

A preventive intervention program for urban African American youth attending an alternative education program: Background, implementation, and feasibility

This paper presents background, implementation, and feasibility findings associated with planning and conducting an after-school intervention program in an alternative education setting designed to prevent the initiation and escalation of violence and substance abuse among urban African American youth at high risk for life-long problem behaviors. Evolving from earlier preventive interventions implemented in clinic and school settings, the program, entitled *The Village Model of Care*, consisted of structured group mentoring, parental support, and community outreach services administered to alternative education students and their primary caregiver(s) during the school year. Over a two-year intake period, 109 youth participated in the present process evaluation study. Findings from the study not only provided relevant demographic information on the characteristics of youth likely to be included in such programs but also indicated the importance of including the family in the rehabilitation effort and the need for school administrative system support for the underlying alternative education approach. The information presented in this report has a direct bearing on the planning of future prevention efforts conducted in similar settings that are aimed at reducing problem behaviors and promoting positive lifestyles among high-risk youth.

Key Words:

African American Youth, Alternative Education, Preventive Intervention, After-School Program