USING POP CULTURE AS A PUBLIC HEALTH PREVENTION STRATEGY

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What were you watching on TV?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What music were you listening to?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Who were your friends?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What were you wearing?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What did “dating” mean?</td>
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<td>What were the big issues/concerns in your life?</td>
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<td>Who were the adults you trusted?</td>
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Public Health believes that prevention is the best medicine
Socio-Ecological Model

- **PUBLIC POLICY**
  - national, state, local laws

- **COMMUNITY**
  - relationships among organizations

- **ORGANIZATIONAL**
  - organizations, social institutions

- **INTERPERSONAL**
  - family, friends, social networks

- **INDIVIDUAL**
  - knowledge, attitudes, skills
Researchers in the field of violence prevention have increasingly turned to a definition of prevention that focuses on the target group of interest. This definition categorizes interventions as:

- **Universal interventions** - approaches aimed at groups or the general population without regard to individual risk; examples include violence prevention curricula delivered to all students in a school or children of a particular age and community-wide media campaigns.

- **Selected interventions**—approaches aimed at those considered at heightened risk for violence having one or more risk factors for violence); an example of such an intervention is training in parenting provided to low-income, single parents.

- **Indicated interventions** - approaches aimed at those who have already demonstrated violent behavior, such as treatment for perpetrators of domestic violence.
"In our desire to rear healthy productive youth, our policies and actions should not be restricted to prevention or cures but should include cultivating skills and meeting needs"

Pittman & Cahill, 1992
Adolescents vs. Adults
I CAN TOTALLY GET AWAY WITH THIS!
Expanding our definitions
For teens, “pop culture” is real culture
What is “Popular Culture”?

Contemporary lifestyle and items that are well known and generally accepted, cultural patterns that are widespread within a population; also called pop culture.

Dictionary.com
Pop culture through the ages...
Pop Culture Pathways
Evolution
1. Seizing an opportunity
In public health, information dissemination is not sufficient.

What made Chris Brown/Rihanna survey matter

- Current
- Kids were talking about already
- Relevant to their lives
- Surprising to adults, who then talked to teens
Survey Findings

- 46% said Rihanna was responsible for the incident
- 51% said Chris Brown was responsible for the incident
- 52% said both individuals were to blame for the incident
- 52% said the media were treating Chris Brown unfairly
- 35% said the media were treating Rihanna unfairly
- 44% said fighting was a normal part of a relationship
- 71% said arguing was a normal part of a relationship
What are the rumors about what happened during the incident?

- "That Chris Brown was cheating on Rihanna and Rihanna gave Chris Brown a disease"
- "She gave him herpes and he beat her up"
- "Rihanna had herpes and didn’t tell him so he reacted in a violent manner"
- "Rihanna gave Chris Brown herpes. Chris Brown was defending himself"
- "Everything but I'm not sure if it's true or not so I don’t know"
- "She gave Chris Brown some disease and she was messing with some other boy"
Boston Teens Misguided, Blame Rihanna for her Attack
Applied Examples

2. Listening to teens
“On average, American youth listen to music from 1.5 to 2.5 hours per day, and an analysis of at-risk youth revealed they listen up to 6.8 hours per day. Studies have shown that a preference for certain types of music or music videos with explicit references to drugs, sex or violence can be associated with negative effects on schoolwork, behavior and emotions. Heavy metal and hard rock music have also been associated with increased suicidal risk, depression and delinquent behavior.”
Nutritional Impact

SOUND RELATIONSHIPS

Music, like food, can feed our brains and give us energy. But, it also can be filled with ingredients that can affect us negatively. Some music may even have an influence on our health and the health of our relationships. This instrument will help you evaluate the “nutritional” value of the music you might listen to. We want you to put on your headphones, turn up the volume and become a song lyrics nutritionist. Just follow these easy steps.

STEP ONE: Find a song
Select a song. Find the lyrics of the song either from the CD insert, or search for them online. Print out the lyrics, and read them to get a feel for the main themes in the song.

STEP TWO: Determine if the song has a relationship theme
Songs with a relationship theme describe an emotional or physical connection between two or more people and should support, celebrate, or glorify the unhealthy or healthy characteristics of the relationship.

STEP THREE: Score the song lyrics
Carefully examine the song’s title and all lyrics in the chorus and verses of the song. Now look at the Song Lyric Scoring Label to the left. Check the “PRESENT” box for each relationship ingredient that you find in the song. The definitions for each relationship ingredient are at the bottom of the label. Finally, for each ingredient that is present in the song, assign it a score from 1-10 in the “INTENSITY LEVEL” box based on how much of that relationship ingredient you feel is in the song. A score of 1 would indicate that there is a very low level of that relationship ingredient in the song while a score of 10 would indicate a very high level of that relationship ingredient. When assigning an intensity score, consider how these particular lyrics impact the overall message of the song.

STEP FOUR: Total your numbers
Add up the scores from the intensity column in both the unhealthy and healthy sections. These totals indicate the unhealthy and healthy relationship “nutritional” value of the song’s lyrics.

STEP FIVE: Balance your “lyrical” diet
Use this tool whenever you want to find out the relationship ingredients of a song. Just like with the food we eat, it is important to have a balanced “song” diet that includes lots of healthy relationship ingredients. Knowing the ingredients will help you make an informed decision about which songs will promote good relationship health.

Prepared by the Boston Public Health Commission, 2009

The song may portray: Drama: a belief that making up/breaking up, yelling, bitter arguing, destroying property or a general sense that unhealthy conflict in the relationship is part of a normal relationship. Possession/Obsession: a belief that another person is an object to use for one’s personal benefit. This could also include stalking, objectification, and controlling behavior. Disrespect: a belief that it is acceptable to disregard another person’s feelings, ideas, opinions and wishes. This could include name calling, putting downs, minimizing language, and belittling. Relationship = sex: a belief that the main component or focus of the relationship is sex. Manipulation: a belief that it is acceptable to lie or use another person’s emotions or vulnerabilities to get what is desired. This could include guilt trips, lying, and using alcohol to get sex. Fun/Enjoyable: a belief that relationships are enjoyable and fun. Support: a belief that a relationship includes building up the other person’s confidence and strengths. This could include encouraging another person to make healthy decisions to better themselves, even when the other person may not totally agree. Respect: a belief that another person has value and is appreciated and recognized for their ideas, thoughts, and decisions. This could include the use of positive or supportive words to describe the other person. Equality: a belief that both parties share decision making and are free to choose what is right for them. One person does not have power over the other either in decision making or sex. Trust: a belief that the other person in the relationship has your best interest at heart. This could include being faithful and honest.
When I kiss you so good, Why would you wanna break up? When this loving is so good, Why would you wanna break up?
When I hit that so good, Why would you wanna break up?
When this feeling is so good, Why would you wanna break up?

Loving you, loving you, loving you, when I'm, when I'm loving you, loving you. Why would you wanna break up? Do anything for you why would you wanna break up? See I been driving through your hood why would you wanna break up?

Now baby girl just dumped me, she no longer wants me, I'm no longer hired
She says that I've been fired
On to the next one
More fish in the sea
Girls are like buses
Miss one, next 15 one comin'
Gucci Mane crazy and his ice game stunnin'
Swag so stupid still the bitch straight dumped me
Over, no more smokin' doja
Baby girl went AWOL
She used to be my soulja
Bing Crosby: Baby It’s Cold Outside

- I really can't stay
  Baby it's cold outside
  I gotta go away
  Baby it's cold outside
  This evening has been
  Been hoping that you'd drop by
  So very nice
  I'll hold your hands they're just like ice
  My mother will start to worry
  Beautiful what's your hurry?
- Your eyes are like starlight now
  To break this spell
  I'll take your hat, your hair looks swell
  I ought to say no, no, no sir
  Mind if move in closer?
  At least I'm gonna say that I tried
  What's the sense of hurtin' my pride?
- I simply must go
  But baby it's cold outside
  The answer is no
  But baby it's cold outside
  This welcome has been
  How lucky that you dropped in
  So nice and warm
  Look out the window at that storm
  My sister will be suspicious
  Gosh your lips look delicious!
- The neighbors might think
  Baby it's bad out there
  Say... what's in this drink?
  No cabs to be had out there
  I wish I knew how
  Never such a blizzard before
“Lady Gaga is Musical Junk Food”

-AP
Breakup Summit

________ is no longer listed as “in a relationship”
The “Face-to-Face” breakup
U R Breaking-Up?!

The way you communicate often determines how well your message is received. This is especially true when you are breaking-up. Use this tool to help you pick the best strategy for being heard. Like the receptions bars on your phone, the more bars you have the stronger and clearer your message will be.

Five bars
FACE-TO-FACE With face-to-face contact you have the best possible reception. That doesn't mean that talking about breaking-up is going to be any easier, but you both will have a better chance of understanding each other's feelings with less miscommunication. You will be able to use body language and tone of voice to help get your message across without interference.

Four bars
PHONE Phones are amazing tools that help us stay in touch with the people we care about. Unfortunately, they are not the best tool for ending relationships. They let you have a live conversation where you can verbally communicate feelings and thoughts, and hear tone of voice, but the problem is that there can be interference — abrupt hang-ups, zero body language information, a lack of privacy and lost reception.

Three bars
Email Sending an email is an effective way of communicating a message; however it is not the ideal way to communicate during a break-up. It can be hard to tell if someone is joking, happy or angry from an email. The person you're trying to communicate with may not get your message. The reception is dependent on what the other person thinks is meant by each word or phrase or idea. Also, once something is in print, it is very hard to take it back or explain away the miscommunication.

Two bars
TEXTING With texting, the chances of your message being clearly received are very small, just like the length of a text message. Too little is said, leaving too much room for misunderstanding. Communicating by text may actually add to the pain and prolong the breaking-up process, if you break-up this way, you may be sending the message that this person is not worth your time, which can result in a stronger negative reaction.

One bar
SOCIAL NETWORKS You're breaking-up, and you want the whole world to know! Posting something hurtful on Facebook, MySpace, AIM or Twitter may feel good for a moment, but no one will really hear your message clearly, especially the person who needs to understand. Even if your ex did something hurtful to cause the break-up, posting hurtful messages tells others more about you and how you treat others.

Prepared by the Boston Public Health Commission, July 2010
www.BPHC.org
face it
don't
facebook it
3. The Halls
Campaign Goals

- Funded by the Office on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the Office on Violence Against Women.

  Engaging Men and Boys

  And

  Defending Childhood Initiative

1. Provide a tool for providers to use to discuss gender norms and healthy relationships with their youth
2. Reach a million views collectively for the whole series.
3. Engage over 2000 twitter followers in messaging content
4. Conduct screenings and discussions with over 1000 youth, particularly young men in the Boston area.
Formative Research Phase

- Conducted 10 focus groups
  - 8 with young men ages 11-14 and 15-18
  - 1 with young fathers
  - 1 with young mothers

- Themes: homophobia, inability to be vulnerable, consent, lack of understanding healthy relationships, pressure from young women to act a certain way, healthy co-parenting

One thing was very clear that the young men wanted to talk about relationships.
Themes Present Within the Series

- **Expectations around sex**
  - Sexual Assault Prevention
  - Healthy Consent

- **Homophobia**
  - Gender policing

- **Lack of Vulnerability**
  - Seeking help around trauma
  - Decreasing stigma around help seeking
  - Pressure to be a player

- **Healthy Relationships**
  - Positive co-parenting

- **Survivorship**
Youth-Informed Development Process

NOT your traditional PSA
Creative Development Process

- Develop concepts for campaign message and design
  - Began with traditional public services announcement and poster campaign.
  - Moved to Web Series format in order to capture subtleties of messaging and youth experience.

- Request for proposals process to identify production company.

- Plot and character development workshop with youth.

- Development of script.
  - Draft written by production company.
  - Extensive feedback sessions to refine messages with youth and staff.

- Production: Casting, filming, editing, and supplemental materials.
Public Health Intervention Materials

- Discussion Guide
  - Broken down by episode
  - Provide adult facilitators a tool to support discussion
  - Broken down by recommended and optional questions

- Walk the Halls
  - Created by our peer leaders to help discuss the themes
  - Visual representations of the themes in the discussion guide
Screen The Halls
Campaign Stats To Date

- Launch event: 130 community partners and youth
- In-person community screenings to date: 503 youth/702 adults
- Number of schools/community orgs scheduled to host a viewing: 15 and counting
- Number of tweets delivered: 143,061
- Number of website page visits: 56,414
- Number of episode views: 24,035
- Biggest referrers are from Facebook and Google
- Tweets created for dissemination: >300
- Resources page: 974 views
How YOU Can Help

1. Spread the message particularly with youth in your lives
2. Send the link www.thehallsboston.com to folks to view the webseries
3. Join our twitter handle @thehallsboston or better yet get the teens in your life to join the handle
4. Please share community orgs where we can host in person screenings with youth and/or adult providers.
“New Moon is a pop-culture tsunami.”

Julia Sharkey, Start Strong Idaho Teen InterACTivist

At the midnight premiere of New Moon on November 19th, Start Strong Idaho teens conducted a survey at theaters in the Boise area.
The “magic formula” is...
Know what’s making news
Involve creative people
Be a credible messenger
Move at their speed
Be innovative (and take risks)
It’s in the packaging
Build relationships and be collegial
Your Turn

- Please spend the next time brainstorming ideas you could do with youth in your program.

Step 1. Brainstorm a topic you would like to cover
Step 2. decide on a medium you would like to use
Step 3. Think of a fun pop culture guilty or not so guilty pleasure you indulge in
DON'T WORRY. TECHNOLOGY WILL SAVE YOU.

MUELLER
Thank You!

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