



Native Youth Adaptation Project

EngenderHealth created Gender Matters, a comprehensive sexual health education intervention, in an effort to reduce unplanned pregnancy amongst teens in the United States. Due to preliminary positive results of the pilot program implemented in Austin, Texas, EngenderHealth is developing an adaptation manual of Gender Matters for Native youth populations. This adaptation will be informed by:

- Completing a thorough **literature review** on the needs, attitudes, and behaviors of Native youth
- Conducting **phone interviews** with key stakeholders, including Native youth and adults, professionals working with Native youth, and others involved in developing or adapting curricula for Native youth
- Conducting **site visits** with various native communities throughout North America
- Convening an **Advisory Committee** to guide the adaptations recommended in the manual

By drawing upon the wisdom of those with experience in sexual health education for Native youth and aligning the Gender Matters curriculum to the specific needs and interests of these communities, the program can become a valuable resource and an additional option for Native communities looking to implement a science-based comprehensive sex education program.

EngenderHealth and Gender Matters

EngenderHealth is a leading global women's health organization committed to ensuring that every pregnancy is planned, every child is wanted, and every mother has the best chance at survival. The Gender Matters (Gen.M) project is an innovative, science-based intervention that incorporates cutting-edge research on gender-based attitudes and behaviors to prevent teenage pregnancy. The project aims to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy, and seeks to achieve three behavioral outcomes with youth participants:

- Delay the onset of sexual intercourse
- Increase the use of the most effective contraceptive methods, including hormonal contraception and the IUD
- Increase consistent and correct use of condoms

The intervention is comprised of **three primary components**: 1) A 20-hour curriculum-based workshop facilitated by trained health educators; 2) A social media campaign that engages youth throughout the program; and 3) the recording of youth generated video messages about gender, relationships, sexual decision-making, and pregnancy and STI prevention. Gender Matters is funded by the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Adolescent Health (OAH) under a 5-year (2010-2015) demonstration project. During this time, Gender Matters was rigorously evaluated through a randomized control trial. Results of this evaluation will be complete by August 2015 and the curriculum will be up for review as an evidence based program in late 2015. The Native Youth Adaptation of Gender Matters was funded by a private donor.

How Gender Matters Can Serve Native Youth

With the high occurrence of teen pregnancy and intimate partner violence in Native populations, Gender Matters is in the unique position to help Native youth learn ways to challenge and redefine the unhealthy gender norms, inequalities and discrimination to ones that are healthier and more equitable. Gender Matter's Native Youth Adaptation Manual will add another resource to the currently limited options in sexual health education curricula developed or adapted specifically for Native youth.

Getting Involved

Interviews

EngenderHealth has already conducted numerous interviews by phone with professionals that have developed, adapted or implemented sexual health education curricula for Native youth. We are interested in hearing from others who have insights they would like to add to this project, including Native youth and adults. All interview participants will be acknowledged in the completed adaptation manual.

Site Visits

EngenderHealth staff will visit communities providing sexual health education to Native youth in the Summer and Fall of 2015. The purpose of these visits is to: 1) observe current sexual health programming, 2) speak with health educators and community members about their experiences with sexual health programming, and 3) develop a deeper understanding of cultural values and norms in each community. The lessons learned in these site visits will be used to customize the adaptation manual to the specific needs of Native youth and communities. EngenderHealth will work with each site to find a time to visit that works within their schedule. Each site will also be provided with an appreciation stipend, acknowledgement of their participation in the adaptation manual, including a description of their program and organization and a copy of the Gender Matters curriculum and the completed adaptation manual*.

Advisory Committee

Advisory committee members serve a vital purpose in guiding the appropriate cultural adaptations available in the manual. Committee members will be made up of individuals with: experience developing, implementing and/or adapting a sexual health program for Native youth, strong research background with Native communities in regards to sexual health or an in-depth understanding of the unique perspectives and experiences of native youth populations. Preference will be given to those who identify as American Indian or Alaskan Native. Committee members will be expected to attend **3 web meetings** (60 minutes each) tentatively scheduled for August 2015, November 2015, and February 2016. In these meetings, members will:

- Provide feedback on drafted questions for meetings with native youth, facilitators and community members during site visits
- Provide feedback on the general outline and table of contents of the adaptation manual and complete a technical review of the first and final drafts of the adaptation manual

Committee members will all receive an appreciation stipend for their work on the manual, acknowledgement of their participation in the manual and a copy of the Gender Matters curriculum and the completed adaptation manual*.

If you are interested in serving as an interviewee, site visit and/or joining the Advisory Committee please contact Mandy Ackerman at ackerman@engenderhealth.org by Friday, July 17, 2015.

*Please note that Gender Matters may not be implemented without first completing the Gender Matters Facilitator Training.

