Main Takeaways

- p.a.p.a. is innovative and meets an unmet need for students
- Teachers, principals, and students think it is relevant and necessary
- Students’ knowledge increased, especially in areas unique to p.a.p.a. – but knowledge remains low
- Students’ are more likely to want to establish paternity and keep both parents involved
- Students less likely to want a child prior to marriage – but real changes in behavior are unknown
Fertility Trends in Texas

- Over 40% of children are born to unmarried parents.
- In Texas, each day 146 babies are born to a teen mom, and another 201 teens become pregnant.
- Texas has 3\textsuperscript{rd} highest teen birthrate. Highest very young teen pregnancy rate.
- Cost of teen childbearing in Texas was more than $1 Billion in 2004.
Nonmarital Childbearing Has Increased Significantly

Percent of U.S. Births to Unmarried Women by Race/Ethnicity

Source: Child Trends data bank, National Center for Health Statistics
% of U.S. Births to Unmarried Women by Age 2006

Source: US Census

- Educate young people about the rights, responsibilities, and realities of parenting.
- Encourage optimal sequencing behavior: finish your education, get a job, form a healthy relationship, THEN have children.
- Encourage both parents to be financially and emotionally committed to their children; even if they do not live together.
- Decrease the number of kids born to parents who are not prepared to raise them.
Background of p.a.p.a.

- Developed by Texas Office of the Attorney General
- Aim is to address child support and paternity issues BEFORE a pregnancy occurs.
- First large scale effort to use child support and paternity as basis for program on parenting.
- In 2007, Texas legislator voted to make p.a.p.a. a mandatory component of the state’s health curriculum: bipartisan support
- Implemented statewide in fall 2008.
- Health is no longer mandatory, but if health is taught, p.a.p.a. must be taught.
Description of p.a.p.a. Curriculum

- Taught by health teachers who were trained by OAG

- 14-hour curriculum:
  - [https://www.oag.state.tx.us/cs/ofi/papa/sessions/](https://www.oag.state.tx.us/cs/ofi/papa/sessions/)

- Video segments accompany each session

- FREE and available online; updated regularly

- Linked to the TEKS (state curriculum standards)

- Final Evaluation Report:
Overview of Evaluation

- Four semesters: 2008 – 2010
- Sampled ~10,000 students from 50 randomly selected schools in TX
- Administered pre and post assessments on knowledge and attitudes
- Conducted focus groups with 75 students from 4 schools
- Complete data on 5,730 students from 47 schools
  - Dem. characteristics are similar to all Texas High School students
- Interviewed teachers and principals

% Correct

Score based on percent correct from 18 content based questions.

Pre  Post

69.6  77.9 *
Changes in Knowledge

- All students show significant gains in content knowledge from p.a.p.a.

- Teens more “at-risk” of early pregnancy have less knowledge prior to p.a.p.a. and gains in knowledge are fewer.

- Teen parents have less knowledge prior to p.a.p.a., but show larger gains.

- Gains in knowledge were smaller in second year of p.a.p.a., indicating need for continued education.
When an infant cries, it is important to:

- The average additional cost per month for one child in TX:

If parents separate, their children will benefit if they:

- Young children aren't impacted by their parents' fighting:

The average additional cost per month for one child in TX:
A key factor in having a healthy, long-lasting relationship is:

Warning signs of a potentially abusive relationship?

% Correct

Pre
Post

85.7
86.7

73.2
79.7
A benefit of establishing paternity; father's name on birth cert.  3 ways to establish paternity. Which is NOT a way?

Pre  Post

83.1  89.8

% Correct

58.9  72.5

*
Child Support Questions

% Correct

- NCPs do NOT have to pay c.s. if they do NOT get to see their child?
  - Pre: 80.6%
  - Post: 81.9%

- An NCP who does not pay c.s. can have his IRS refund or lottery $ withheld?
  - Pre: 80.3%
  - Post: 89.7%

- An NCP who does not pay c.s. can have his license suspended?
  - Pre: 67.4%
  - Post: 84.4%

- What % of net income is paid in c.s. for one child?
  - Pre: 43.1%
  - Post: 62.9%

Legend: Pre = Purple, Post = Blue
Parenting Responsibility Questions

**Parent with the legal primary care of child is?**
- Pre: 89.2%
- Post: 91.2%

**Both the CP and NCP are legally responsible for their child financially?**
- Pre: 87.3%
- Post: 88.1%

**At nonmarital birth, the bio dad has the same legal rights and responsibilities as the bio mom?**
- Pre: 25.9%
- Post: 53.1%
Summary of Knowledge Gains

Knowledge gains greatest in content areas unique to p.a.p.a.

- Legal rights and responsibilities of unmarried father (105%)
- Cost per month to raise a child (61.5%)
- Percentage of net income on child support (45.9%)
- Pathways to paternity establishment (23.1%)
Summary of Knowledge Gains

- Despite gains, knowledge remains low in key areas, indicating need for more information.
  - Legal rights and responsibilities of unmarried father (53.1%)
  - Cost per month to raise a child (27.3%)
  - Percentage of net income on child support (62.9%)
  - Pathways to paternity establishment (72.5%)
Summary of Attitudes

- Students' attitudes are more “pro social” in key areas unique to p.a.p.a.
  - More likely to think it is important to be married prior to having a child
  - More likely to think establishing paternity is important
  - More likely to think it is important to have both parents involved, even if not married
Summary of Behavior

- Students are less likely to want a child at an early age than marriage (21% decline).
- Students more aware of how their behaviors may lead to early parenting.
- Students do NOT get a strong message from their parents about delaying child bearing.
- Students do NOT talk about future plans or healthy choices with parents or in churches – they talk with their friends.
Purpose and Relevance of p.a.p.a.

Students claim the primary purpose is to teach young people about the consequences of early parenting and encourage students to wait until they are ready.

- A participant in Central Texas stated, “[p.a.p.a.] shows you the lifestyle of being a young parent, your responsibilities, [the] things you can’t do. You can’t play football, you can’t go out with your friends. You have to be with that child 24-7. So you have no life really.”

- Another student from Central Texas underscored her major take away from p.a.p.a., “They [the teen parents in the videos] did a great job! They made me change my mind [from] somebody who wanted to be young and pregnant ...to someone who thinks [that] I want to be able to provide for my baby.”
Realities of Early Parenting

**Time**

- A student from North Central Texas remarked, “If you don’t have a kid, you’re going to have more time to spend with your friends, you can study, you’re free.”

- One student from the Rio Grande Valley stated, “You don’t really have time for yourself anymore because you have someone else to take care of. So it’s not all about you anymore, it’s simply about the child.”
Realities of Early Parenting

**Sacrifice**

- A participant in Central Texas remarked, “I think about all the goals that I want to reach, having a kid now would just ruin everything.”

- A student from the Rio Grande Valley stated, “You lose a lot of opportunities for school, college, and experiencing new things because you have somebody else to take care of.”
Realities of Early Parenting

Cost

- Two students from the Panhandle relayed their thoughts, "[It’s] striking info about how much stuff costs and how hard it is for those people being interviewed to raise a child on their own."

- Another added, ‘Especially like child support and the health care. Kids are expensive and it’s hard to take care of them.”

- A third participant from the Panhandle elaborated, “I knew it was expensive, but when they started talking about child support… it is a lot. I knew you’d have to buy diapers and stuff, but then with the child support… a job, and be in school. It’s a lot to handle at this age.”
Realities of Early Parenting

“Makes You Think”

- A student in Central Texas provided a good summary of why p.a.p.a. was important, “I never thought of the pros and cons of what could have happened because I always wanted to have a child at a young age, cause I’d get to spend more time with my child, so that I can enjoy them more in my life. But after [p.a.p.a.] I’m waiting ‘til my 30’s. I never thought of all of those negative things. I just thought, get a job and support your baby, but now...you have to be emotionally ready.”

- Another participant in Central Texas delved further into the need to plan for a baby, “You have to be economically ready, mentally ready, [and] emotionally ready. [You have to] be ready to support [the] kid and know what you’re doing.”
Students learned that a baby is a tremendous stressor on a relationship.

A student from the Panhandle reflected, ‘Everyone thinks that when they get pregnant that their relationship is just going to stay together, that it will get better, but it won’t; it gets harder and they don’t usually stay together.”

One participant in Central Texas commented, ‘It gets frustrating, even when you’re boyfriend and girlfriend, when you argue and stuff, you’re going to argue even more when the baby is born.”
Effectiveness of p.a.p.a.

Students thought p.a.p.a. would influence their behavior, but were skeptical that it would change everyone.

- One student from the Rio Grande Valley commented about the effect the program had on him, “You’re going to think twice before you do something that you’re going to regret.”

- One student from the Panhandle asserted, “You can tell them and they can understand, but they’re going to do what they want.”

- “[The information] will be in the back of their heads; they’re still going to do it, but they will have it in the back of their heads.”
Retention of Knowledge

- Students did not retain all of the facts they had learned.

- But students remembered the feelings that p.a.p.a. spurred. It was still “with” them.

- Students would like more.
Lessons Learned from p.a.p.a.

- For broad support, focus on “why” not to have a baby before you’re ready
- Schools (administrators and teachers) desire a complement to existing efforts
- Mandatory in health curriculum insures it is not marginalized; schools need help to align curriculum
- Training is key: free, in-house, knowledgeable trainers
- Beginning early and offering often may improve results