

Implementation and Impact of the Project WITH Curriculum in Juvenile Justice Facilities and Group Homes

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Implementation Findings	1
Impact Findings	1
Introduction	2
Development of Project WITH	2
Overview of the Curriculum	3
Literature Review	5
Findings	7
Implementation of Project WITH	7
Completion of the Lessons	7
Engagement With the Curriculum’s Activities	8
Implementation of Project WITH	9
Youth’s Perceptions of the Impact of Project WITH	10
Impact on Goal Setting	10
Impact on Healthy Relationships	11
Impact on Self-Regulation and Decision-Making	12
Impact on Intentions Related to Sexual Intercourse	13
Impact on the “Success Sequence”	14
Conclusions and Recommendations	16
Program Retention	16
Effective Program Implementation	17
Incentives for Participation	17
Refinements to the Curriculum	17
Additional Research	17

References	19
Appendix A. Methodology	22
Study Design	22
Description of the Surveys	22
Survey Administration	23
Description of the Lesson Completion and Fidelity Log Data	24
Analysis Plan	24
Study Participants	24
Appendix B. Data Tables	26

Executive Summary

Project WITH is an innovative, literary-based curriculum designed for justice-involved youth. The curriculum has 12 lessons in which youth read a literary selection, such as a short story or poem; discuss the literary work with their peers and a facilitator; and participate in an activity aligned with the lesson's main idea. Project WITH can be best characterized as a curriculum designed to strengthen relationship skills and self-management skills. By helping justice-involved youth develop a plan for their future, the curriculum aims to reduce their participation in a range of harmful behaviors, including risky sexual behaviors.



This evaluation was funded by a Sexual Risk Avoidance Education (SRAE) grant and examined the implementation of Project WITH and the perceived impact of the curriculum in a sample of justice-involved youth residing in juvenile justice facilities and group homes in California. The evaluation's key implementation and impact findings are summarized below.

Implementation Findings

- Project WITH participants who remained at their site for the duration of the lessons completed an average of 11.0 out of 12 total lessons.
- The youth listened during 83 percent of the Project WITH activities and interacted with one another and the facilitator during 76 percent of the activities.
- Three fourths of the youth reported that they were interested in the program sessions "all of the time" or "most of the time."

Impact Findings

- Eighty-one percent of youth reported that Project WITH made them "much more likely" or "somewhat more likely" to make plans to reach their goals.
- Seventy-seven percent of youth reported that Project WITH made them "much more likely" or "somewhat more likely" to better understand what makes a relationship healthy.
- Sixty-six percent of youth reported that Project WITH made them "much more likely" or "somewhat more likely" to think about the consequences before making a decision.

Introduction

Project WITH was developed to provide a sexual health curriculum that would meaningfully engage justice-involved youth. The need for such a curriculum was clear because justice-involved youth experience a range of sexual health disparities, such as higher rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs; Barnert et al., 2020) and teen pregnancy (Sedlak & Bruce, 2010) than the U.S. population as a whole. Additionally, only a small number of the existing sexual health programs were designed specifically for justice-involved youth.

WestEd was chosen to evaluate the implementation and impact of Project WITH. WestEd's study was funded by a Sexual Risk Avoidance Education (SRAE) grant awarded to [TELACU](#) that provided funding to implement Project WITH in juvenile justice facilities and group homes in California.

This study addressed the following two research questions:

- Was Project WITH implemented in a way that is consistent with how the curriculum was designed and planned (i.e., with fidelity)?
- What are youth's perceptions of the impact of Project WITH?

Development of Project WITH

Project WITH was adapted from a relationship skills curriculum named The Art of Loving Well (McLaren, 1995) as part of a prior Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) grant. The Art of Loving Well teaches youth about a range of relationships, including friendships, family, and marriages, by reading and discussing short stories, poems, and essays. The curriculum leads youth to connect the ideas in the literary works to their own choices in real life to support them in developing the values and attitudes needed to engage in healthy relationships and responsible sexual behaviors. An evaluation of the Art of Loving Well found that, at the end of the program, participants reported greater intentions to abstain from sex and engage in discussion about the risks of pregnancy than youth in a comparison group (Kreitzer, 1992).



The Project WITH developers made changes to The Art of Loving Well to ensure the curriculum would appeal to justice-involved youth. For instance, they shortened many of the reading passages so they would be appropriate for youth with a range of reading abilities. Project WITH developers also included additional literary works, videos, and activities in the curriculum that would be of interest to justice-involved youth.

Discussing fictional characters instead of their own personal experiences provides justice-involved youth a sense of safety that supports their full participation in conversations. This approach aligns with trauma-informed practices that avoid necessitating the disclosure of personal trauma (Record-Lemon & Buchanan, 2017). Although the ultimate goal of Project WITH is to improve youth's sexual health outcomes, the curriculum focuses on relationship skills and self-management and can also be characterized as a social and emotional learning program (Jones & Doolittle, 2017).

Overview of the Curriculum

Project WITH has 12 lessons that are designed to be delivered in a 6-week, twice-weekly format by a facilitator with lived experience that is consistent with the experiences of justice-involved youth. Each lesson is designed to last approximately 1 hour and entails youth reading a literary selection, discussing the literary work, and participating in an activity aligned with the lesson's main idea. The content includes poetry, short stories, and excerpts from films and other videos. All participating youth receive a Project WITH journal that contains the curriculum's literary works and activities. In ideal program delivery, a group of 5 to 10 youth participate and share a meal with the facilitator between two lessons. The meals are intended to allow the facilitators to help build relationships and trust with the youth.



Each Project WITH lesson includes a “Big Idea” that relates to relationship skills or self-management. For instance, Lesson 1 is titled “Two Wolves,” and the big idea is “love and relationships are a journey.” In the lesson's short story, a grandfather describes the battle that occurs inside of everyone between a “good” wolf and an “evil” wolf. One of the goals of the lesson is to get youth to understand that they will be able to make changes in their lives if they take the time and effort to learn how to love well. Examples of lessons that

focus on self-management include “Lesson 2: Maturity Starts with Knowing Who You Are” and “Lesson 8: Waiting and Self-Control Can Lead to Committed, Mature Relationships.”

The literary works included in Project WITH are diverse, including Maya Angelou’s poem “Alone” and a story from the Wintu Tribe of Northern California about how female eagles choose their mates. The activities are varied and include sequencing the steps of a healthy relationship, identifying nonnegotiable traits in a future partner, completing a budgeting exercise related to parenting, and brainstorming strategies to overcome obstacles in life. Additional information about the curriculum and a copy of the Project WITH journal can be found on the Project WITH website.

Literature Review

The majority of sexual health programs designed for adolescents focus on providing information to youth about birth control methods, STIs, and pregnancy (e.g., Covington et al., 2016); making contraceptive services available (e.g., Rotz et al., 2016); and promoting abstinence and contraceptive use (e.g., Manlove et al., 2015). However, there are other sexual health programs (e.g., the Love Notes program; Barbee et al., 2023) that include information about healthy relationships and life planning as part of a broader curriculum.

A rigorous quasi-experimental evaluation found that Project WITH had a positive and statistically significant impact on the planfulness of justice-involved youth (Nakamoto et al., 2024).

In general, prior research has shown that programs focused on relationship skills can lead to improvements in adolescents' conflict management skills and decreases in faulty beliefs about relationships (McElwain et al., 2017). To date, there has been one rigorous study of the Project WITH curriculum that was funded by a Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) grant (Nakamoto et al., 2024). The study used a rigorous quasi-experimental design with a comparison group of justice-involved youth who did not participate in Project WITH programming. The impact analysis showed that Project WITH had a positive and statistically significant impact (effect size = 0.32; $p < .05$) on the planfulness of justice-involved youth. Examples of the survey items used to measure planfulness are "I have a plan for my future" and "I like to concentrate on one thing at a time." The study's findings also showed that, consistent with the focus of the program, the youth participating in Project WITH reported that they more frequently attended classes in which healthy relationships (effect size = 0.40; $p < .05$), plan for the future (effect size = 0.32; $p < .05$), and risky sexual behavior (effect size = 0.29; $p = .09$) were discussed.

There are multiple logistical and accessibility issues that make it difficult to conduct research with justice-involved youth (Wendt et al., 2021). Not surprisingly, only a relatively small number of existing sexual health programs have been tested with justice-involved youth. One exception is a study that investigated two evidence-based sexual health programs (i.e., *Making Proud*

Choices! and *Be Proud! Be Responsible!*) that found that these programs increased sexual health knowledge and led to more positive attitudes toward using birth control and condoms (Combs et al., 2019). Another study with justice-involved youth found that a sexual health program called Healthy U resulted in youth having more positive attitudes toward condom use and increased intentions to use condoms and birth control (Wendt et al., 2022).

Programming that incorporates sex education into a broader curriculum focused on life planning and healthy relationships can lead to improved sexual health outcomes. One randomized controlled trial that evaluated a program called Love Notes found that program participants reported fewer pregnancies than a control group at a 1-year follow-up. This outcome is consistent with Love Note's theory of change, which aims to get youth to think about how their relationships fit into their life goals and understand that they are more likely to achieve their goals if they avoid risky sexual behaviors (Barbee et al., 2023).

Findings

This study relied on surveys administered to justice-involved youth who resided in juvenile justice facilities and group homes in California and participated in Project WITH. In addition, we used lesson completion records and data from fidelity logs completed by the Project WITH facilitators. The analyses, which were primarily descriptive, involved examining the implementation and perceived impact of Project WITH. (See Appendix A for full details on the study's methodology.)

Overall, the study found the following:

- Project WITH was implemented with fidelity at juvenile justice facilities and group homes serving justice-involved youth when the youth remained at their site for the duration of the Project WITH lessons.
- The youth who remained at their sites generally completed all or nearly all of the lessons.
- The vast majority of the Project WITH lesson activities were completed and the youth were engaged with the curriculum.
- The youth had positive perceptions of the impact of Project WITH, particularly in the areas of goal setting, healthy relationships, self-regulation, and decision-making.

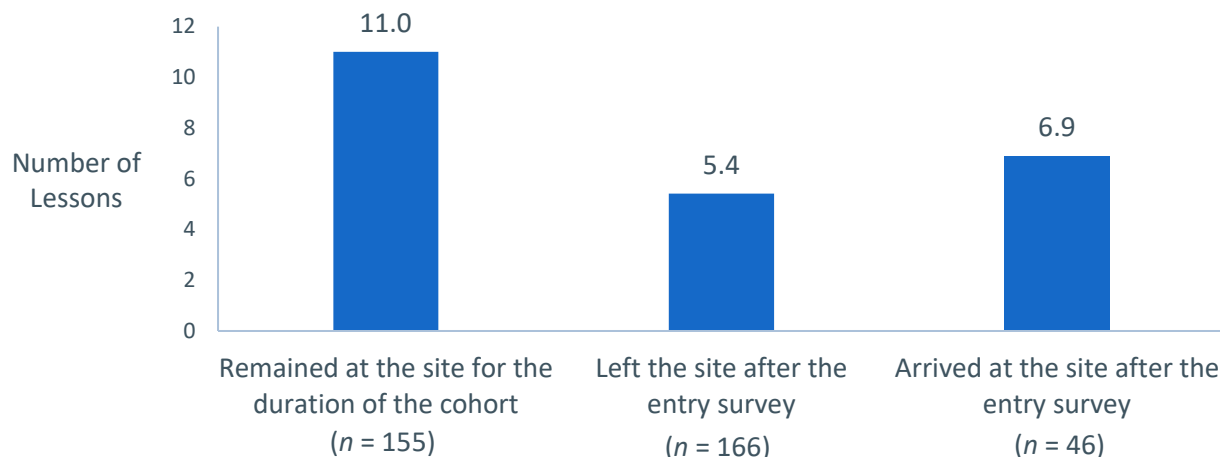
Implementation of Project WITH

Completion of the Lessons

Project WITH facilitators succeeded in having the majority of the participants (76%) complete 11 or 12 of the curriculum's 12 lessons when the youth remained at their juvenile justice facility or group home for the duration of the lessons. However, when the youth left their site or arrived at their site after the start of the lessons, they completed substantially fewer lessons. As shown in Figure 1, **the average Project WITH participant who remained at their site for the duration of the lessons completed 11.0 lessons.** In contrast, participants who took only the entry survey (and left their site before the end of the lessons) completed 5.4 lessons.

Additionally, participants who arrived at their site after the entry survey (i.e., after the start of the lessons) completed 6.9 lessons.

Figure 1. Average Number of Project WITH Lessons Completed by Study Participants



Note. Data represented in this figure are displayed in [Table B1 in Appendix B](#).

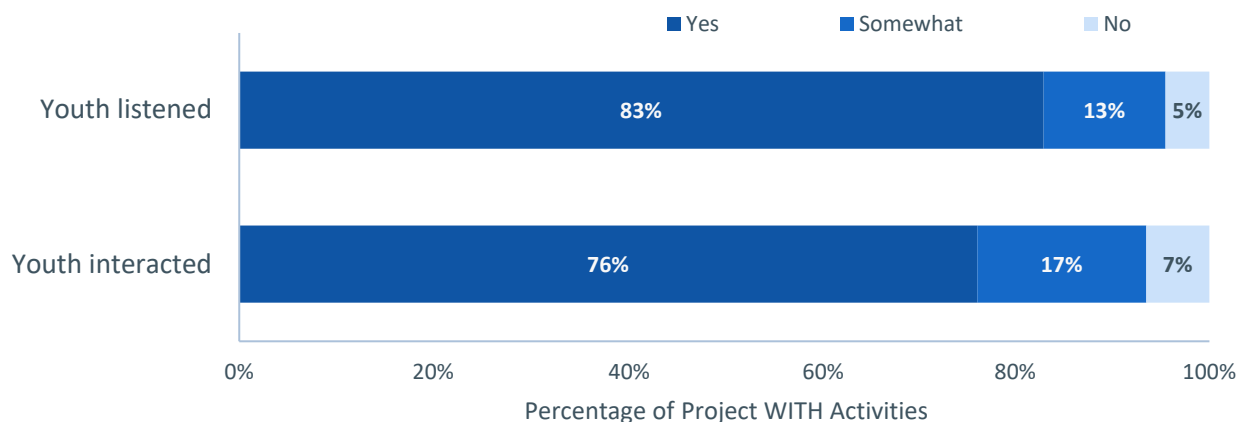
Engagement With the Curriculum's Activities

Overall, the data from the fidelity logs completed by the Project WITH facilitators showed that the curriculum was implemented with a high degree of fidelity to the program model. On average, 7.5 youth (range = 2 to 17) participated in each Project WITH lesson. The fidelity log data showed that **89 percent of the Project WITH activities were completed**. Lesson 9 (i.e., Ben's/Judy's Story) had the lowest rate of activity completion (81 percent), which is not surprising given that it is the longest lesson. After the completion of the SRAE grant, Project WITH developers substantially shortened Lesson 9 with the hope that facilitators will be able to complete more of the activities in the future.

As shown in Figure 2, the participating youth listened during **83 percent of the Project WITH activities and interacted with one another and the facilitator during 76 percent of the activities**. The facilitators reported that youth did not listen and interact only in 5 to 7 percent of the activities. A facilitator who implemented the program at one of the juvenile justice facilities reported on the fidelity log that the **probation staff said that the Project WITH facilitators were the only individuals who had been able to get the youth to sit together and participate in a program for over an hour**. Other facilitators reported that the youth were actively engaged in discussion during the lessons and were very supportive of one another during the lessons. The youth shared personal stories, fears, and reflections. When youth were not engaged in the lessons, the facilitators indicated that the youth were not in a good mood

when they arrived at the site because they had been participating in other programming that afternoon or the youth were causing distractions with side conversations and bathroom breaks.

Figure 2. Study Participants' Engagement in the Project WITH Activities



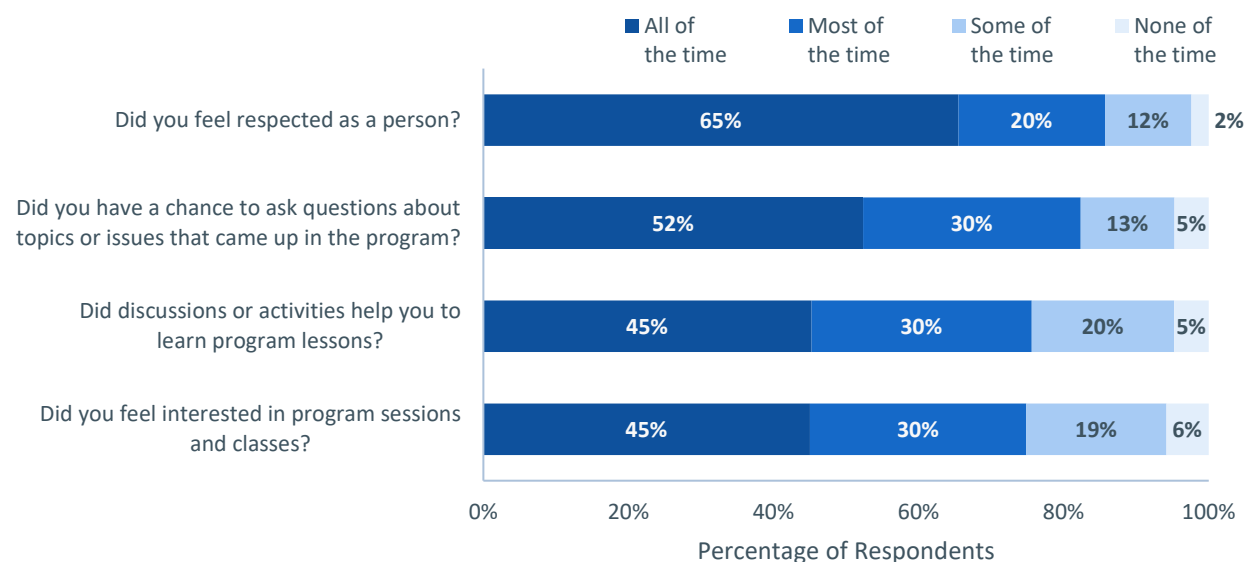
Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Data represented in this figure are displayed in [Table B2 in Appendix B](#).

Implementation of Project WITH

The facilitators reported that 92 percent of the Project WITH lessons did not have any technical issues. Examples of these technical issues included not being able to connect with the TV screen and needing a new charger for a tablet. One area of relative weakness from the fidelity log data was that the probation and group home staff were supportive of the Project WITH activities during only 72 percent of the lessons. The facilitators had a much easier time implementing the curriculum and guiding the discussions when the staff encouraged the youth to participate in the lessons, minimized distractions, and helped maintain order at the sites.

As shown in Figure 3, the participating youth had positive perceptions of the implementation of Project WITH. For example, **85 percent of the youth felt respected as a person “all of the time” or “most of the time” during the program.** The theme of respect came up frequently in the facilitators' comments on the fidelity logs. The facilitators noted when the youth listened respectfully, when they had to remind youth to be respectful, and when they became more respectful over time. **Furthermore, 75 percent of the youth reported they were interested in the program sessions “all of the time” or “most of the time.”**

Figure 3. Youth’s Perceptions of Project WITH Implementation



Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Data represented in this figure are displayed in [Table B3 in Appendix B](#).

Youth’s Perceptions of the Impact of Project WITH

Impact on Goal Setting

The participating youth reported most positively on Project WITH’s impact on their goal setting. Figure 4 shows that **81 percent of Project WITH participants reported that the curriculum made them “much more likely” or “somewhat more likely” to make plans to reach their goals.** Additionally, 75 percent of the youth reported that the curriculum made them “much more likely” or “somewhat more likely” to care about doing well in school.

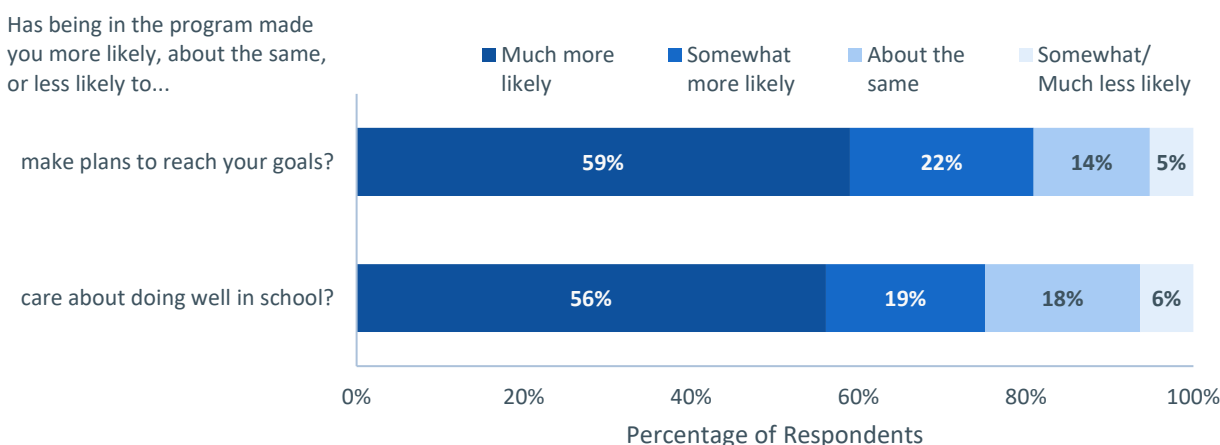
Lesson 11

 **Journal Reflection:**

List one thing/action you want to take before the end of the week that will move you closer to strengthening a relationship you have.

List the name of 1 person that you will share this goal with.

Figure 4. Youth’s Perceptions of the Impact of Project WITH on Goal Setting

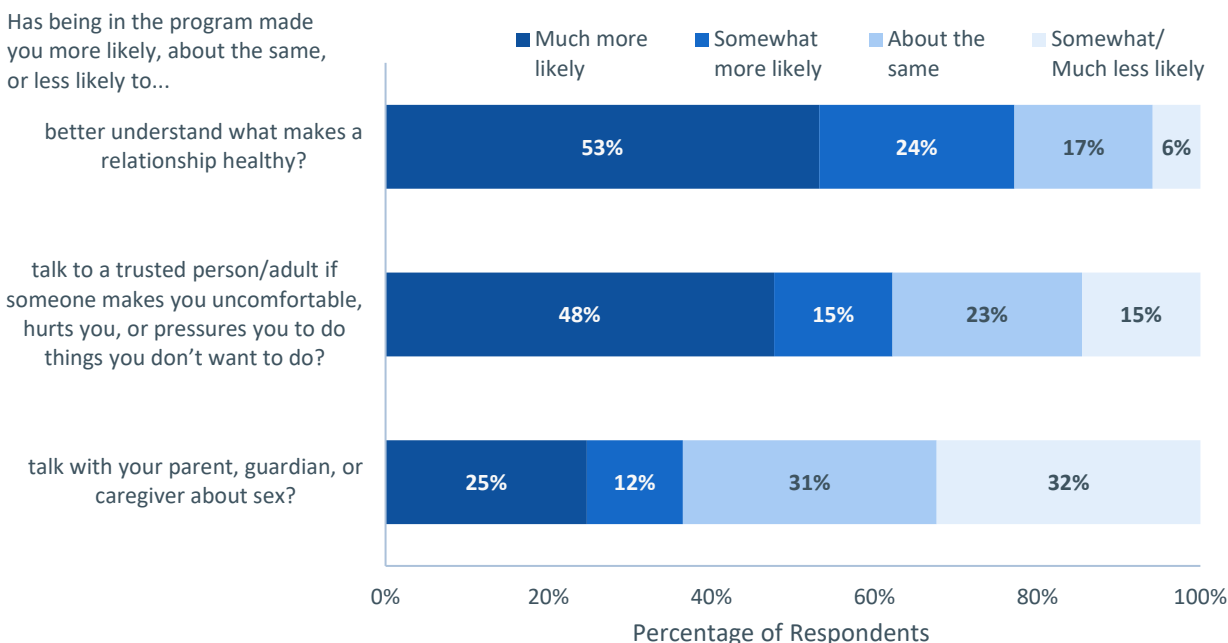


Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Data represented in this figure are displayed in [Table B4 in Appendix B](#).

Impact on Healthy Relationships

The youth reported that their participation in the Project WITH curriculum also had a positive impact on their understanding and engagement in healthy relationships (see Figure 5). Specifically, **77 percent of the Project WITH participants reported that the curriculum made them “much more likely” or “somewhat more likely” to better understand what makes a relationship healthy.** Multiple Project WITH lessons focus on the idea that healthy relationships are based on care, respect, and responsibility. Additionally, 63 percent of the youth reported that the Project WITH curriculum made them “much more likely” or “somewhat more likely” to talk to a trusted adult if someone made them uncomfortable or hurt them. In contrast, only 37 percent of the youth reported that the curriculum made them “much more likely” or “somewhat more likely” to talk with their parent, guardian, or caregiver about sex. This finding is not surprising given that Project WITH focuses less on sex than on healthy relationships. However, it also underscores the limited involvement that many justice-involved youth have with their parents, which is a particular challenge encountered by this population (Burke et al., 2014). It also highlights the important role that Project WITH facilitators can fill in the lives of the justice-involved youth they work with.

Figure 5. Youth’s Perceptions of the Impact of Project WITH on Healthy Relationships

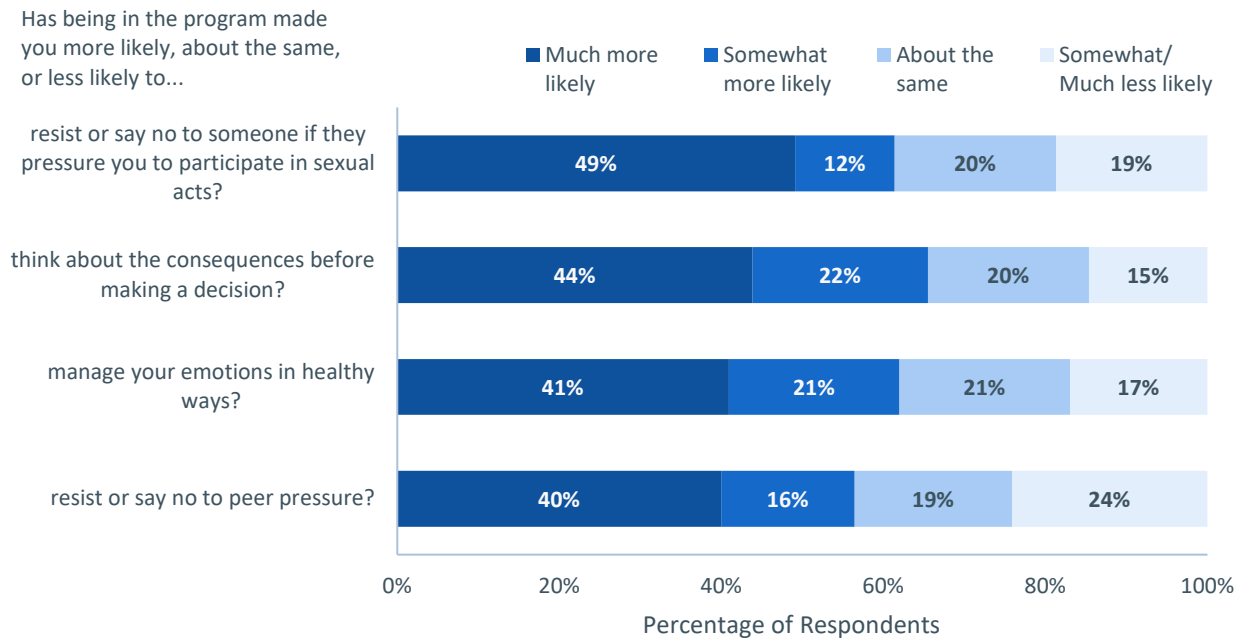


Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Data represented in this figure are displayed in [Table B5 in Appendix B](#).

Impact on Self-Regulation and Decision-Making

The youth indicated that their participation in the Project WITH curriculum had a positive impact on their self-regulation and decision-making skills (see Figure 6). For example, **66 percent of the youth reported that they were “much more likely” or “somewhat more likely” to think about the consequences before making a decision as a result of participating in Project WITH.** Decision-making is a key part of the Project WITH curriculum. Lesson 9 has youth list decisions that they could make to remove obstacles in their lives, and Lesson 12 has youth work through relationship decision scenarios. Furthermore, 62 percent of youth reported that the Project WITH curriculum made them “much more likely” or “somewhat more likely” to manage their emotions in healthy ways. Lesson 6 has youth discuss the relationship between a father and his children depicted in a poem. The lesson has the facilitator convey the point to the participants that emotions in their lives are complex just like in the poem.

Figure 6. Youth's Perceptions of the Impact of Project WITH on Self-Regulation and Decision-Making

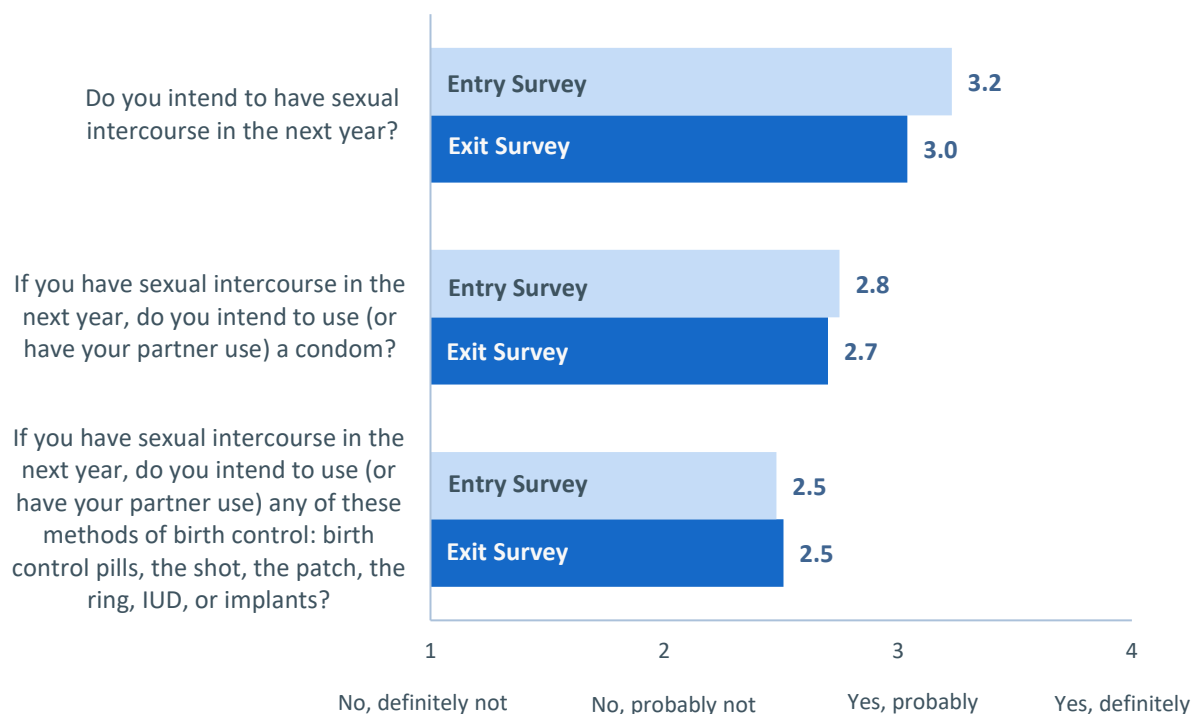


Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Data represented in this figure are displayed in [Table B6 in Appendix B](#).

Impact on Intentions Related to Sexual Intercourse

Project WITH participants showed declines between the entry and exit surveys regarding their intention to engage in sexual intercourse (see Figure 7). The participating youth declined from an average of 3.2 at the entry survey to 3.0 at the exit survey on the 1 (*no, definitely not*) to 4 (*yes, definitely*) scale. This difference was marginally significant ($p = .08$) and was equivalent to an effect size of -0.16, which is considered a small impact (Hill et al., 2008). This finding is particularly noteworthy given that Project WITH does not focus directly on this issue, which suggests that the curriculum may be positively impacting longer term sexual health outcomes. According to Project WITH developers, the activities in Project WITH frequently lead to discussions about the ramifications of having sexual intercourse. However, prompts for these types of discussions are not currently in the curriculum manual and it is up to the facilitators to bring these up. The participating youth showed essentially no changes between the entry and exit surveys in their intentions to use condoms ($p = .68$) and other forms of birth control ($p = .72$). These findings suggest that Project WITH did not have an impact on these two outcomes.

Figure 7. Changes in Youth’s Intentions Related to Sexual Intercourse Between the Entry and Exit Surveys

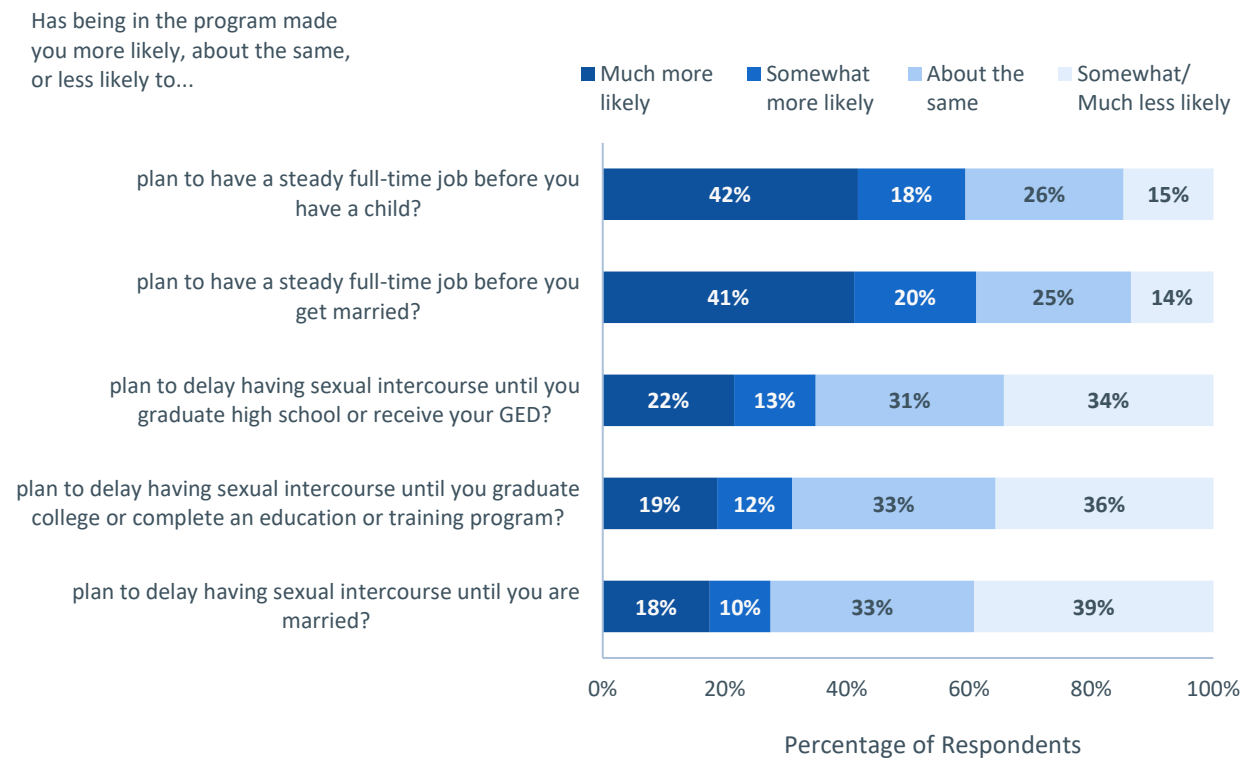


Note. Data represented in this figure are displayed in [Table B7 in Appendix B](#).

Impact on the “Success Sequence”

There was a mixed pattern of findings regarding the youth’s perceptions of the impact of the Project WITH curriculum on aspects of the *success sequence*, a set of life milestones that are linked to escaping poverty and becoming part of the middle class. As shown in Figure 8, **60–61 percent of youth reported that they were “much more likely” or “somewhat more likely” to plan to have a steady full-time job before they have a child or get married as a result of participating in Project WITH.** Lesson 7 has an activity in which youth determine the order of various steps in a relationship, such as meeting the family, moving in together, and pregnancy. Conversely, only 28–35 percent of the youth reported that they were “much more likely” or “somewhat more likely” to plan to delay having sexual intercourse until they complete various milestones (e.g., graduate college) as a result of participating in Project WITH. This finding is consistent with the fact that Project WITH does not directly focus on parts of the success sequence that advocate for delaying sexual intercourse until other life milestones are met.

Figure 8. Youth's Perceptions of the Impact of Project WITH on the Success Sequence



Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. Data represented in this figure are displayed in [Table B8 in Appendix B](#).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The current study adds to the growing evidence base on the Project WITH curriculum. The study found that Project WITH was implemented with fidelity in a sample of justice-involved youth living in juvenile justice facilities and group homes in California. Furthermore, the youth who participated in the program reported that it positively impacted them in the areas of goal setting, healthy relationships, self-regulation, and decision-making. A prior quasi-experimental evaluation of Project WITH that employed a comparison group of nonparticipating justice-involved youth showed that the curriculum had a positive and statistically significant impact on the planfulness of the participating youth (Nakamoto et al., 2024). Thus, two studies with separate samples of justice-involved youth have shown that Project WITH can be implemented with fidelity and can positively impact the participating youth.

Program Retention

An important limitation of the current study was that 52 percent of the youth who started the Project WITH lessons left their juvenile justice facility or group home before they could complete the lessons. According to the staff at these sites, this turnover rate is common over a 5-to-10-week period and did not relate to the youth's participation in the Project WITH study. Project WITH was not implemented with fidelity with the youth who left the sites, and they completed an average of only 5.4 lessons. To address this limitation moving forward, at the start of each cohort, Project WITH could attempt to screen out youth who have a high likelihood of leaving their site over the next 2 months. Although this could increase the fidelity with which the curriculum can be implemented with all participating youth, it would lead to logistical challenges in monitoring youth, especially at the juvenile justice facilities where nonparticipating youth in a unit would need to be monitored separately during the lessons. Screening youth would also be contrary to Project WITH's goal of being inclusive and would not likely be worth the goal of implementing the curriculum with fidelity with all the participating youth.

Effective Program Implementation

An earlier study on Project WITH (Wendt et al., 2021) identified a number of important lessons learned regarding how to implement programs like Project WITH in juvenile justice settings. This earlier study was based on interviews with the lead developer, facilitators, and probation staff at a facility where Project WITH was implemented. It highlighted the importance of using relatable facilitators, allowing for flexibility in the delivery of the curriculum, leveraging relationships with juvenile justice advocates, and gathering buy-in from a range of interest holders. With these lessons learned in mind, Project WITH has continued to be implemented successfully and shown positive outcomes for the participating youth.

Incentives for Participation

As part of their participation in Project WITH for this study, youth were provided with meals; received gift cards for completing surveys; and, when allowed by the sites, were provided excursions to a summer camp facility. Project WITH facilitators may want to explore different ways to incentivize youth to participate in the activities and complete the lessons. Furthermore, Project WITH facilitators may want to try different ways to encourage the staff at the juvenile justice facilities and group homes to participate in and support the Project WITH lessons.

Refinements to the Curriculum

Project WITH developers should continue to refine the curriculum so that it remains engaging for the participating youth. The recent modification of Lesson 9 (i.e., Ben's/Judy's Story) is one example of changes that can be made to make the curriculum more effective. The developers should continue to look for new activities, videos, and literary works that could make Project WITH even more relevant for justice-involved youth. Project WITH developers may want to explore whether additional discussion prompts could be added to the curriculum that would lead youth to discuss the potential negative outcomes that could result from them having sexual intercourse. It could also be helpful to include information in the curriculum's appendix about effective contraceptive methods and train facilitators on this topic so they are ready to provide accurate information when it comes up in discussions.

Additional Research

Future research should examine differences in how Project WITH is implemented at lockdown juvenile justice facilities and group homes serving justice-involved youth. The Project WITH facilitators reported anecdotally that it is harder to implement the curriculum at the group

homes because of the distractions in the environment and the comparatively limited authority the staff have over the youth. Additionally, future research should investigate whether the impacts of Project WITH differ in these two types of settings. Finally, future research could investigate whether the Project WITH curriculum resonates with and is relevant for youth at risk who are not justice-involved.

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Appendix A. Methodology

Study Design

As part of this study, Project WITH participants were surveyed through entry and exit surveys before and after they participated in Project WITH. The initial plan for the study was to conduct an impact study with a comparison group of justice-involved youth who were not participating in the program (Shadish et al., 2002). However, we were not able to enroll a sufficient number of comparison youth in the study due to resource limitations and the fact that the vast majority of the sites wanted to participate in Project WITH programming. As a result, the evaluation is based only on the survey responses of the youth who participated in Project WITH.

Description of the Surveys

The current evaluation relied heavily on questions included in the high school version of the SRAE participant exit survey, which is a requirement of the Sexual Risk Avoidance Education (SRAE) grants (SRAE Performance Analysis Study, 2022). The required SRAE participant entry survey, which was also administered as part of the current study, was brief and included only demographic measures. The demographic questions on the required SRAE entry and exit surveys ask for each youth's age, home language(s), sex, race, and ethnicity (i.e., Hispanic/Latino). For the current study, we analyzed the demographic questions on the exit survey. We combined the race and ethnicity categories because the majority of youth who indicated they were Hispanic/Latino left the race question blank or wrote in a response (e.g., Mexican) indicating they were Hispanic/Latino.

The required SRAE exit survey included a range of questions that ask the youth whether being in the program (i.e., Project WITH) made them more or less likely to engage in a range of behaviors. They answered these questions using a scale of 1 (*much less likely*) to 5 (*much more likely*). The individual items included in our analysis are shown in the figures in the Findings section and addressed the following topics: self-regulation, decision-making, goal setting, healthy relationships, and the success sequence.¹ The required SRAE exit survey also contained

¹ The success sequence is a set of life milestones that are linked to escaping poverty and becoming part of the middle class. The milestones include completing a high school education or higher, finding a full-time job, and waiting to have children until after marriage (Goesling et al., 2020).

program satisfaction questions that asked youth to rate how often they felt positive about different aspects of the program using a scale of 1 (*none of the time*) to 4 (*all of the time*).

As part of the current study, we added a small number of additional questions to the surveys after the questions on the required SRAE entry and exit surveys. For example, we added a question at the end of the surveys that asked the youth how many questions they answered honestly using a scale of 1 (*hardly any*) to 4 (*all of them*). We also included three items at the end of the surveys that asked about the youth's intentions to engage in sexual intercourse over the next year that were rated on a scale of 1 (*no, definitely not*) to 4 (*yes, definitely*).

Survey Administration

After securing approval from the probation facilities and group homes, Project WITH staff went to the sites to describe the study to the youth and administer assent forms (for youth under 18) and consent forms (for youth 18 and older) for participating in the study. WestEd's Institutional Review Board approved an assent/consent process that included a waiver of informed consent for the parents because many of the youth had very little contact with their parents. These youth were then asked to complete a paper version of the entry survey. Project WITH staff returned to the sites to administer the exit survey at the end of the 12 lessons, which ranged from 5 to 10 weeks after the entry survey (average = 7.2 weeks). Youth who arrived at the sites after the start of the lessons completed an assent/consent form before they completed the exit survey.

The data collection for the study occurred between May 2023 and September 2024. Youth in the group homes and some of the probation facilities received a \$25 gift card for completing the assent/consent form regardless of whether they agreed to participate in the study and received another \$25 gift card when they completed the exit survey. We were not allowed to give gift cards to the youth in some of the probation facilities. In these facilities, the youth were provided with a meal from a take-out restaurant (e.g., a sandwich and fries) or a toiletry item instead of a gift card.

In total, 414 youth were invited to participate in the study and 367 youth (89%) agreed to participate and completed the entry and/or exit survey. There was a total of 50 Project WITH cohorts included in the study. The average number of assenting/consenting youth per cohort was 7.3, and the number in each cohort ranged from 1 to 18. Of the 321 youth who completed the entry survey, 48 percent ($n = 155$) remained at their site for the duration of the lessons and completed the exit survey, and 52 percent ($n = 166$) left their site before the exit survey. A greater percentage of youth at the probation facilities (59 percent) left the sites before the exit survey compared to the group homes (41 percent). An additional 46 youth arrived at their sites after the start of the lessons and completed only the exit survey.

Description of the Lesson Completion and Fidelity Log Data

We calculated the number of Project WITH lessons that each youth completed based on the sign-in sheets collected by the facilitators. Additionally, the Project WITH facilitators completed fidelity logs during the lessons. The fidelity logs included check boxes for each lesson regarding whether the probation or group home staff were supportive during the lessons (i.e., yes or no) and whether there were any technical issues (i.e., yes or no). The facilitators also noted the number of youth who participated in each lesson. The number of activities per lesson ranged from 7 to 13. For each activity within a lesson, the facilitators completed a check box for the completion status (i.e., yes or no) and ratings for the extent to which the youth listened and interacted. The listening and interacting were rated using a 3-point scale based on emojis: yes [😊], somewhat [😐], and no [😞]. The fidelity logs also had space for facilitators to write in open-ended comments about what worked well, what challenges they encountered, what improvements could have been made, and any other thoughts they had about the lesson and activities. WestEd received fidelity logs for 89 percent of the lessons.

Analysis Plan

WestEd conducted descriptive analyses with the survey data, including the calculation of means, standard deviations, percentages, and frequencies. When the analysis included data from only one survey item, WestEd included all of the available responses in the analysis (i.e., casewise deletion). We were able to maximize the number of responses that were included in each analysis using this method. For the questions on the entry and exit surveys that asked about the youth's intentions to engage in sexual activities, we used paired samples *t*-tests. We included youth's responses in the analysis of the survey data when their responses were 3 (*most of them*) or higher on the item that asked whether they answered the questions honestly and excluded youth who did not answer the question. Youth who completed only the entry survey were excluded from the analysis of the survey data. Some of the fidelity log analyses were conducted at the activity level (e.g., youth's engagement in the activities) and some of the analyses were conducted at the lesson level (e.g., the site staff's support for Project WITH activities). Finally, we followed the data visualization recommendations included in Evergreen (2017) when creating the figures that are included in the Findings section of this report.

Study Participants

A total of 201 youth completed the exit survey and were eligible for inclusion in the analysis of the survey data. Just over half of the sample (52 percent) of the youth resided in probation facilities in San Diego County ($n = 64$), Merced County ($n = 16$), Stanislaus County ($n = 13$), and Los Angeles County ($n = 11$). These facilities are secure lockdown facilities. The rest of the youth ($n = 97$) resided in group homes in Southern California. Prior to the start of the study, Los Angeles County went through a criminal justice reform that reduced the populations of the

youth probation facilities (Garrova, 2020). Probation departments in Southern California had placed the vast majority of the youth in the group homes, and their previous experiences were consistent with those of the youth in the probation facilities. Fourteen percent of the youth who completed the exit survey were excluded from the analysis based on their responses to the honesty question on the survey. As a result, the analysis of the exit survey included 173 youth.

The average age of the participating youth was 16.5 years old, and they ranged from 12 to 21 years old. Males constituted 88 percent of the sample and females represented the remaining 12 percent. The racial/ethnic breakdown of the sample was 71 percent Hispanic/Latino, 13 percent African American/Black, 4 percent White, 5 percent two or more races, and 7 percent other/unknown. Nearly 90 percent of the youth reported speaking English at home, and an additional 42 percent of the youth reported speaking Spanish at home. Another 3 percent of youth reported speaking another language at home, such as Samoan or Vietnamese.

Appendix B. Data Tables

Table B1. Average Number of Project WITH Lessons Completed by Study Participants

Study participant group	Number of youth	Average number of lessons completed
Remained at the site for the duration of the cohort	155	11.0
Left the site after the entry survey	166	5.4
Arrived at the site after the entry survey	46	6.9

Note. See [Figure 1](#).

Table B2. Study Participants' Engagement in the Project WITH Activities

Type of engagement	Yes	Somewhat	No
Youth listened	83%	13%	5%
Youth interacted	76%	17%	7%

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. The number of activities rated was 5,942 for youth listened and 4,802 for youth interacted. See [Figure 2](#).

Table B3. Youth's Perceptions of Project WITH Implementation

Survey item	All of the time	Most of the time	Some of the time	None of the time
Did you feel respected as a person?	65%	20%	12%	2%
Did you have a chance to ask questions about topics or issues that came up in the program?	52%	30%	13%	5%
Did discussions or activities help you to learn program lessons?	45%	30%	20%	5%
Did you feel interested in program sessions and classes?	45%	30%	19%	6%

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. The sample sizes for the items ranged from 168 to 171. See [Figure 3](#).

Table B4. Youth's Perceptions of the Impact of Project WITH on Goal Setting

Has being in the program made you more likely, about the same, or less likely to...	Much more likely	Somewhat more likely	About the same	Somewhat/Much less likely
make plans to reach your goals?	59%	22%	14%	5%
care about doing well in school?	56%	19%	18%	6%

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. The sample size for the items was 173. See [Figure 4](#).

Table B5. Youth's Perceptions of the Impact of Project WITH on Healthy Relationships

Has being in the program made you more likely, about the same, or less likely to...	Much more likely	Somewhat more likely	About the same	Somewhat/Much less likely
better understand what makes a relationship healthy?	53%	24%	17%	6%
talk to a trusted person/adult if someone makes you uncomfortable, hurts you, or pressures you to do things you don't want to do?	48%	15%	23%	15%
talk with your parent, guardian, or caregiver about sex?	25%	12%	31%	32%

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. The sample sizes for the items ranged from 171 to 172. See [Figure 5](#).

Table B6. Youth's Perceptions of the Impact of Project WITH on Self-Regulation and Decision-Making

Has being in the program made you more likely, about the same, or less likely to...	Much more likely	Somewhat more likely	About the same	Somewhat/Much less likely
resist or say no to someone if they pressure you to participate in sexual acts?	49%	12%	20%	19%
think about the consequences before making a decision?	44%	22%	20%	15%
manage your emotions in healthy ways?	41%	21%	21%	17%
resist or say no to peer pressure?	40%	16%	19%	24%

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. The sample sizes for the items ranged from 170 to 171. See [Figure 6](#).

Table B7. Changes in Youth's Intentions Related to Sexual Intercourse Between the Entry and Exit Surveys

Survey item	Entry survey average	Exit survey average
Do you intend to have sexual intercourse in the next year?	3.2	3.0
If you have sexual intercourse in the next year, do you intend to use (or have your partner use) a condom?	2.8	2.7
If you have sexual intercourse in the next year, do you intend to use (or have your partner use) any of these methods of birth control: birth control pills, the shot, the patch, the ring, an IUD, or implants?	2.5	2.5

Note. The sample sizes for the items ranged from 105 to 118. The items were rated using a 1 (*no, definitely not*) to 4 (*yes, definitely*) scale. The difference between the entry and exit survey for "Do you intend to have sexual intercourse in the next year?" was marginally significant ($p = .08$). The differences between the entry and exit surveys for intentions to use condoms ($p = .68$) and other forms of birth control ($p = .72$) were not significantly different. See [Figure 7](#).

Table B8. Youth's Perceptions of the Impact of Project WITH on the Success Sequence

Has being in the program made you more likely, about the same, or less likely to...	Much more likely	Somewhat more likely	About the same	Somewhat/Much less likely
plan to have a steady full-time job before you have a child?	42%	18%	26%	15%
plan to have a steady full-time job before you get married?	41%	20%	25%	14%
plan to delay having sexual intercourse until you graduate high school or receive your GED?	22%	13%	31%	34%
plan to delay having sexual intercourse until you graduate college or complete an education or training program?	19%	12%	33%	36%
plan to delay having sexual intercourse until you are married?	18%	10%	33%	39%

Note. Percentages may not sum to 100 percent due to rounding. The sample sizes for the items ranged from 170 to 172. See [Figure 8](#).