into the curriculum because these are pertinent factors that may affect adolescents’ sense of empowerment. The overall goal is for group members to consider new perspectives and skills in order to conquer the obstacles they face throughout adolescence. The curriculum has not yet been implemented, though it has been preliminarily evaluated by experts in the field of counseling.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Various feminist movements helped create equality for women in U.S. society. The women involved in these movements felt empowered to participate, critically reflect and control their environments, lives and resources. Those women, who served as role models for future generations, were not passive observers of their own lives, but active participants of change.

The first wave of feminism began in the mid-19th century and ended when women earned the right to vote with the 19th Amendment to the Constitution in 1920. In 1871 the first state laws specifically making wife beating illegal were passed. In 1891 Marie Owens, born in Canada, was hired in Chicago as America's first female police officer. These events signified the beginning of women’s equal integration into politics and society (Wikipedia, 2012).

With the second wave of feminism, the Equal Rights Amendment, written by suffragist Alice Paul, was introduced to Congress in 1923. The amendment states "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.” When the United States entered World War II in 1941, 12 million women were already working (making up one quarter of the workforce), and by the end of the war, the number was up to 18 million (one third of the workforce). However, while eventually 3 million women worked in war plants, the majority of women who worked during World War II worked in traditionally female occupations, like the service sector. Another important event of 1963 was the publication of Betty Friedan's influential book "The Feminine Mystique", which is often cited as the founding
moment of second-wave feminism. This book highlighted Friedan's view of a coercive and pervasive post-World War-II ideology of female domesticity that stifled middle-class women's opportunities to be anything but homemaker. Friedan's book is credited with sparking second-wave feminism by directing women's attention to the broad social basis of their problems, stirring many to political and social activism (Wikipedia, 2012).

Third-Wave feminism began in the 1980s and continues to the present. In the 1960s to 1980s, women realized they can use the stereotypes given to them and create a sense of empowerment. The Third-Wave redefined women and girls as "assertive, powerful, and in control of their own sexuality" and also redefined women as having "many colors, ethnicities, nationalities, religions and cultural backgrounds". The Third Wave embraces diversity and change. In this wave there is no all-encompassing single feminist idea (Wikipedia, 2012).

Although legally men and women are provided the same rights, women continue to be mistreated in society and have disparities to overcome. A National Violence Against Women Survey conducted by the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control in 2003 asked 8,000 U.S. women ages 18 and older if they had been victims of intimate partner violence at any time in their lives. They found that 22.1% of women had been physically assaulted by an intimate partner at some time in their lives, while 7.7% had been raped by an intimate partner. These statistics reveal that women continue to be battered and molested in modern society.

Furthermore, many women in society do not pursue careers in the math and science field, which may be due to societal values they inherit. About 29 percent of male freshmen, compared with 15 percent of female freshmen, planned to major in science,
technology, engineering or mathematics, according to the study in 2006. And women’s representation in some fields is actually declining. In the mid-1980s, women earned 36 percent of bachelor’s degrees awarded in computer science, compared to 20 percent in 2006. Women are also underrepresented in many professions, particularly in the engineering and computer science fields. Women made up about 1 percent of engineers in 1960, for example, and about 11 percent by 2000 (Hill, Corbett & St. Rose, 2010).

Although many historic women have paved the way for women’s empowerment, many girls do not have positive female role models in their lives who can guide them to fulfill their potential in becoming powerful women in current society. It is crucial that vulnerable girls receive the aid they need to develop as strong women who are able to keep up with the responsibilities they have as adults as well as fulfilling their desires in life. Adolescent girls are facing many current issues such as peer pressure, bullying, divorced parents, media influence, cultural diversity, date rape, competitive college admission and an increased high school dropout. Learning how to maneuver within these personal, social and career areas can help create a foundation for their success. A safe environment where they can discuss these issues with peers experiencing similar problems as well as a competent facilitator can assist them through this process.

**Statement of Need/Problem**

Adolescent girls need to be equipped with interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge and skills to develop as individuals, define what they want from life, and to know how to attain their desires. By fostering their self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-image, they are better able to conquer the obstacles they face throughout adolescence and are more likely to have fewer problems and to achieve more success.
**Purpose**

The purpose of this project is to provide a manual for counselors, mental health professionals, or teachers to hold a safe circle for discussing important issues with adolescent girls who need extra guidance in the personal, social and career domains.

**Significance**

This project will contribute a curriculum for mental health professionals, school counselors and teachers to provide adolescent females with a psycho-educational forum in which they can increase personal, social and career awareness.

**Terminology**

1. Empowerment has been defined as a process involving group participation, critical reflection and control over one’s environment, life and resources (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995).
2. Resilience is the ability to develop stable, healthy personas and to recover from or adapt to life's stresses and problems (Winfield 1991).
3. Self-esteem refers to a person's feeling of self-worth or adequacy (Crocker and Major, 1989).
4. Self-efficacy is defined as a person's judgment of his or her capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances (Bandura, 1986).
5. Body image can be defined as the accurateness of a person’s thoughts, feelings and perception of his or her body (Henry, Anshel, & Michael, 2006).
6. Bullying involves a quite socially competent child or adolescent's intent on dominance through repeatedly inflicting harm, physically or verbally, on a weaker peer (Salmivalli & Peets, 2009).

7. Cyber-bullying is bullying via computer or digital device in the form of spreading rumors, insults, embarrassing photographs, and threats quickly and widely (Surdin, 2009).

Bridge

In order to better understand this issue, it is necessary to review previous studies and research regarding how development, environmental factors, relationships, self-esteem, and career exploration can affect adolescent girls.
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Vulnerable teenage girls who do not get the support they need to develop a strong sense of self can run into major issues such as early pregnancy, eating disorders or depression. The most important issues that must be addressed for empowering adolescent girls are development, environmental factors, peer relationships, self-esteem, and career exploration. These topics will be included in the curriculum for the adolescent empowerment group entitled “Girl Power”. In this chapter, each of the topics will be examined through previous research studies.

Development

Identity development is a central part of the adolescent experience. In Erik Erikson’s psychosocial theory (1968), adolescence is marked by either identity or role confusion. The concept of identity includes who you are, where you are going and where you fit into society. Adolescents will experiment with various new tasks to figure out what defines them. James Marcia (1966) developed an interview procedure to assess where an adolescent is in the process of identity formation. Adolescents were classified into one of four identity statuses based on their progress toward an identity in several different domains. The four identity statuses include diffusion status, foreclosure status, moratorium status, and identity achievement status. The diffusion status is when an individual has not yet thought about or resolved identity issues. Foreclosure status is when an individual seems to know who he or she is but has latched onto an identity prematurely without much thought. Moratorium status is when an individual is experiencing an identity crisis, actively asking questions and seeking answers, but can
come to no conclusion. Identity achievement status is when an individual resolves his or her identity crisis and makes commitments to particular goals, beliefs and values.

Entering the moratorium status can be a good indication if one can raise questions about themselves and come to a conclusion. In Philip Meilman’s (1979) study of college bound boys between the ages of 12 and 18, most of the 12 and 15 year olds were in the identity diffusion or foreclosure status. Only 20% of 18 year olds had achieved a firm identity. Females progress toward a clear sense of identity at about the same rate as males. To achieve a sense of identity, one must integrate the many different perceptions that are part of the self-concept into a coherent sense of self (van Hoof, 1999). Teenage girls can be encouraged to ask themselves questions and explore their self-concepts in order to achieve a strong sense of identity. There are many reasons why adolescent girls can experience an identity crisis, a major one being that their bodies are going through major physical changes.

The most dramatic sexual maturation process for girls is menarche, the first menstruation, which begins at the average age of 12 (Spear, 2000a). Sexual maturation proceeds at different rates in different ethnic groups. African-Americans and Mexican-American girls begin experiencing pubertal changes earlier than Euro-American girls (Chumlea, Schubert, Roche, Kulin, Lee, Himes, et al., 2003). Early maturing girls express higher levels of body dissatisfaction than their pre-pubertal classmates and can engage in unsafe dieting and exercise (McCabe & Ricciardelli, 2004). Also, fitness tests amongst American teenagers show that about one third of them have poor physical fitness (Carnethon, Gulati & Greenland, 2005). Poor eating habits, inactivity and parental behaviors contribute to teenage obesity (Steffen, Dai, Fulton, & Labarthe, 2009).
Gender-role socialization can also be partly responsible. As girls mature sexually and physically, they are often encouraged to engage in more traditionally “feminine” activities and less in those deemed “tomboyish”. Studies of world records in track, swimming, and cycling suggest that as gender roles have changed in the past few decades, women have been improving their performances, and the male–female gap in physical performance among top athletes has narrowed dramatically (Sparling, O’Donnell, & Snow, 1998). This shows that, although fewer young women are as physically active as we might like, they are capable of achieving the highest levels of physical activity and fitness if they attempt it.

Adolescents increasingly find that they must conform to traditional gender norms to appeal to the other sex. Increased intolerance of deviance from gender-role expectations is tied to the process of gender intensification, in which gender differences may be magnified by hormonal changes associated with puberty and increased pressure to conform to gender roles (Boldizar, 1991). According to this process, boys begin to see themselves as more masculine and girls emphasize their feminine side as they sexually mature. There is some support for this, at least in terms of higher levels of “femininity” reported by teen girls than by boys (Priess, Lindberg, & Hyde, 2009). When it comes to “masculinity,” though, teen boys and girls report roughly the same levels.

When gender intensification does occur, it is largely related to peer influence and the growing importance of dating. A girl who was a tomboy and thought nothing of it may find, as a teenager, that she must dress and behave in more “feminine” ways to attract boys and must give up tomboyish ways (Carr, 2007). A boy may find that he is more popular if he projects a more sharply “masculine” image. Social pressures on
adolescents to conform to traditional roles may even help explain why sex differences in cognitive abilities sometimes become more noticeable as children enter adolescence (Roberts, Sarigiani, Petersen, & Newman, 1990).

It should be noted that the social pressure to conform to gender stereotypes does not need to be real—adolescents’ perceptions of their peers’ thoughts and expectations can affect behaviors and lead to gender intensification (Pettitt, 2004). Adolescents seem to become highly intolerant of certain role violations and to become stereotyped in their thinking about the proper roles of males and females in adolescence. They are more likely than somewhat younger children to make negative judgments about peers who violate expectations by engaging in cross-sex behavior or expressing cross-sex interests (Alfieri, Ruble, & Higgins, 1996). Later in adolescence, teenagers again become more comfortable with their identities as males and females and more flexible in their thinking. Nonetheless, gender role socializations can leave an impact on teenage girls’ development.

Moral development of teenagers gradually shifts from Lawrence Kohlberg’s pre-conventional to conventional reasoning (Colby, Kohlberg, Gibbs, & Lieberman, 1983). A person at the second stage of moral development conforms to rules to gain rewards or satisfy personal needs. There is some concern for the perspectives of others, but it is motivated by the hope of benefit in return. What is right is now what pleases, helps, or is approved by others. People are often judged by their intentions; “meaning well” is valued, and being “nice” is important. Other people’s feelings, not just one’s own, should be considered. At its best, Stage 3 thinking involves reciprocity—a simple Golden Rule morality of doing unto someone else what you would want done unto you. Severely
violent youth have often experienced abandonment, neglect, abuse, bullying and other insults that may cause them to view the world as bad and feel little concern for others (Lansford, Miller-Johnson, Berlin, Dodge, Bates, & Pettit, 2007).

Cultural or ethnic identity development is also part of the adolescent experience. Young adolescents say either that they identify with their racial or ethnic group because their parents and others in their ethnic group influenced them to do so (foreclosure status) or that they have not given the issue much thought (diffusion status). In their mid to late teens, many minority youths move into the moratorium and achievement statuses with respect to ethnic identity (Seaton, Scottham, & Sellers, 2006). Exploring and instilling a positive ethnic identity can protect adolescents’ self-concepts from the damaging effects of racial or ethnic discrimination (Wong, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2003).

Environmental Factors

It is important to understand not only what empowers positive adolescent development, but also what facilitates resiliency from adverse environments that affect adolescent development. Hawkins, Oesterle, and Hill (2004) constructed eight dimensions and indicators of successful young adult development from which it is helpful to understand what to instill in adolescence. Physical health, psychological and emotional well-being, life skills, ethical behavior, healthy family & social relationships, educational attainment, constructive engagement, and civic engagement were the categories that promoted success in young adulthood. These indicate areas of focus for nurturing successful young adult development that a group for empowering adolescent girls can help provide and instill.
It is also important to understand what promotes successful development when adolescents are faced with adversity. According to McMillan & Reed (1994) resilient students have a psychological support system that provides a safety net and encouragement. This system is evident in the way the students are meaningfully connected to others, in or out of school. Resilient students have adults-usually a parent (more often mother than father) and someone from the school-with whom they have trusting relationships (McMillan & Reed, 1994). These adults have high expectations and provide support and encouragement with firmness. Students respect these adults because they obviously care about their welfare. Having looked over what provides success and resiliency within adolescent development informs us about what it takes to develop into a positive adult. The reality is that adolescents are faced with a multitude of environmental risks that can impact their development including bullying, media, family issues, substance abuse and dating.

Bullying. In the school year 2008–09, some 7,066,000 U.S. students ages 12 through 18, or 28.0 percent of all such students, reported they were bullied at school, and about 1,521,000, or 6.0 percent, reported they were cyber-bullied anywhere (i.e., on or off school property). This data from the School Crime Supplement (SCS) to the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) (US Department of Education, 2009) shows the extent to which bullying and cyber-bullying are reported by students with different personal characteristics. Implications are discussed further in the Peer Relationships section.

Media. Use of media that conveys messages about body ideals is consistently associated with greater body dissatisfaction and experimental exposure to images
portraying the thin-ideal result in moderate decreases in self-esteem and increases in body dissatisfaction among females (Stice & Shaw, 1994). John Jacob and Jeong-ju Yoo (2010) examined how boys’ and girls’ weight preoccupation varied by grade level, parent-child relationships, self-classified weight, entertainment media exposure levels, and gender. Seventh-grade girls (n = 190) and boys (n = 132) and 10th-grade girls (n = 99) and boys (n = 67) participated. Girls were more likely to report weight preoccupation. Perceiving oneself as heavier was correlated with weight preoccupation regardless of age and gender. Age and gender interactions with magazine reading and visiting fashion websites contributed to the prediction of weight preoccupation. Positive parent-child relationships were negatively correlated with weight preoccupation. Building a positive relationship between young girls and their parents who can guide them in having a healthy body image could be beneficial for them.

Family issues. It is estimated that almost half of all marriages will end in divorce, and that approximately one million children will experience divorce each year (Clarke, 1995). This could have negative consequences on adolescents due to a broken family support system. Another study found the association of parental divorce with recent drunkenness (Tomcikova, Madarasova Geckova, Orosova, van Dijk, & Reijneveld, 2009). The quality of the individual’s attachment to parents continues to be highly important throughout adolescence, but peers begin to compete with parents as sources of intimacy and support (Furman & Buhrmester, 1992).

Adolescents may feel conflicted as they seek greater independence from their parents yet continue to need their support, but a balance of exploration and attachment is the key to successful development at this age (Allen, 2008). Gaining some separation
from parents is healthy; becoming detached from them is not (Beyers, Bates, Pettit & Dodge, 2003). A blend of autonomy and attachment, or independence and interdependence, is most desirable.

Many marriages in the U.S. end up in divorce and adolescents may have major difficulties in adjustment to the new family system. Familial risk factors identified in the divorce literature include parental conflict, reduced contact with a non-custodial parent, low parental monitoring and low levels of parental support. These risk factors have been directly associated with negative child outcomes (Emery and Forehand, 1994). Family processes have also been found to mediate and moderate the adjustment of adolescents to marital transitions (Hetherington, Bridges & Isabella, 1998).

According to Rodgers & Rose (2002) low levels of parental monitoring are predictive of higher externalizing behaviors. Low levels of parental support and monitoring are predictive of higher internalizing of symptoms. Parental support is the strongest factor for internalizing. School attachment was negatively associated with externalizing and internalizing. Peer support and neighborhood support were significantly related to lower internalizing, i.e. higher self-esteem, lower depressed affect, and fewer thoughts of suicide.

Substance Abuse. A quarter of high school students report occasional heavy/binge drinking (Center for disease control, 2009c). Teens under the risk of alcohol are more likely to engage in risky behavior. They are more likely to smoke cigarettes and the more they smoke, the more likely they are to become addicted to nicotine. They are more likely to engage in risky sexual behaviors including sex with multiple partners and unprotected sex. In turn, these behaviors are associated with unintended pregnancies and
sexually transmitted diseases. They are more likely to get into a car where the driver has been drinking, greatly increasing the risk of an accident. They are more likely to get into physical fights, experience academic problems, and engage in illegal behaviors.

Dating. In a recent study, more than one half of the sixth graders interviewed (53%) reported having a boyfriend/ girlfriend in the last 3 months (Miller, Gormam-Smith, Sullivan, Orpinas, & Simon, 2009). This data suggests that a significant percentage of adolescents are involved in adolescent dating relationships. Nationwide, approximately 10% of students reported being physically hurt by a boyfriend or girlfriend in the past 12 months (CDC, 2008). Nearly one in three sexually active adolescent girls in ninth to 12th grade (31.5%) reported experiencing physical or sexual violence from dating partners (Decker, Silverman, & Raj, 2005). Teen girls are vulnerable to becoming physically or sexually abused by their partners if they do not receive the guidance necessary to prevent and intervene in such situations.

It is apparent how today's teens can be negatively affected by the harmful environmental factors evident in the statistics and research. Their physical health, psychological and emotional well-being, family & social relationships, and even educational attainment are in jeopardy. Considering how positive relationships are a big factor for resiliency, a closer look at the risks and benefits of relationships is called for.

Peer Relationships

Teenage girls tend to show aggression in the form of “relational aggression”- subtle and indirect aggression such as gossiping about and ignoring and excluding others. Rose, Swenson and Waller (2004) found that relational aggression works for girls in early adolescence to enhance their perceived popularity. Perceived popularity also predicts
more use of relational aggression later for females, suggesting that adolescents who become popular may discover that they can use their social power to exclude or hurt others and do just that. Doing so serves the useful purpose of enforcing a group’s norms and strengthening allegiance to the group (Killen, Rutland, & Jampol, 2009). Bullying usually involves a child or adolescent repeatedly inflicting harm, physically or verbally, on a weaker peer (Salmivalli & Peets, 2009). Cyber-bullying, a more recent social development, enables bullies to spread rumors, insults, embarrassing photographs, and threats quickly and widely via computer or digital device (Surdin, 2009). For some children and adolescents, being hounded by bullies can lead to becoming a bully, as well as to high rates of delinquency, depression, and self-harmful behavior, including suicide (Barker, Arseneault, Brendgen, Fontaine, & Maughan, 2008).

A study examined the prevalence, impact, and differential experience of cyber bullying among a large and diverse sample of middle and high school students (N = 2,186) from a large urban center (Mishna, Khoury-Kassabri, Gadalla, & Daciuk, 2012). The survey examined technology use, cyber bullying behaviors, and the psychosocial impact of bullying and being bullied. About half (49.5%) of students indicated they had been bullied online and 33.7% indicated they had bullied others online. Most bullying was perpetrated by and to friends and participants generally did not tell anyone about the bullying. Participants reported feeling angry, sad, and depressed after being bullied online. Participants bullied others online because it made them feel as though they were funny, popular, and powerful, although many indicated feeling guilty afterward. Adolescents need to be educated about how to deal with bullying to prevent perpetuating the problem.
Another study by Nation, Vieno, Perkins and Santinello (2008) explored the development of bullying and victimization in school by investigating 11, 13 and 15 year olds’ sense of interpersonal empowerment with parents, friends and teachers. A national sample of 4386 male and female students from 243 middle and secondary schools in Italy were surveyed. Boys were more likely than girls to be bullies and more likely to have been a bully/victim. Victimization and the likelihood of being both a bully and a victim declined with age. Bullying increased with age among boys whereas for girls it was slightly more prevalent at age 13 than ages 11 or 15. The sense of empowerment students experience with their teachers decreased in the older cohorts. Disempowered relationships with teachers consistently predicted bullying behavior. Higher social competence was reported by 13-and 15 year old bullies. Chronically bullied students had lower social competence in all age cohorts. Predictors of victimization varied by age. Eleven year-old victims felt less empowered by their teachers, whereas 15-year-old victims reported more difficulties in negotiating cooperative relationships with parents. Bullies in all cohorts and younger bully/victims feel less empowered by their teachers. These findings suggest that students who are disempowered by teachers may either compensate by oppressing (bullying) peers or generalize the power differential with peers (become a victim). It demonstrates that relationship balance with adults can impact youth and their projections.

Impett, Sorsoli, Schooler, Henson & Tolman, (2008) found that relationship authenticity (i.e., the congruence between what one thinks and feels and what one does and says in relational contexts) is essential to self-esteem and well-being. The authors investigated the role of relationship authenticity in promoting girls’ self-esteem over the
course of adolescence. Latent growth curve modeling was used to test the association between relationship authenticity and self-esteem with data from a 5-year, 3-wave longitudinal study of 183 adolescent girls. Results revealed that both relationship authenticity and self-esteem increased steadily in a linear fashion from the 8th to the 12th grade. Girls who scored high on the measure of relationship authenticity in the 8th grade experienced greater increases in self-esteem over the course of adolescence than girls who scored low on relationship authenticity. Girls who increased in authenticity also tended to increase in self-esteem over the course of adolescence. If adolescent girls learn how to choose and maintain positive friendships, those friendships can become beneficial rather than harmful.

Intimate Relationships. Kinsfogel and Grych (2004) investigated the ways in which exposure to inter-parental conflict may affect adolescent dating relationships in a sample of 391 adolescents ages 14 to 18 years. Boys exposed to greater parental discord were more likely to view aggression as justifiable in a romantic relationship, had more difficulty managing anger, and believed that aggressive behavior was more common in their peers’ dating relationships. Each of these variables in turn linked witnessing inter-parental conflict to higher levels of verbal and physical aggression toward their own romantic partners. Inter-parental conflict was not related to girls’ aggressive behavior. Girls need to become aware of dating violence and how they can prevent becoming involved in an unsafe relationship.

Intimate relationships during adolescence can also lead to the risks of early pregnancy and AIDS through sexual intercourse. Small and Luster (1994) found that many of the risk factors that were linked to sexual experience in their sample of 2,168
adolescents enrolled in the 7th, 9th, and 11th grades and residing in a midsize Southwestern city were notably poor school performance, involvement in a committed relationship, low parental education, and using alcohol frequently. Included in the group are a history of sexual abuse, and the perception of limited economic opportunities in the future. Other significant predictors were history of physical abuse, lack of school attachment, low neighborhood monitoring, and permissive parental values about teenage sexual behavior. There was a very clear association between level of parental monitoring and sexual experience for both males and females. Teens who were carefully monitored were less likely to be sexually experienced. A measure of the teens' tendency to conform when pressured by peers was not related to sexual activity. It may be that people tend to overestimate the role that peers play in influencing sexual behavior, whereas parental monitoring is more crucial. Thus, fostering positive relationships with adult figures in adolescents’ lives can influence their decisions about sexual intercourse.

With so many developmental, environmental and relationship changes happening for teenagers, their self-esteem and self-efficacy can also take a plunge. Although a slight decrease in self-esteem is natural at their age, the effects of a larger decline in self-esteem can be detrimental to their positive development.

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem and self-efficacy are both part of people’s sense of self because they affect how people feel about themselves and their capabilities. Self-esteem tends to decrease from childhood to early adolescence for a number of reasons. Adolescents become more knowledgeable and realistic about their strengths and weaknesses (Jacobs, Lanza, Osgood, Eccles, & Wigfield, 2002). This dip in self-esteem affects only some
teens, though. It is most common among white females, especially those facing multiple stressors—for example, entering middle school, coping with pubertal changes, beginning to date, and perhaps dealing with a family move all at the same time (Gray-Little & Hafdahl, 2000).

Self-esteem can also be affected by the social context and the social comparisons it makes available. To illustrate, Herbert Marsh and Kit-Tai Hau (2003) studied more than 100,000 15 year olds in 26 countries to better understand the big fish–little pond effect. Keeping factors such as academic competence equal, a student’s academic self-concept tends to be less positive when the average academic achievement level of her classmates is high (when she is a small fish in a big pond) than when her classroom or school’s average academic achievement level is low. This big fish–little pond effect suggests that making the transition from regular classes to classes for gifted students, or from an unselective high school to a selective college or university, could threaten adolescents’ self-esteem by changing the social comparisons they make. Indeed, gifted children moved from regular classes into gifted programs sometimes do lose academic self-esteem (Marsh, Chessor, Craven, & Roche, 1995). Similarly, special education students tend to have higher academic self-esteem when they are placed in homogeneous special education classes than when they are placed in regular classes with higher-achieving classmates, despite other benefits that may come from including students with learning problems in the mainstream (Manning, Bear, & Minke, 2006). Children and adolescents can learn to recognize their own strengths without comparing them with others to build their self-esteem.
Young girls’ body image is also a determinant of their self-esteem. The more dissatisfied a girl is with her body, the lower her self-esteem (Paxton, Neumark-Sztainer, Hannan & Eisenberg, 2006). Seidah and Bouffard (2007) found that thirty-five percent of the female participants in their study equated their feelings about their physical appearance with their level of self-esteem. Body image issues must be addressed to help adolescents with their self-esteem since it is so highly equated.

As adults, adolescents with low self-esteem tend to have poorer physical and mental health, poorer career and financial prospects, and higher levels of criminal behavior than adolescents with high self-esteem (Trzesniewski, Donnellan, Moffitt, Robins, Poulton & Caspi, 2006). In the end, though, adolescence is not as hazardous to self-esteem as most people believe. Although some adolescents do experience drops in self-esteem in early adolescence, and some feel like tiny guppies in huge ponds, most emerge from this developmental period with higher self-esteem than they had at the onset (Donnellan, Trzesniewski, & Robins, 2006). If adolescents have opportunities to feel capable in areas important to them and to experience the approval and support of parents, peers, and other important people in their lives, they are likely to feel good about themselves (Harter, 1999).

Self-efficacy is another important aspect of a person’s sense of self. Bandura (1986) defined self-efficacy as "people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances" (p. 391). Self-efficacy beliefs are formed primarily from four sources (Bandura, 1997). The most influential source is the interpreted result of one’s own previous performance or mastery experience. Efforts interpreted as successful raise self-efficacy, whereas efforts
determined as failures lower it. The vicarious experience of observing others perform
tasks, although weaker than mastery experience, also contributes to self-efficacy beliefs.
Social persuasions received from others, including the verbal judgments others provide
affects self-efficacy beliefs as well. The last of the four primary sources of self-efficacy is
physiological and emotional states that can gauge a person’s degree of confidence
through the physiological state they experience as they contemplate a task, such as
negative thoughts and fears about their capabilities which then trigger additional stress
and agitation.

A recent study (Gonida & Leondari, 2011) examined the motivational outcomes
of high school students with biased and accurate self-efficacy beliefs regarding their
academic performance. It found that underestimation of one’s performance, even in a
single school subject, is non-beneficial and even costly for a student. Accurate or realistic
self-appraisals are associated with benefits. Furthermore, overestimation of one’s
performance is more likely to be associated with both costs and benefits to a student. This
illustrates the maladaptive functioning of negative illusions and the adaptive functioning
of realistic appraisals. It provides insight that boys and girls should be encouraged to
develop high but accurate efficacy beliefs while acquiring the knowledge and skills for
academic success.

Career Exploration

Career exploration is a natural part of adolescent progression in the U.S. because
after individuals complete formal education, they transition into the world of work. It also
helps define their sense of self because their skills, interests and values comprise their
career aspirations. The Self Directed Search created by John Holland (1986) provides
areas of interest that people may strongly categorize for themselves through an assessment. These areas, otherwise called “Holland Interest Environments” include Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional. Once someone takes an assessment that considers their skills, interests and values, he or she is provided with possible career areas that match their interest types. The Self-Directed Search provides a person with a clearer idea of what jobs match their interests. This can be very helpful for adolescents who are not aware of many different careers that would match them.

As important as it is for young people to know what they want to do with their lives, it is also important to believe in themselves. Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorell (2001) tested a structural model of the network of socio-cognitive influences that shape children's career aspirations and trajectories with 272 children, between the ages of 11 and 15. The researchers found that familial socioeconomic status is connected to adolescents’ career trajectories indirectly through its effects on parents' perceived efficacy and academic aspirations. The impact of parental self-efficacy and aspirations on their children's perceived career efficacy and choice is interceded through the children's perceived efficacy and academic aspirations. Children's perceived academic, social, and self-regulatory efficacy influence the types of occupational activities for which they judge themselves to be efficacious both directly and through their impact on academic aspirations. Perceived occupational self-efficacy gives direction to the kinds of career pursuits children seriously contemplate for their life's work and those they disfavor. Children's perceived efficacy rather than their actual academic achievement is the main determinant of their perceived occupational self-efficacy and preferred choice of work-
life. Perceived occupational self-efficacy also predicts traditionalism of career choice. This study demonstrates the importance of instilling accurately high self-efficacy beliefs.

Although college women are just as concerned about establishing a career identity as men are, they attach greater importance to and think more about the aspects of identity that center on sexuality, interpersonal relations, and balancing career and family goals (Kroger, 2007). These concerns probably reflect the influence of traditional gender roles.

Karen O’Brien and Ruth Fassinger (1993) tested 2 causal models of career choice and orientation with high school women. Participants were 409 adolescent women enrolled in their last year of high school in an all-female private liberal arts high school in a large midwestern city. The career orientation and career choice of adolescent women were predicted by ability, agentic characteristics, gender role attitudes, and relationship with mother. Young women who possessed liberal gender role attitudes, were instrumental and efficacious with regard to math and careers, and exhibited moderate degrees of attachment and independence from their mothers valued their career pursuits. Adolescent females who selected nontraditional and prestigious careers showed high ability and strong agentic characteristics. Deciphering gender role attitudes in developing career goals is indicated in order for female youth to be open to a broader range of career options that they might desire.

Bullock-Yowell, Andrews & Buzetta (2011) found that negative career thinking, openness, and conscientiousness explained a significant amount of variance in career decision-making self-efficacy in a general sample of college students, mostly of Caucasian and African American background. No unique variance was explained by cultural mistrust in a sample of African American college students. However, it is
important to explore individuals’ cultural mistrust in regard to career decision making. Boosting positivity, openness and conscientiousness at the beginning of the career decision-making process can instill higher self-efficacy beliefs in individuals’ career ambitions and promote their success in pursuing their goals.
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Recruitment of Group Members

“Girl Power” is open to eight to ten girls between the ages of twelve and sixteen who are interested in participating in such a group. Parents might nominate their children for the group in a private setting. Girls may be nominated by a school counselor or teacher in a school setting. School counselors may make classroom announcements regarding the group information and ask that interested students visit her or him. Permission slips for parental consent will be provided for potential participants to return prior to the first meeting of the group.

Formation of Group

Once consent forms are returned and reviewed for completeness, the counselor or therapist leading the group will begin interviews to assess whether a candidate is a good fit for the group. The group leader should consider whether the candidate will benefit from the group. Participants should be capable of sharing their thoughts and opinions, as well as respecting others’ opinions. They should commit to attending all group meetings. The rules of confidentiality must be reviewed and agreed to by the participant. After the participants are chosen, the seven week long group will commence to meeting weekly for the duration of fifty minutes.

Evaluation

Since “Girl Power” has not yet been implemented, a pre and post test will be available for participants to complete to determine the effectiveness of information provided and the process in which it was delivered. Evaluations by experts in the
counseling field were also conducted to ensure the relevance of the curriculum. The evaluations were performed by experts familiar with working with adolescent girls.

**Expert Evaluation Measurement**

Each expert was asked three close ended questions and two open ended questions. The three close ended questions were based on a scale using numbers 1-3. The number “1” stood for “not at all”, “2” was for “somewhat” and “3” stood for “very much”. The five questions included, (1) How effective are these topics and accompanying information to adolescent girls? (2) How understandable is the information based upon adolescent girls’ developmental levels? (3) Would you personally use the curriculum with teen girls? (4) What critique do you have of the program? (5) What suggestions would you make to improve the program?

**Expert Characteristics**

The experts were chosen due to their working knowledge of adolescent girls. The first expert is a Marriage and Family Therapist in private practice. The second expert is a school counselor for middle school students who holds a California Pupil Personnel Services Credential. The third expert is a psychologist in private practice.
CHAPTER IV
DESIGN AND CONTEXT OF THE PROGRAM

Context of Program Use

This curriculum is designed to be used by mental health practitioners, school counselors and teachers. It is a manual for providing a psycho-educational forum for teen girls. It can be held in a private practice, clinical or school setting. The curriculum is designed for adolescent girls between the ages of about twelve and sixteen. It is to be administered in a group setting with eight to ten participants. Parents, therapists, teachers or school counselors may refer girls who they think will benefit from the curriculum. The group meetings are to be held for the duration of fifty minutes weekly within seven weeks. Group members should be willing to participate, follow group rules and have parental consent.

Description of Program Goals

The purpose of this project is to provide mental health practitioners, school counselors and teachers a method for discussing topics relevant to adolescent girls’ development into successful women. The specific goals for the group are:

- To increase participants interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge and skills to define who they are as individuals, what they want from life, and how to attain their desires.
- To foster participants’ self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-image
- For members to feel more capable in conquering the obstacles they face throughout adolescence
• To empower members to actively participate, critically reflect and control their environments, lives and resources

The goals and topics of the curriculum were developed through extensive review of the literature regarding adolescent development, environmental factors, relationships, self-esteem and career exploration. The implications of the research demonstrated the need for a psychoeducational group that enhances adolescent girls' personal, social and career awareness. The curriculum was evaluated by experts in the counseling field, who assured the effectiveness of the program for adolescent girls.

Discussion of Expert Evaluation

Three professionals in the counseling field who are considered to have expert knowledge about adolescent girls were asked if they thought the curriculum used in “Girl Power” was appropriate and effective for the intended age group and if they would consider using the curriculum in their work setting. The first three questions included (1) How effective are these topics and accompanying information to adolescent girls? (2) How understandable is the information based upon adolescent girls’ developmental levels? (3) Would you personally use the curriculum with teen girls? The number “1” stood for “not at all”, “2” was for “somewhat” and “3” stood for “very much”. Almost all of the experts thought the information provided is effective and understandable for teen girls. Two out of three experts would use the curriculum with teen girls. Their feedback is charted below.
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<th>Evaluators</th>
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<th>Q #3</th>
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<td>Second Expert</td>
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<td>Third Expert</td>
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<td>3</td>
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The three professionals were also asked to critique the curriculum, as well as offer suggestions about how to improve the program. The first expert who is a Marriage and Family Therapist liked the curriculum very much and did not have further suggestions. The second expert who is a school counselor wanted there to be an actual career assessment included, however most effective career assessments have copyrights and must be purchased for use. The third expert who is a psychologist thought the program varied too broadly to be used in private practice where clients come in for specific problems. He suggested narrowing down the focus of the curriculum. However, this suggestion was not followed since the intention of the project was to address a wide range of issues that adolescents face.
CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

The purpose of this project is to provide a curriculum that can be used by mental health practitioners, school counselors and teachers to help empower adolescent girls. Issues such as development, environmental factors, relationships, self-esteem and career exploration are incorporated into the curriculum because these are pertinent factors that may affect adolescents’ sense of empowerment. The overall goal is for group members to consider new perspectives and skills in order to conquer the obstacles they face throughout adolescence.

Research has found terrible problems that girls face throughout adolescence from substance abuse and parental problems to bullying and date rape. The literature about adolescent girls supports the importance of a psychoeducational group that focuses on the areas covered by the group counseling curriculum. The interpersonal and intrapersonal knowledge and skills that the participants can gain from the group addresses the issues found to be concerning adolescent girls.

Although the curriculum has not been implemented, experts in the counseling field evaluated the program to be useful with young girls. The professionals consisted of a Marriage and Family Therapist, a school counselor, and a psychologist. They not only concluded the program to be potentially effective, but they also expressed interest in using it themselves.

Implications

“Girl Power” can be used by counseling professionals in diverse settings. The curriculum is simple and should be easily administered. Although the curriculum has not
yet been implemented, it has been evaluated by three experts. Once “Girl Power” is implemented, evaluations using the pre and post tests should be made by group members. Evaluation by both members and participants are important to creating an effective program that meets the needs of adolescents. As a result of meeting the adolescents’ needs, it is the expectation that they will improve in their intrapersonal and interpersonal knowledge and skills.

Conclusion

The purpose of this project is to provide a curriculum that can be used by mental health practitioners, school counselors and teachers to help empower adolescent girls. The curriculum provides a medium for adolescent girls to discuss and learn about important information and skills to enhance their capability for empowerment. Issues such as development, environmental factors, relationships, self-esteem and career exploration are incorporated into the curriculum because these are pertinent factors that may affect adolescents’ sense of empowerment. The overall goal is for group members to consider new perspectives and skills in order to conquer the obstacles they face throughout adolescence.

“Girl Power” has not yet been implemented, though it has been preliminarily evaluated by experts in the counseling field. The experts were made of a Marriage and Family Therapist, a school counselor, and a psychologist who are all qualified to implement "Girl Power" successfully. The evaluations were positive overall and most of the evaluators would use it themselves.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX A

Week One

“Girl Power!”

Goals

✓ Group members will learn the guidelines of the group, including the rules and limits of confidentiality, check for understanding and agreeing to them
✓ To have group members become acquainted with each other to encourage a comfortable and safe environment to share and learn together
✓ Identifying what group members would like to gain from the experience
✓ Recognize and reflect on their personality and character traits

Objectives

✓ Group members will be able to explain the guidelines for the group
✓ Group members will be able to share a collage representing their attributes

Time: 50 minutes

Materials Needed

➢ Pens
➢ Dry erase board or poster paper
➢ Poster boards
➢ Magazines
➢ Scissors
➢ Glue sticks
➢ Markers
➢ Group Pre-test (See appendix B)
➢ Healthy snacks
Procedures

1. Welcome members to the group and re-introduce yourself.

2. Pass out pre-test and have members fill them out while passing out snacks.

3. Ask members about their personal role models. Tell them that they are capable of being strong powerful women in the world just like their role models might be. They just need to learn how to channel their own strengths.

4. Discuss how being a young girl can be stressful given the pressures of fitting in with cliques, dealing with physical changes, clashing with parents, experimenting with drugs, succeeding academically or interacting with boys. The purpose of the group sessions is to increase their sense of empowerment to overcome these events through discussion, activities and learning strategies. The end goal is for each member to gain a stronger sense of self.

5. Ask members what they would like to gain from the experience.

6. Discuss counselor confidentiality and inform group members of the limits to confidentiality regarding intent to harm self or others, suspected abuse, and court ordered mandate. Check for understanding by asking members to repeat what they understood and write on the board.

7. Discuss basic rules for the group members regarding confidentiality, politeness, appropriateness, listening and positive feedback with each other. Check for understanding by asking members to repeat and write on the board.

8. Ask members to each sign the board as a statement of agreement to commit group participation.
Activity

- As the first activity ask each group member to create a collage of what identifies them with magazine cut outs. Ask them to think about their culture, morals, values, talents, skills, hobbies and personality. Each member will introduce themselves by sharing their collage after everyone is complete.

- Thank members for sharing and commend them on their insight and creativity.

- Discuss that while members might have a good idea of who they are in some aspects of their self-concept, they might not have thought about others as much. It is important for teenagers to explore how they came about to identify with certain self-concepts and if those are truly how they identify themselves. Ask members how they came to learn certain concepts about themselves. Have they explored other possibilities? Do they have other interests that they have not explored yet?

- Encourage members to explore different aspects of themselves throughout the weeks that you will be working together.
Week 2

“Take Control!”

**Goals**

✓ For group members to understand the negative effects that their environment can have on them

✓ For group members to understand that they have the power to control situations and influence their environment

✓ To help members learn assertive communication and positive decision making skills

**Objectives**

✓ Group members will be able to describe or role play how to communicate effectively

✓ Group members will be able to describe or role play how to make healthy decisions

**Materials**

- Dry erase board/poster board
- Markers
- Healthy snack
**Procedures**

1. Welcome members back to the group

2. Discuss how different factors in their environment can influence them such as the media’s portrayal of a thin body ideal, bullying at school, parents getting a divorce and peer pressure to take drugs.

3. Discuss different situations where the members feel helpless including situations regarding parental relationships and negative peer pressure with drugs while writing them out on a board

4. Ask members, “On a scale of 1-10, where 1 means little or none and 10 means a great deal, how effective are you at getting your thoughts, opinions and feelings across?”

5. Discuss the differences between passive, assertive and aggressive communication

6. Tell members that assertive communication is important to get your messages across because it is the most effective method

7. Discuss with members that learning how to make healthy and positive choices will help them to feel good about themselves and lead them to their goals.

8. Explain that when they are in a given situation where they might feel helpless they can: 1) Clarify the situation 2) think of possible solutions 3) consider the consequences of each solution 3) Consider whether the consequences are safe and fair 4) Consider how you and others may feel 5) Consider whether it will work 6) Make a choice 7) Act on it
Activity

- Brainstorm possible scenarios with members and ask for volunteers to role play healthy decision making and assertive communication
- Process the participants’ and observers thoughts and feelings regarding the role play
- Remind members to try and practice what they have learned throughout the week
Week 3

“Mean Girls”

**Goals**

- Group members will be able to distinguish qualities of a good friend
- Members will learn what they can do to be a better friend toward others
- Members will empathize with each other regarding experiences of being a bully or victim
- Group members will learn strategies to prevent or stop the cycle of bullying

**Objectives**

- Group members will be able to describe the differences of a good friend versus a bad friend
- Members will state what they can do to be a better friend toward others
- Members will demonstrate the use of “I” statements in dyads

**Time:** 50 minutes

**Materials Needed**

- Markers
- Dry erase board/poster board
- Healthy snacks
Procedures

1. Welcome members back to the group and pass out snacks

2. Ask members what are character traits they believe are in a good friend? Are there friends that they continue to hold close although they might not meet their expectations? How can you tell if a friend will not harm you in any way?

3. Tell members that it is important to make friends with those who truly like you as a person and wouldn’t want to harm you. Friendships are very powerful and can influence us in ways that are either positive and growthful or negative and hurtful for us.

4. Tell members that by staying in a friendship that influences you to do things you aren’t comfortable with and can cause you to get into trouble, you are saying that you care more about others than yourself and that it is more important to be liked by the “right people” than being yourself.

5. Ask what extent are you willing to go to make friends with someone who doesn’t value you as a person? What would you do if she starts spreading gossip about you? If you go out for revenge what can you expect from the situation?

6. Discuss the issue of bullying and cyber-bullying with members. Ask them whether they have been in a bullying situation, whether they were the bully or victim? How did it feel?

7. Tell members that coping with gossiping and bullying can be done with making “I-statements”. For example, “When you said spread mean rumors about me I was hurt and angry because I thought we were friends and I want you to stop immediately.”
8. They can also prevent becoming part of spreading rumors about others when they here gossip by saying, “Gossip is hurtful, so I do not want to be involved and I think you should stop.”

**Activity**

- Ask members to form dyads and practice “I-statements” with imaginary situations.
- Encourage them to discuss how they feel about using “I-statements”.
- Tell them that they might feel uncomfortable in the moment but it is the right thing to do because the bullies know they are wrong. By showing your individuality and courage you will be more respected in the long run. The bully may realize their mistake and apologize. If she doesn’t, you will know that she is not your true friend and to move on.
Week Four

“Boy Oh Boy”

Goals

✓ To have members recognize the difference between an unhealthy relationship and a healthy relationship
✓ To have members become aware of their rights in a relationship
✓ To have group members learn the warning signs of dating violence and learn skills in preventing dating violence

Objectives

✓ Members will identify their values in a relationship
✓ Members will identify their rights in relationships and how to maintain them
✓ Members will identify consequences of early sexual activity
✓ Members will identify how to avoid dating violence

Time: 50 minutes

Materials

➤ Healthy snacks
➤ Dry erase board/poster board
➤ Markers
➤ My Bill of Rights Handout (See Appendix C)
Procedures

1. Welcome members back to the group and pass out snacks

2. Ask members to share what they value most in a dating relationship

3. Discuss what they would do if they started dating someone who they find out does not have the same major values as they do

4. Pass out My Bill of Rights Handout and discuss the concepts of fairness, equality and respect. Ask how members feel when they don’t get respect in a relationship. How do they feel when they disrespect others or take advantage of them.

5. Remind them how they can use the skill of assertive communication and using I-statements to maintain fairness, equality and respect in a relationship

6. Ask members to list some of the negative consequences of early sexual activity and their opinions about choices regarding sex

7. Discuss different forms of assault and sexual assault

8. Ask members to list what they can do to avoid getting into situations where violence may occur
Week Five

“I feel good, I knew that I would!”

Goals

✓ To understand the elements of self esteem
✓ To recognize positive qualities of each member
✓ To learn how to persevere in accomplishing goals

Objectives

✓ Members will accept positive affirmations from other members of the group
✓ Members will write 5 positive affirmations about themselves
✓ Members will state a personal goal and how they will accomplish it

Time: 50 minutes

Materials

➢ Decorative flashcards
➢ Rings
➢ Hole Puncher

Procedures

1. Play James Brown’s “I Feel Good” as member’s walk in and as you pass out
   snacks.

2. Introduce the topic of positive self-esteem and self-efficacy by defining them.

3. Explain how body image plays a big factor of self-esteem in girls and ask them if
   they agree. Media and society place an unrealistic ideal about beauty that is very
unhealthy regarding body weight. It is important to understand that models do not actually look the way they do in magazines because those are airbrushed and they also go through unhealthy measures to look seemingly perfect.

4. Tell members that eating balanced meals and exercising an hour a day will help them feel better about their bodies.

**Activity**

- Pass out decorative flashcards and a ring to each member. Ask members to each write a positive feature for each member of the group on a different flash card. Then ask each member to express what they wrote for a member and give the card to them. Go around until everyone receives their positive feedback from other members.

- Ask members to write down 5 additional positive affirmations about themselves and then ask them to share what they wrote.

- Members can then hole punch their cards and place them on rings to look through when they are feeling down about themselves and need a lift in spirit.

- Ask members what they would like to change or improve about themselves. This can be related to their personality, academics, friendship style, etc.

- Ask members what they believe holds them back from accomplishing this change.

- Ask members to set a goal regarding their desired change and how they plan to accomplish this.

- Tell members that they can do anything that they put their mind to as long as they believe in themselves, persevere through challenges and don’t give up. It is important to set realistic goals that you believe you can accomplish with effort.
This will lead to reaching bigger goals. It feels good to gain new skills or accomplishments, but you need to know what you already have and believe in what you are capable of.
Week 6

“What do you want to be when you grow up?”

Goals

✓ For members to identify skills, interests and values regarding career choice
✓ To explore and match with different career paths
✓ To be open to exploration of new career options

Objectives

✓ Members will choose 3 possible career interests
✓ Members will identify the type of training/education they will need to prepare for the career

Time: 50 minutes

Materials

➢ Healthy snacks
➢ Pens
➢ 8 copies of John Holland’s Self Directed Search Assessment Form R 4th edition available for purchase through www.parinc.com
➢ John Holland’s “The Occupation Finder” available for purchase through www.parinc.com
Procedures

1. Welcome members back to group and pass out snacks

2. Ask members what they want to be when they grow up? How did they discover this?

Activity

- Provide members with copies of John L. Holland’s Self-Directed Search assessment
- Have members take the career assessment and identify their according group of occupations
- Ask members if the results of their assessment reflect what they expected or their original choice of career
- What do they think of their result? Ask members to narrow their options to 3 careers
- Ask members to research the training and education required for those careers by the following week
Week 7

“Mission Possible!”

Goals

✓ To incorporate the goals from each week into a comprehensive understanding of what it takes to be empowered
✓ For each member to express his or her purpose in life
✓ For members to experience a positive ending of group

Objectives

✓ Members will describe what they have learned over the weeks that they will incorporate in their lives
✓ Members will describe how they have changed within the short period of working together
✓ Members will create a Mission statement that they will follow to remain empowered

Time: 50 minutes

Materials Needed

➢ Party Food
➢ Post-tests
➢ Pens
➢ Markers
➢ Decorative construction paper
Procedures

1. Welcome members back to the group and pass out party food.

2. Ask members what they discovered about their career training requirements through research.

3. Discuss the implications of their findings together. Do they believe they will pursue the education required? What do they need to do currently to assure that they will be able to pursue the training or education required?

4. Ask members if they have any questions or comments about any of the topics covered in past group sessions.

5. Tell members how great it has been to have every member participate in the group.

6. Since this is the last group, ask members what they liked most about the group process and the most important thing they learned.

Activity

- Pass out decorative construction paper and markers to all members
- Ask members to write a mission statement for themselves consisting of a sentence about who they are, a sentence about where they are going, and another sentence about how they will get there.
- Have members share their mission statements
- Ask members to state one thing that they have learned or benefitted from another member.
- Thank members for participating in the group and acknowledge their growth throughout just 7 weeks of working together. Tell them that as long as they stay
true to their mission statement they will be able to go far in life. Tell them that you know each member is already so strong to have been willing participants in this group and that they are going to turn out to be amazing women in the future.

- Pass out post-tests and pens for members to complete and collect when completed while dismissing members with encouraging words.
APPENDIX B

“Girl Power”

Pre/Post Test

Please answer the following questions honestly and completely by circling your answers.

DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME! You will not be graded on your answers.

1. Rate your sense of understanding of who you are, who you would like to become and how to get there.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Good At All</td>
<td>Not Good</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
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2. Rate your ability to communicate your thoughts, opinions and feelings with others. Circle your answer.

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<tr>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>Somewhat Low</td>
<td>Somewhat High</td>
<td>Very Good</td>
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3. I make good choices that lead to positive outcomes.

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<tbody>
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<td>Almost Never</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Most Of The Time</td>
<td>Almost Always</td>
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4. Spreading rumors online is as hurtful as hitting someone in person.

   TRUE    FALSE

5. Rate your awareness of the differences between having a healthy and unhealthy romantic relationship.

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<tr>
<td>Not At All</td>
<td>Very Little</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Very much</td>
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</table>
6. I feel in control of my actions and respected when I am in a romantic relationship.

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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Not At All</td>
<td>Very Little</td>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Very much</td>
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7. Rate your self-esteem by circling the number that fits how you feel about yourself.

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<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Negative</td>
<td>Somewhat Negative</td>
<td>A Little Negative</td>
<td>A Little Positive</td>
<td>Somewhat Positive</td>
<td>Very Positive</td>
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</table>

8. I believe that I can accomplish anything I set my mind to do.

TRUE          FALSE

9. I have thought about my career goals and know what I would like to be when I grow up.

TRUE          FALSE

10. I believe I can be just as successful as my role models.

TRUE          FALSE
Appendix C

My Bill of Rights

You have a right to...

- Be treated with respect
- Have and express your own opinions and feelings
- Set your own priorities
- Say no without feeling guilty or giving explanations
- Ask for what you want and need
- Get what you pay for
- Choose not to assert yourself
- Be independent
- Have your needs met (including by yourself)
- Do less than you are humanly capable of
- Act only in ways that promote your dignity and self-respect as long as others’ rights are not violated in the process

*If you know what your rights are, you will be less hesitant about asserting them*