



Project funded by:



Teen Speak-Out: Engaging rural teenagers to develop community-driven interventions to address stress

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Stress is associated with teen risk behavior

- substance misuse,
- mental health difficulties,
- academic problems,
- poor decision-making, and
- diminished physical well-being



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OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify individual & social factors associated with stress among teens, living in rural communities, by convening a series of community “Teen Speak-Out” dinners in targeted catchment areas.
2. Design & evaluate the feasibility & acceptability of at least one measurable intervention to address stress among teens that can be reproduced.

Design and Setting



Community-
engagement &
qualitative research

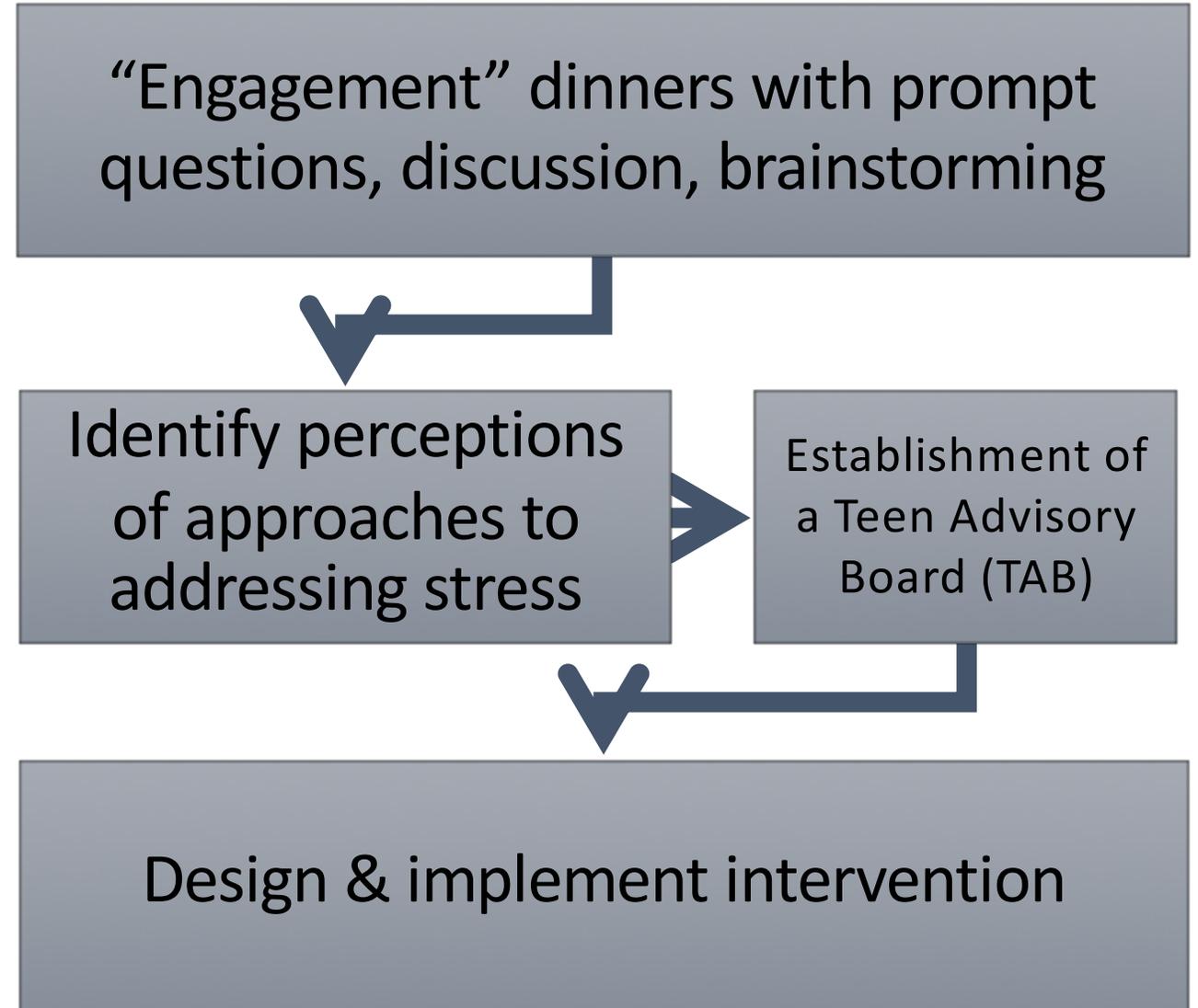
Several rural
underserved rural
communities

Participants

Teens, aged 13-19 years of age

Teen Advisory Board (TAB), including teenagers, community member advocates/stakeholders, primary care clinicians, members of the research team

Study Phases



- **Five events**
- **More than 35 teens with some attending multiple sessions**
- **Two youth leaders**
- **Community stakeholders**

“Teen Speak-Out” Dinners



Teens want:

- Safe space for discussing stressors
- More coordination of school schedules
- More adult guidance
- “Therapy” available at school
- School mechanism for dealing with bullying
- “LIFE 101” course

Suggested Interventions

- Mindfulness apps or programs
- Counseling/therapy available at school
- Free Yoga, dance or Zumba classes at school
- Discussion groups like Teen Speak-Out
- School-wide on-line and coordinated schedule
- Project similar to the “Humans of New York” or Tumblr site



Intervention

Researched apps on stress, anxiety apps rated for “Teens” on Google Play

(Dartmouth Center for Technology and Behavioral Health)

- *7 Cups* – Anxiety & Stress Chat
- *Pacifica* – Stress and Anxiety
- *SuperBetter*

Outcome Measures

- Teen well-being pre/post intervention
- Acceptance of intervention
- Perceived relevance & usefulness
- Intention to use *Pacifica* in the future
- Ideas about strategies for broad dissemination

Results

- Apps available to support teens in managing stress (*Pacifica chosen by TAB*)
- Compelling & heart-breaking stories shared by teens
- Through AIMS Grant funded counselor/therapist through local FQHC for a local high school

Limitations

- Small feasibility pilot
- School activities
- School calendar
- Teen assent/parental consent for participation in Phase 2

Conclusions to date

- Through an AIMS grant, full-time counselor/therapist hired through FQHC and placed at local K-12 school
- Significant stakeholder support = expanding network of school-based counselor/therapist positions through FQHC
- Predict low-risk technology solution to support teens in managing stress
- Considering intervention targeting teens with pre-existing anxiety/mental health diagnosis

Thank you!

Questions?

Comments?