

Background

- Twenty percent of high school students have been bullied at school
- One in ten high school students have been physically hurt intentionally by a romantic partner
- One out of every ten students who drop out of school does so because of repeated incidents of bullying
- 20% of high school students who report being bullied have also seriously considered suicide
- One in five adolescents ages 13-18 years old will develop a serious mental health illness
- African-Americans of all ages are 20% more likely than Caucasians to experience serious psychological distress that leads to adverse mental health outcomes
- Dunbar – Mercy High School students self-reported:
 - ✓ High incidence of inter-personal conflict and unhealthy relationships
 - ✓ lack of support for addressing these issues at home and in school surroundings

Objectives

The purpose of this project was to:

- Promote positive relationships among adolescent clinic users at Dunbar SBHC
- Increase knowledge and awareness of behaviors associated with building and maintaining healthy relationships
- Decrease social, emotional, and behavioral risk factors that correlate to the occurrence of unhealthy relationships
- Assess students' satisfaction with this kind of program

Methods

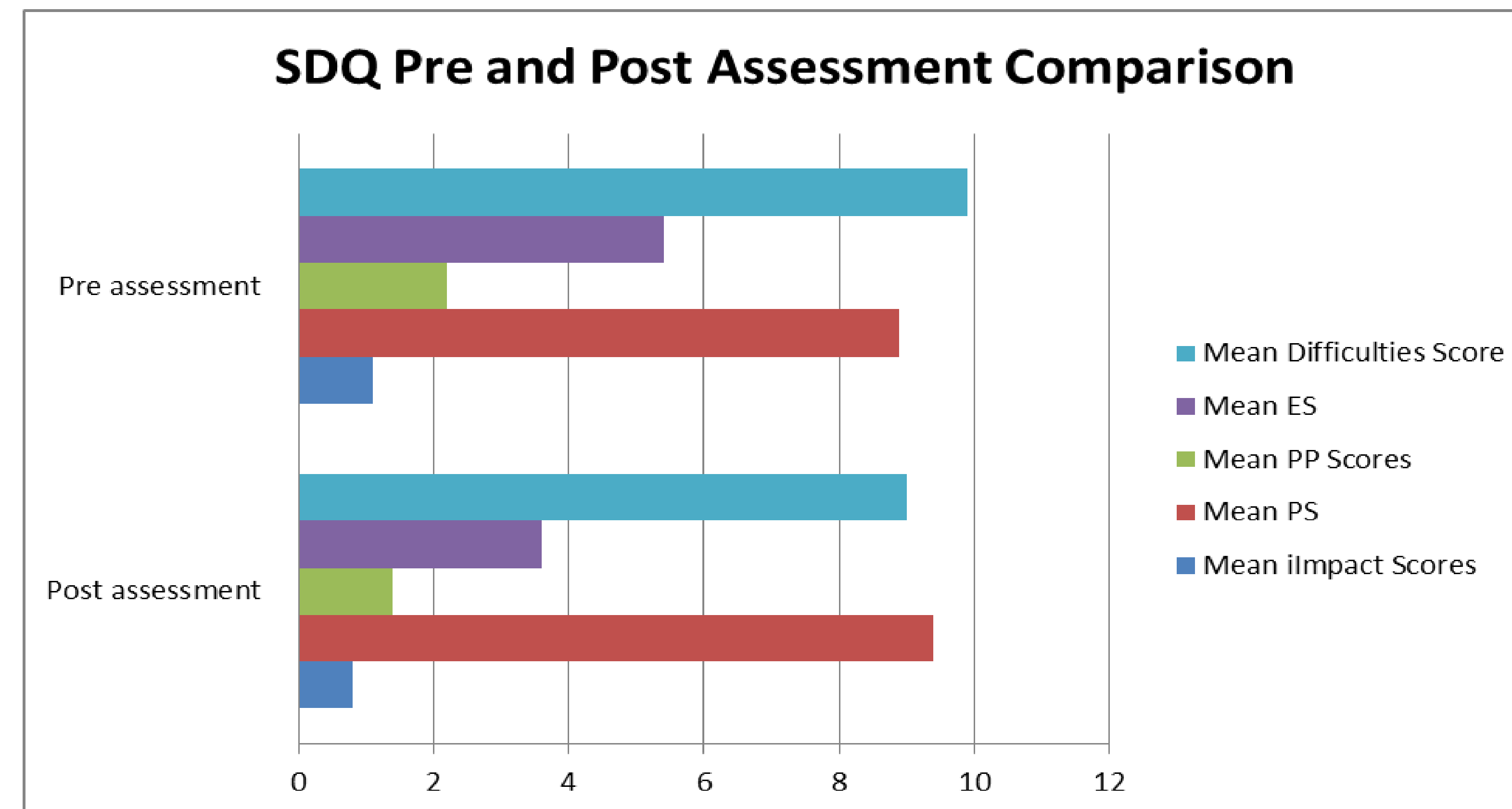
- Quality Improvement project
- Pre and post intervention measures included
 - ✓ Problems Oriented Screening Instruments for Teenagers (POSIT): a self-reporting mental health screening tool used to identify possible participants.
 - ❖ Utilized as a needs assessment
 - ❖ 95 questions: long and takes ~ 45 minutes to complete
 - ✓ Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ): pre-and post-intervention assessments to measure behavioral risk factors
 - ❖ 25 questions: short and takes ~15 minutes to complete
 - ❖ **Categories of focus:**
 - Emotional Symptoms (ES) – Situations that may cause stress
 - Peer Problems (PP) – Situations that may cause conflict w/peers
 - Prosocial Behaviors (PS) – Positive behaviors
 - Impact Score – the burden of the identified problems / difficulties
- Post-program satisfaction survey to measure student satisfaction with this type of program

Evidence – Based Interventions

- Participants Identified by:
- One-on-one encounters with identified participants to garner interest and obtain consent
- Adaptation of the evidence-based Safe Dates Program Curriculum to fit a 5-week timeline and to meet the needs of the target population
- Weekly topics included:
 - ✓ Week 1: Introductions / Defining and Establishing Trust
 - ✓ Week 2: Establishing Safe Boundaries
 - ✓ Week 3: Healthy vs Unhealthy vs Abusive Relationships Continuum
 - ✓ Week 4: Conflict Management Through Effective Communication
 - ✓ Week 5: Wrap up / Reflection
- Collaborative efforts between SBHC staff and school administration

Results

- N = 7 Participants**
- ✓ Participant Demographics: 4 Freshmen; 3 Sophomores; 5 Girls; 2 Boys
- SDQ Pre and Post Assessment Comparison**
- Categories of focus:**
 - ✓ **Emotional Symptoms (ES)** – Situations that may cause stress
 - ✓ **Peer Problems (PP)** – Situations that may cause conflict among peers
 - ✓ **Prosocial Behaviors (PS)** – Positive behaviors
 - ✓ **Impact score** – The burden of the identified problems / difficulties

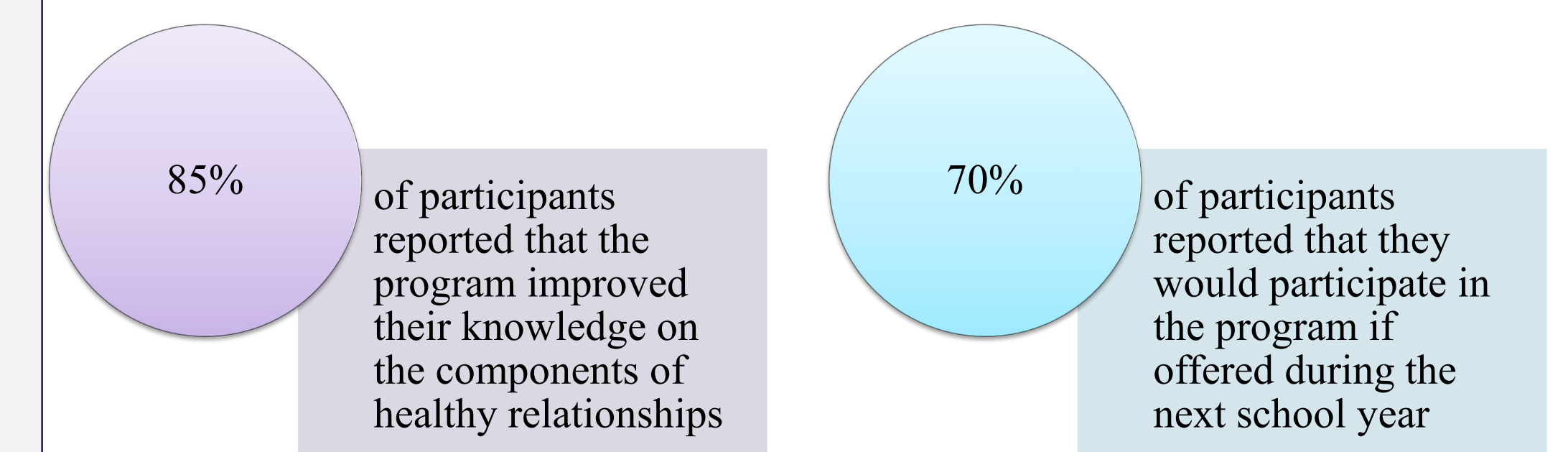


| | Pre assessment | Post assessment |
|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Mean Difficulties Score | 9.9 | 9 |
| Mean ES | 5.4 | 3.6 |
| Mean PP | 2.2 | 1.4 |
| Mean PS | 8.9 | 9.4 |
| Mean Impact Scores | 1.1 | 0.8 |

Results Cont'd

- SDQ pre-assessment scores outside of average range include:
 - ✓ Emotional Symptoms (ES), Peer Problems (PP), and Impact Score
- SDQ post-assessment scores decreased (moved closer to average) by the following values:
 - ✓ ES = -1.8; PP = - 0.8; Impact score = - 0.3

Participant Satisfaction Scores



Conclusions

- Safe Dates Program Curriculum was effective in the target population as evidenced by:
 - ✓ A decrease in participants' pre and post SDQ assessment scores
 - ✓ Participants' ability to identify behaviors associated w/building and maintaining positive relationships
- The design and flexibility of the Safe Dates Program and the three SDQ focus areas (emotional symptoms, peer problems, and prosocial behaviors) were used to meet the needs of the specific population and contributed to program success
- Participants found the program to be beneficial as evidenced by:
 - ✓ "I would love for this group to actually be a part of our regular classes because it can really help a lot of people"
 - ✓ "Confronting someone who offended me does not have to be an argument especially when it can solve a problem we may have with each other"

Lessons Learned

- Participant attendance will vary based on many factors that include students' general attendance at school and school activities (field trips, testing, etc.)
- This program can be easily replicated in other SBHCs and community-based organizations that serve adolescents, but staff must remain flexible with logistics as schedules may change unexpectedly especially within the school setting