

Program Highlights

Broward County, Florida

HIV/AIDS Advisory Committee Helps Enhance District's HIV Prevention Efforts

In fall 2006, Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) established an HIV/AIDS Advisory Committee to provide recommendations on how to enhance the district's HIV prevention efforts. Membership on the committee includes representatives from the health department, school district, numerous community-based organizations, parents, teachers, and students. One of the Advisory Committee's first tasks was to conduct an informal assessment of community and school-based HIV prevention services for youth to begin to identify assets, needs, and areas for improvement. Through the assessment, the Advisory Committee learned there were few HIV prevention programs for youth at times when school is not in session.

To begin to address this need, BCPS partnered with members of the Advisory Committee to develop and implement a 6-week HIV, STD, and teen pregnancy prevention program, Promoting Healthy Development (PhD), for middle school students. A science-based curriculum, consisting of ten, 45- to 60-minute lessons, was designed to provide essential HIV prevention information and resistance skills through information sharing, role-playing, and group exercises. Using CDC funds, BCPS provided financial support to four community-based organizations to implement the PhD program in out-of-school settings in areas of the county disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS. The program was piloted during the summer of 2007 and reached 350 youth aged 12–15 years. Of the youth reached, 80% were African American, 14% were Hispanic, and 6% were white. Fifty-eight volunteered to be tested for HIV; 90% demonstrated an increase in knowledge of HIV prevention; and 70% were able to demonstrate negotiation, decision-making, and refusal skills. BCPS, in collaboration with the HIV/AIDS Advisory Committee, will continue to expand the reach of the PhD program.