



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

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Agenda Item Number: 4

Agenda Date: March 8, 2022

In Control: Community Health, Environment and Culture Committee

DEPARTMENT: Health Department

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Claude Jacob

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

A briefing on the possibility of requiring that schools and universities which receive city funding ensure instruction on family violence, child abuse, and human trafficking.

SUMMARY:

Metro Health would like to provide a response to the Council Consideration Request filed by councilmember Manny Pelaez on October 7, 2021 giving direction to City staff to draft an ordinance requiring that schools and universities which receive city funding ensure instruction on family violence, child abuse, and human trafficking.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), one in three teens in the United States will experience physical, sexual, or emotional abuse from someone they are in a relationship with before they become adults, and nearly half (43%) of college women report

experiencing violent or abusive dating violence. This is one of the reasons that education on this subject in our schools is so important. Teaching teens and young adults about warning signs of an abusive relationship could help them identify and avoid future violence. Because teens often don't report unhealthy behaviors to family or friends, it is essential that we talk about it to ensure that young people recognize the red flags of domestic violence, teen dating violence and human trafficking. Teaching young people about resources and what to watch out for is key. Young people who have participated in prevention education classes are less likely to report experiencing physical relationship abuse. When it comes to domestic violence, there is often a cyclical affect. Some young people who are victims of violence will go on to abuse or neglect their own children or be victims of abuse themselves. These repeated situations of abuse later in life often create unsafe and unhealthy conditions for children and subsequently, create a pattern of violence that goes on for generations.

The proposed CCR would require that schools, colleges, and universities provide age-appropriate and accurate instruction on the topics of child abuse, family violence, dating violence, sex trafficking, and the warning signs that a person may be at risk for sex trafficking, violence, or abuse. Domestic violence, child abuse, and human trafficking are significant issues in San Antonio and efforts to increase awareness and response are ongoing. In the Summer of 2019, the City of San Antonio developed a five-year comprehensive domestic violence prevention plan. As a part of that plan, the Collaborative Commission on Domestic Violence (CCDV) was created. The CCDV is currently co-chaired by Judge Monique Diaz and Deputy City Manager Maria Villagómez. Several of the strategies recommended in the plan directly support the recommendation of the CCR, including:

1. Promoting the adoption and implementation of comprehensive, evidence-based parenting education programs to reduce the incidence of child abuse, including the Triple P Parenting Program.
2. Expanding school-based prevention and engagement of service providers to reduce violence through the implementation of evidence-based violence prevention programming and structured partnerships between schools and community service providers.

Evidence based community education programs that provide measurable behavior change are typically not one-time workshops, but generally structured curriculum requiring significant investment in both instructor training and resources. The CDC has identified the characteristics of an effective health education curriculum which include:

- A focus on clear health goals and related behavioral outcomes.
- Is research-based and theory-driven.
- Addresses individual values, attitudes, and beliefs.
- Addresses individual and group norms that support health-enhancing behaviors.
- Focuses on reinforcing protective factors and increasing perceptions of personal risk and harmfulness of engaging in specific unhealthy practices and behaviors.
- Addresses social pressures and influences.
- Builds personal competence, social competence, and self-efficacy by addressing skills
- Provides functional health knowledge that is basic, accurate, and directly contributes to health-promoting decisions and behaviors.
- Uses strategies designed to personalize information and engage students.
- Provides age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate information, learning strategies, teaching methods, and materials.

- · Incorporates learning strategies, teaching methods, and materials that are culturally inclusive.
- · Provides adequate time for instruction and learning.
- · Provides opportunities to reinforce skills and positive health behaviors.
- · Provides opportunities to make positive connections with influential others.
- · Includes teacher information and plans for professional development and training that enhance effectiveness of instruction and student learning.

There are several evidence-based curricula for K-12 and college students, but all curricula share the features of multiple sessions by training facilitators. Quality, behavior change curriculum require significant investment to execute with fidelity.

ISSUE:

School based programming requires adoption and acceptance by each district's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC). Requirements for schools should be developed in close coordination with the Texas Education Association (TEA) and leadership of local Independent School Districts to ensure that any requirements are coherent and congruent with requirements for Texas schools. Additionally, support for training, materials, substitute teachers while staff is trained, is required to implement high quality, evidence-based programming that can change outcomes in the community.

The CCDV Education Committee and Nonprofit Committee have identified ensuring that evidence-based teen dating violence prevention curriculum are used in schools as their Year Three Strategy. In addition, Metro Health works with community partners to offer the full range of Triple P classes for free to the community, including schools and universities. Triple P's approach ties directly to Metro Health's goals of applying a public health lens to violence prevention by reducing and helping to break cycles of violence on a population level.

FISCAL IMPACT:

None

ALTERNATIVES:

None are recommended at this time.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that Metro Health assess the types of domestic violence, child abuse and human trafficking education independent school districts, and colleges and universities in San Antonio are currently providing and report findings back to the CHECC. In parallel, staff recommends meeting with stakeholders as well as researching the feasibility of implementing this ordinance.

