

# TEEN DATING VIOLENCE

Three-Year Evaluation of PIAL's Teen Dating Violence Awareness Program

## Project Overview

### Research Questions:

- How does experiencing PIAL's TDVA program change teens' understanding of teen dating violence?
- What are teens' sources of information?
- What next steps will teens make after the TDVS?

In response to the largely unseen issue of teen dating violence affecting Iowa youth, the *Parenting: It's a Life* (PIAL) project, housed within the Child Welfare Research and Training Project of Iowa State University, has implemented the *In Their Shoes* Teen Dating Violence Simulation (TDVS) as a major component of their Teen Dating Violence Awareness (TDVA) program. The TDVS is designed to create awareness surrounding teen dating violence. PIAL delivers modules to youth in schools across Iowa and covers topics such as decisions and goals, peer pressure, and healthy relationships. Currently, the TDVS is a supplement to the module on healthy relationships and is an important addition to PIAL's TDVA. This report describes students' responses\* to PIAL's TDVA program, as well as their knowledge prior to and after implementation of the TDVS on various topics surrounding teen dating violence. This research aims to evaluate the value and success of PIAL's TDVA program.

## Project Results

**Q: How does experiencing PIAL's TDVA program change teens' understanding of teen dating violence?**

The *In Their Shoes* TDVS is an effective tool for increasing students' awareness of teen dating violence, how to recognize unhealthy relationship patterns, and how to avoid unhealthy relationships for oneself or for a friend. Significant findings ( $p < .05$ ) are illustrated in **Figures 1, 2, and 3**.

*"After walking through today's simulation about teen dating violence, I will be more cautious about who I choose to be in a relationship with."*

\*In 2018-2019, students filled surveys about their knowledge and abilities on a 1-3 point Likert scale. In 2020, these surveys were modified to a 1-4 point Likert scale.

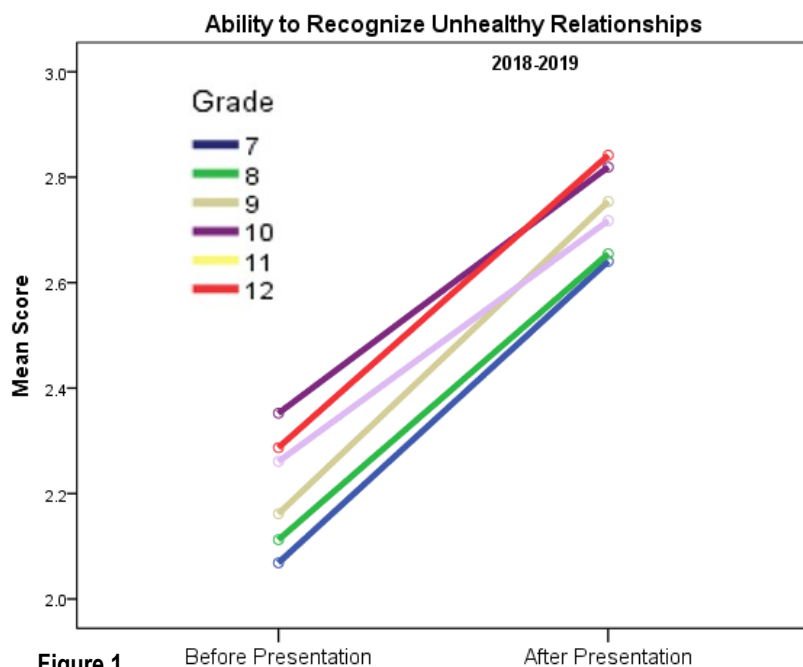
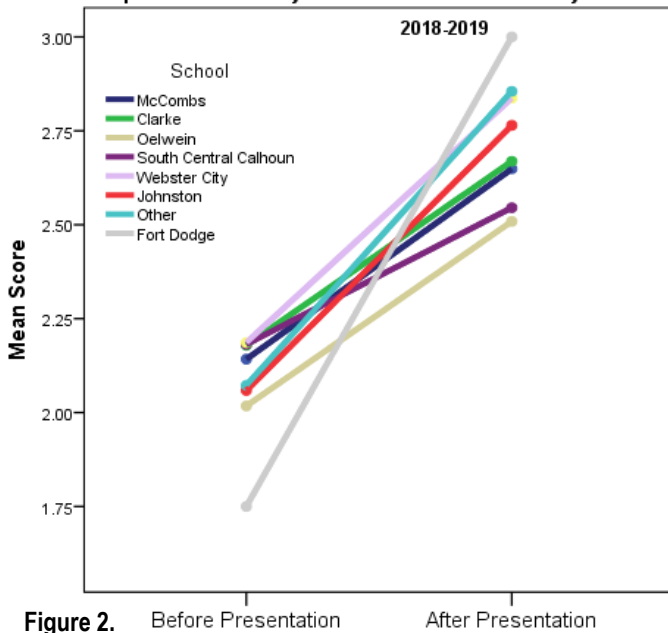


Figure 1. Before Presentation After Presentation

**Knew Steps to Remove Myself/ Friend from Unhealthy Relationships**



**Figure 2.** Before Presentation After Presentation

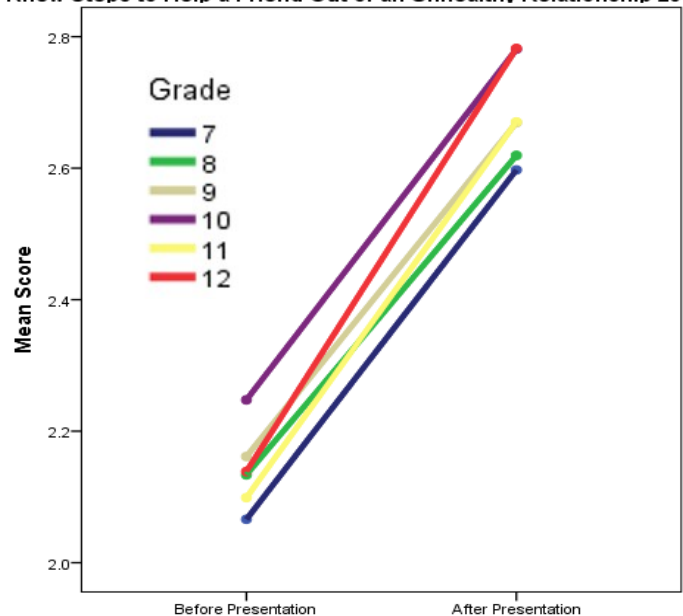
**Q: Where do teens learn about teen dating violence?**

Youth reported learning from parents/ caretakers, teachers, friends, the internet, and “other” sources. Youth learned most from parents/caretakers (mean = 2.62) and the least from other classes (mean = 1.80).

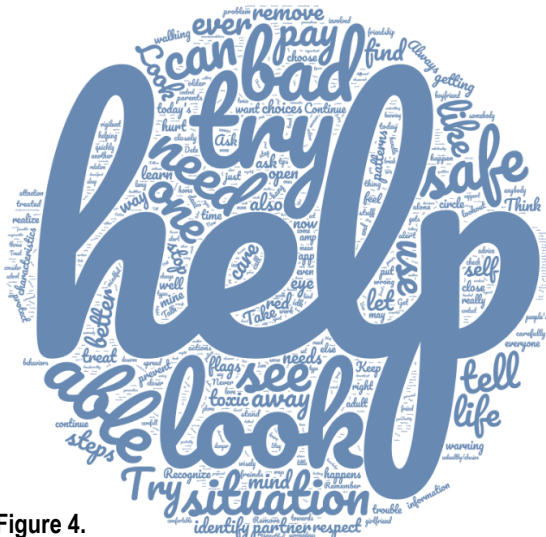
**Q: What next steps will teens make after the TDVS?**

When youth were asked how they will move forward after learning about teen dating violence, themes emerged surrounding helping oneself and others, avoiding unhealthy relationships, being careful, and treating partners well. The most common words are illustrated in **Figure 4**.

**Knew Steps to Help a Friend Out of an Unhealthy Relationship 2018-2019**



**Figure 3.**



**Figure 4.**

**Summary and Recommendation**

Based on these results, the PIAL TDVA increased youths’ awareness about topics surrounding teen dating violence. Using the students’ responses and feedback as a guide, future goals for PIAL include incorporating the practical steps students reported into the curriculum, as well as focusing efforts on youth who may be at higher risk of teen dating violence.