

**Evaluation of the**  
**Parenting and Paternity Awareness**  
**p.a.p.a**  
**Curriculum**  
**First Year Report**


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# Evaluation of the Parenting and Paternity Awareness

## p.a.p.a Curriculum First Year Report

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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## BACKGROUND

Texas, like many states, has seen its teen pregnancy rate begin to trend back upward after a decade of decline. In 2006, the teen birth rate increased to more than 63 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19 years; the third highest level in the U.S. Even more troubling is that Texas leads the nation in repeat teen births; a fact driven largely by the high pregnancy rate among very young Texas teens.

In addition, the proportion of children born to unmarried mothers has increased such that 4 out of every 10 children born in Texas today are born to unmarried parents. These trends have huge immediate and long-term public costs that show up in high school dropout rates, Medicaid and TANF expenditures, poverty rates, and a rapidly expanding child support enforcement caseload.

Most state child support agencies have responded to the increases in teen and nonmarital births with the traditional offer of paternity establishment and child support enforcement services *after* the birth of the child. The Child Support Division of the Texas Office of the Attorney General (OAG) has taken the innovative step of developing a number of educational and outreach efforts that reach youth and young adults *before* a pregnancy occurs.

The leading example of the OAG's efforts is the **Parenting and Paternity Awareness (p.a.p.a.) Curriculum**; **p.a.p.a.** is a high school curriculum that sends a strong message to adolescents on how to optimally sequence their lives: complete an education, choose a career, enter into a healthy marriage, and *then* begin having children.

The 14-hour curriculum is designed to teach students about the rights and responsibilities of parenthood and paternity establishment, the realities of having a child, and the elements of a healthy relationship.

As a result of legislation passed in the 80<sup>th</sup> session of the Texas Legislature, the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**

is now a mandatory component of the state's health curriculum, and is the first large scale effort in any state to educate students on parental responsibilities using child support and paternity as the basis for the program.

## EVALUATION

To determine the impact that the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** has on students' knowledge and attitudes, as well as the level of support for the program from teachers and principals, the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin is conducting a multi-year comprehensive evaluation of the program.

In the first year of the evaluation, complete data were gathered on 3,584 students from a representative sample of 44 Texas high schools.

Students completed an online pre and post assessment that included 16 questions to test their knowledge about parenting, paternity establishment, and healthy relationships, and 28 questions to gauge their attitudes on the issues reflected in **p.a.p.a.** In addition, 45 students were interviewed via focus groups.

Information on the implementation of **p.a.p.a.** and fidelity to the curriculum was gleaned from surveys and interviews of 73 health teachers and 59 principals across the state, as well as an online survey of all teachers trained in **p.a.p.a.** through December 2008.

The findings discussed in this report are based on data from the 2008-2009 academic year; the first year of the mandatory implementation of the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**.

The results of the evaluation show that **p.a.p.a.** is addressing an unmet need for high school students and it is significantly improving students' knowledge and attitudes in areas that are unique to the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**. Teachers and principals strongly support the program, yet fidelity to the curriculum varies across teachers and could be improved.

## KEY FINDINGS ON STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES

After exposure to p.a.p.a.:

**More students plan to delay childbearing until after marriage.** The number of students reporting they plan to have a child at an earlier age than they plan to get married declined by 23%.

One female student commented: “[p.a.p.a.] made me change my mind [from] somebody who wanted to be young and pregnant ... to someone who thinks I want to be able to provide for my baby.”

**Students' knowledge regarding the costs associated with being a parent increased.** The number of students who could correctly identify the average cost per month of raising a child in Texas increased by 71%, and the number who knew the percent of net income that a non-custodial parent generally pays in child support increased by 50%.

One male student claimed: “It takes like half the money you make if you're working... it gets expensive!”

**Students have greater knowledge of the legal issues that unmarried parents face.** After p.ap.a., more than twice as many students knew that an unmarried, biological father does NOT have the same legal rights and responsibilities as the biological mother, and the number who knew the legal methods to establishing paternity increased by 26%.

A female student said: “One thing I like about p.a.p.a. is that it taught me about the consequence [sic] of getting pregnant as a teen. Also I like that it showed me how to sign a paternity form so my baby's father have [sic] rights.”

**Students are more likely to value the importance of fathers' legal and social involvement.**

Students were more likely to report that they would establish legal paternity if they have a child outside of marriage. In addition, more students agree that it is important for a child to have two actively involved parents, even if the parents do not live together.

A male student noted: “[p.a.p.a.] let's you know the real facts about having a child at a young age and that not only do you have to be financially ready, but physically and emotionally.”

Students' overall level of knowledge increased by 13% between the pre and post assessments, and gains in knowledge were greatest on the issues that are most unique to the p.a.p.a. Curriculum. However, levels of student knowledge remained low in several key areas, indicating the need for continued education.

**Students most at risk of becoming a teen parent demonstrate the greatest need for the curriculum.** White students and students in more advantaged schools scored significantly higher on the pre and post assessments. In addition, gains in knowledge were higher for White and Hispanic boys as compared to Black boys; whereas for girls, there were no significant differences in knowledge by race or ethnicity.

## TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL SUPPORT

**Teachers and principals overwhelmingly agree that the issues covered in p.a.p.a. are relevant and should be taught to their students prior to graduating high school.** Almost 85% of teachers report that p.a.p.a. is relevant to their students, and over two-thirds believe that p.a.p.a. should be taught to all students prior to graduating high school.

**Principals consider p.a.p.a. to be “reality based” and an important complement to other programs.** One principal of a large high school commented, “I like that these topics will reach more students. I think this will help students think about responsibility and reality. Currently we have 62 girls who are pregnant in our school.”

## TEACHER FIDELITY TO p.a.p.a.

**Most teachers modify the curriculum to fit their class schedules and existing health curriculum, and many teachers find the legal aspects of the curriculum too complex.** Approximately 8 in 10 teachers modified p.a.p.a. in some way, and nearly 30% of teachers did not teach aspects of the curriculum they deemed too complex for themselves and their students. Additional training and guidance are necessary for these teachers, because student knowledge is lowest in the areas that are the least familiar to teachers.



# **FIRST YEAR REPORT**

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## OVERVIEW

Across the country, teen pregnancy rates are beginning to trend upward after a decade of decline. Texas has the third highest teenage birthrate in the U.S.; indeed in 2006, the teen birthrate increased to more than 63 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19 years. Even more troubling is that Texas leads the nation in repeat teen births; a fact driven largely by the high pregnancy rate among very young Texas teens.

In addition, the proportion of children born to unmarried mothers continues to increase. Today in Texas, 4 out of every 10 children are born to unmarried mothers. These trends vary considerably by race and ethnicity such that approximately 70% of African American children are born to unmarried mothers, compared to 50% of Latinos and 25% of White children.

These trends in teen and nonmarital births have huge immediate and long-term public costs that show up in high school dropout rates, Medicaid and TANF expenditures, poverty rates, and a rapidly expanding child support enforcement caseload.

Most state child support agencies have responded to the increases in teen and nonmarital births with the traditional offer of paternity establishment and child support enforcement services *after* the birth of the child. The Child Support Division of the Texas Office of the Attorney General (OAG) has taken the innovative step of developing a number of educational and outreach efforts that reach youth and young adults *before* a pregnancy occurs.

The leading example of the OAG's efforts is the **Parenting and Paternity Awareness (p.a.p.a.) Curriculum**; **p.a.p.a.** is a high school curriculum that sends a strong message to adolescents on how to optimally sequence their lives: complete an education, choose a career, enter into a healthy marriage, and *then* begin having children.

The curriculum is designed to teach students about the rights, responsibilities, and realities of parenthood and to encourage students to make

choices that improve their chances of academic and personal success.

The **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** is unique compared to other school-based curriculum in that it focuses on the legal aspects of paternity establishment; the rights and responsibilities of custodial and non-custodial parents; the costs of raising a child, including child support obligations; the importance for children of having two actively involved parents, even if the parents are not married; and the elements of a healthy relationship, including the benefits of marriage.

The curriculum is comprised of 14 stand-alone units that can be taught in various intervals over the course of an academic semester, ranging from 14 school days to 14 weeks.

In 2007, the Texas legislature voted nearly unanimously to mandate that the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** be taught to all Texas students in their health courses beginning in the fall of 2008. The **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** is the first large scale effort in any state to educate students on parental responsibilities using child support and paternity as the basis for the program.

This report presents findings from the first year of a multi-year, comprehensive evaluation to determine the effect that the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** has on students' knowledge and attitudes, as well as the support the program has from teachers and principals.

Overall, the findings show that students' knowledge increases significantly after exposure to the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**, and increases in knowledge are greatest in the content areas that are most unique to **p.a.p.a.** In addition, after **p.a.p.a.**, students are less likely to report that they want to have a child prior to marriage. Moreover, teachers and principals strongly support the goals of the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** and think that it provides their students with a valuable addition to the other teen programs taught in Texas high schools.

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# EVALUATION METHOD

The two primary goals of the evaluation are to:

1. Determine the impact that the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** has on students' knowledge and attitudes.
2. Understand the level of support for the program from teachers and principals, as well as teachers' fidelity to the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**.

## STUDENT EVALUATION

To measure changes in students' knowledge and attitudes, we surveyed 3,584 students from a representative sample of 44 Texas high schools. Students completed an online pre and post assessment that included 16 questions to test their knowledge about parenting, paternity establishment, and healthy relationships, and 28 questions that gauge their attitudes on the issues reflected in **p.a.p.a.** In addition, 45 students were interviewed via focus groups.

Our goal was to develop a sample of students from 50 Texas high schools, randomly selected from the 1,440 high school campuses across the state. To ensure our sample was representative of high school students in Texas and that it included a large sample of students most at risk of early parenting, we used a stratified random sampling strategy based on three criteria: limited English proficiency (LEP), economically disadvantaged (poor), and rural versus other geographic locale (rural) of the campus. These characteristics are associated with differential levels of teen and nonmarital childbearing.

A campus is considered "LEP" if more than 15.5% of the students on campus are LEP. This represents the top decile of all Texas high school campuses according to 2008 public data from the Texas Education Agency (TEA). A campus is considered "poor" if 50% or more of the students on campus are eligible for free or reduced priced lunch. A campus is considered "rural" if designated as such by TEA. Using these criteria, 10.2% of Texas high school campuses are LEP, 49.9% are poor, and 46.1% are rural, although these are not mutually exclusive categories.

To generate our sample, we divided the 1,440 high school campuses into 8 mutually exclusive "buckets" based on all possible combinations of the 3 criteria described above, and the possibility that a school fits none of the criteria (No Status). The distribution of the 1,440 campuses for the state, as well as for our desired sample of 50 campuses is provided in Table 1 below. Importantly, although the "No Status" schools only represent 28% of high school campuses across the state, approximately 50% of Texas students are enrolled in these schools.

In fall 2008, we began recruiting schools to participate in the evaluation. We randomly selected the determined number of campuses from each "bucket" to get to our desired total of 50 campuses to include in the study. For example, as is indicated in Table 1, we randomly selected 4 campuses out of the 110 high schools in Texas that are LEP and Poor; 1 campus from the 33 schools in the LEP + Poor + Rural "bucket", and so on. If a campus declined to participate in the evaluation, we included them in our attrition analysis and randomly "re-drew" from the same bucket to find a replacement campus. We continued with this same strategy as we approached principals, district administrators, and teachers to participate in the study to ensure that the appropriate number of campuses from each bucket was included. Although our final sample includes 44 rather than 50 schools, the desired number of schools within each "bucket" has agreed to participate in the 2009-2010 academic year.

Throughout the 2008-2009 academic year, we collected information from 5,090 students in 44 Texas high schools. There were 1,506 students who did not complete both a pre and a post assessment and are not included in this analysis. This attrition is based largely on teachers not finishing their health curriculum rather than individual student attrition.

Our final evaluation sample includes 3,584 students from 44 high schools who took both the pre- and post-assessments (see Table 2)<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> 14 of the 44 schools participated in both the fall 2008 and spring 2009 semesters. All of the schools will participate in both semesters in 2009-10, including 3 additional schools who could not participate this year

**TABLE 1:  
DISTRIBUTION OF CAMPUSES BASED ON STRATIFIED RANDOM SAMPLING CRITERIA**

School Characteristics	# Campuses with a 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade in Texas	% of Total Desired <sup>a</sup>	# Campuses Sought for Evaluation	# Campuses Participating in Evaluation	% of Total Achieved <sup>b</sup>
LEP Only	2	0.14%	0	0	0
LEP + Rural (not Poor)	2	0.14%	0	0	0
LEP + Poor (not Rural)	110	7.64%	4	3	6.82%
LEP + Poor + Rural	33	2.29%	1	1	2.27%
Poor Only	264	18.33%	9	9	20.45%
Poor + Rural (not LEP)	311	21.60%	11	10	22.73%
Rural Only	318	22.08%	11	10	22.73%
No Status	400	27.78%	14	11	25.00%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,440</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

- a. The percent of the 50 campuses sought for the evaluation sample were based on the number of campuses in a respective “bucket” relative to the total number of campuses (1,440).
- b. The percent of campuses achieved represents the number of campuses in the final evaluation sample relative to the total number of 44 schools in the evaluation.

**TABLE 2:  
EVALUATION SAMPLE OF STUDENTS COMPLETING A PRE AND POST ASSESSMENT**

“Bucket” description	# of Participating Campuses	# of Health Classes	# of Health Teachers	# of Students Completing Pre and Post	% of Students in Evaluation
LEP Only	0	0	0	0	0%
LEP + Rural (not Poor)	0	0	0	0	0%
LEP + Poor (not Rural)	3	28	5	323	9.01%
LEP + Poor + Rural	1	1	1	9	0.25%
Poor Only	9	73	15	759	21.18%
Poor + Rural (not LEP)	10	54	13	565	15.76%
Rural Only	10	28	13	338	9.43%
No Status	11	83	26	1,590	44.36%
<b>Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>3,584</b>	<b>100%</b>

The schools in the evaluation sample are similar to high schools throughout the state with the exception that the schools in our sample are slightly more advantaged (less likely to be poor and have fewer minority students) and interestingly, they have lower achievement scores and more disciplinary problems than the average high school in Texas.

A description of the characteristics of the students included in the evaluation sample is included in Table 3. Approximately 52% of the participants in our evaluation are male and 48% are female. Approximately 40% of the sample is White, 9% is Black, 43% is Hispanic, and 8% identify their race or ethnicity as something other than White, Black, or Hispanic. This race/ethnic distribution is very similar to Texas state averages for high school students, with the exception that our sample is slightly under representative of Black and Hispanic students and over representative of White students. The most common grade level of students in our sample is 9<sup>th</sup> grade, but more than half of the students are in 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade, and approximately 10% of the students in our sample are in their senior year. Very few students in the sample are in 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

**TABLE 3: CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS IN THE EVALUATION SAMPLE (N = 3,584)**

Characteristic	n	% of Sample
Gender		
Male	1858	51.84%
Female	1726	48.16%
Race/Ethnicity		
White	1422	39.68%
Black	334	9.32%
Hispanic	1538	42.91%
Other	290	8.09%
Grade Level		
7 or 8	88	2.45%
9	1418	39.56%
10	963	26.87%
11	777	21.68%
12	338	9.43%

The primary analytic strategy to determine changes in students' knowledge and attitudes was a pre-post design. Teachers administered the online assessment prior to teaching **p.a.p.a.** to their students and administered a similar assessment after they finished teaching the 14-unit curriculum. We compared the pre and post scores on each question, and tested for significant changes in their knowledge and attitudes.

The pre and post assessment technique is limited in that it cannot determine whether students retain the information they glean from a particular curriculum. Additionally, without a control group, we cannot fully determine if changes in student learning are the result of the curriculum per se or some other occurrence that co-occurs with the learning of the curriculum and that also influences student learning.

To provide more context to the online assessments, we conducted focus groups with 45 students from four high schools that had participated in the **p.a.p.a.** evaluation in the 2008-09 academic year. Within the sample, there were 24 female and 21 male students, comprising a total of 17 high school freshman, 17 sophomores, and 11 juniors. We plan to follow these students over time to determine changes in their behavior and retention of the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**.

## TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EVALUATION

To determine the level of support for the program from teachers and principals, as well as teachers' fidelity to the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**, we conducted an implementation evaluation that included three strategies: 1) phone interviews with 59 principals; 2) an online pre and post survey of the 73 sample teachers; and 3) an online survey of 363 teachers across the state trained in **p.a.p.a.** as of December 2008.

For a more detailed description of our sample, sampling strategy, instruments of assessment, and attrition analysis, please contact the director of the evaluation, Cynthia Osborne, Ph.D.

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# KEY STUDENT FINDINGS

## STUDENTS' PRIOR KNOWLEDGE

**The p.a.p.a. Curriculum provides valuable information to students that they do not receive elsewhere.** Although students have a high level of prior knowledge on many of the issues addressed in **p.a.p.a.**, prior knowledge is *lowest* in the areas that are most unique to the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**.

On nine of the 16 knowledge-based questions, approximately 80% or more of students answered the questions correctly on the pre-test (See Table 4), indicating a high level of prior knowledge on many the issues covered in the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**. For example:

- ❖ 92% of students answered correctly that when an infant cries, it is important to pick them up and comfort them, versus ignoring them, telling them to stop, or taking them to the doctor.
- ❖ 89% of students knew the correct definition of a custodial parent.

Student knowledge was somewhat lower on issues related to child support and paternity establishment. For example:

- ❖ 82% of students knew that non-custodial parents must continue to pay child support, even if they do not get to see their child.
- ❖ 82% of students knew that a benefit of establishing paternity is that the father's name can go on the birth certificate.

Between half and three-quarters of the students knew the correct answer to four additional questions on the pre-test, indicating a moderate level of knowledge. In particular:

- ❖ 73% of students knew the warning signs of a potentially abusive relationship.
- ❖ 68% of students knew that non-custodial parents can have their driver's license suspended if they stop paying child support.

- ❖ 66% knew that young children are impacted by their parents' fighting.
- ❖ 58% answered correctly that giving a baby the father's last name is not a way to establish legal paternity.

Students had very low levels of prior knowledge on three of the 16 questions, specifically:

- ❖ 42% of students knew that a non-custodial parent generally has to pay 20% of net income in child support for one child.
- ❖ 27% of students knew when a child is born to unmarried parents the biological father does NOT automatically have the same legal rights and responsibilities as the biological mother.
- ❖ Only 17% of students correctly identified that the average additional cost per month for an adult to take care of a child in Texas is over \$700.

The issues on which students had moderate to low levels of prior knowledge are largely unique to **p.a.p.a.**, thus lower levels of prior knowledge in these areas suggests that the curriculum is addressing an unmet need.

**Risk factors influence students' level of prior knowledge.** Students who smoke, are younger, foreign born, born to unmarried parents, and who are currently involved in a romantic relationship have lower levels of prior knowledge on the issues addressed in the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**.

## CHANGES IN STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE

**After experiencing the p.a.p.a. Curriculum, students showed significant gains in knowledge.** On average, students scored 13% higher on the post assessment than they did on the pre-test. The average student answered 69% of the knowledge-based questions correctly on the pre-test, whereas the average score on the post-test was 78%.

**TABLE 4:**  
**CHANGES IN STUDENTS KNOWLEDGE FROM PRE TO POST ASSESSMENT<sup>a</sup>**

	<b>% Correct Pre-Test</b>	<b>% Correct Post-Test</b>	<b>% Change Pre/Post</b>
When an infant cries, it is important to: (Pick up and comfort)	92	92	0
For unmarried, separated, or divorced parents, the parent who has been given the legal right to decide where a child lives and has primary care of a child is called a: (Custodial Parent)	89	92	3
Both the non-custodial and the custodial parents are legally responsible for supporting their child financially. (True)	87	88	1
A key factor in having a healthy, long-lasting relationship is: (Being able to manage and resolve conflict with each other)	85	87	2
If parents separate or divorce, their children will benefit if they: (Work together as a team to keep child out of arguments)	83	88	6*
Non-custodial parents do not have to pay child support if they do not get to see their child. (False)	82	85	4
One benefit of establishing paternity is that the father's name can go on the birth certificate. (True)	82	90	10*
In the state of Texas, only the mother can open a child support case at the Office of the Attorney General. (False)	80	82	3
A non-custodial parent who stops paying court-ordered child support can have his/her IRS tax refund or lottery winnings taken away or withheld. (True)	80	89	11*
Which of the following is a warning sign of a potentially abusive or violent relationship? (jealous because he/she loves you so much)	73	80	10*
A non-custodial parent who stops paying court-ordered child support can have his/her driver's license suspended. (True)	68	86	26*
Young children aren't impacted by their parent's fighting because generally they don't understand what's going on with the conflict until they are in their teens. (False)	66	72	9*
There are three pathways to establish legal paternity for a child born to unmarried parents. Which of the following is NOT a pathway? (Give the baby the father's last name)	58	73	26*
In most cases, what percentage of the non-custodial parent's net income would be paid in child support for one child? (20% net inc.)	42	63	50*
When a child is born to unmarried parents, the biological father automatically has the same legal rights and legal responsibilities as the biological mother. (False)	27	55	104*
The average additional cost per month for an adult to take care of a child (childcare, diapers, food, housing, medical care, clothing) in the state of Texas is: (Over \$700 per month)	17	29	71*
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>13*</b>

a. Scores Listed From Highest to Lowest Correct Response on Pre-Test; \*Indicates post test and pre test scores differ significantly at the  $p < .05$  level. N=3,584

**Gains in students' knowledge were greatest in content areas that are generally unique to the p.a.p.a. Curriculum.** Students' knowledge increased significantly on ten of the 16 questions. Increases in knowledge were generally higher on questions relating to the legal aspects of paternity and child support – content areas that are largely unique to the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** and areas in which students' prior knowledge was generally low. For example, after **p.a.p.a.:**

- ❖ More than twice as many students knew that at a child's birth, an unmarried biological father does NOT have the same legal rights and responsibilities as an unmarried mother.
- ❖ The proportion of students who could correctly identify the average monthly cost to raise a child in Texas increased by 71%.
- ❖ The proportion of students who knew the percentage of net income that a non-custodial parent generally pays to care for one child increased by 50%.
- ❖ An additional 26% of students knew that a non-custodial parent's driver's license can be suspended for failure to pay child support.
- ❖ There was a similar increase in the proportion of students who learned that giving a baby the father's surname is NOT a pathway to establishing legal paternity.

Student knowledge also increased significantly on four additional questions relating to child support obligations, paternity establishment, and relationship violence. Again, these questions represent content areas that are unique to the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** and not readily accessible to students who do not have access to **p.a.p.a.**

**Although students' knowledge increased significantly in most content areas, student knowledge remained relatively low in key areas, indicating a continued need for the information offered in the curriculum.** For example, despite large gains in knowledge, after **p.a.p.a.:**

- ❖ Nearly 30% of students incorrectly noted that giving a baby the father's surname is a pathway to establish legal paternity.
- ❖ Fewer than 3 out of 4 students knew that young children are negatively affected by their parents' fighting.
- ❖ Fewer than two-thirds of students knew the amount of the average child support obligation for a non-custodial parent.
- ❖ Approximately half of students knew that at a child's birth the unmarried biological father does not have the same legal rights and responsibilities as the biological mother.
- ❖ Only 29% of students could accurately identify the average monthly cost of raising a child.

#### **Students' characteristics influence gains in knowledge from the p.a.p.a. Curriculum.**

Students who smoke, are older, foreign born, and those who live with both of their biological parents have significantly lower gains in knowledge from the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**.

### **RACE AND ETHNIC DIFFERENCES**

**Prior knowledge on the issues discussed in p.a.p.a. was significantly higher among White students as compared to Black or Hispanic students.** The average score on the pre-test was 73% for White students, compared to 69% for Black students, and 66% for Hispanic students. Black students had a significantly higher level of prior knowledge than Hispanic students (see Table 5).

**Gains in knowledge were significantly greater for White and Hispanic male students as compared to Black male students.** The average score on the pre/post assessment increased by 14% for Hispanic students and 12% for White students, whereas for Black students, the average score increased by only 10%.

These findings apply only to boys, however. Girls showed similar increases in knowledge, regardless of race or ethnicity, whereas Black boys had significantly smaller gains in knowledge relative to their White and Hispanic peers.

Overall, the results suggest that White students enter and exit the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** with significantly higher levels of content knowledge than their Black or Hispanic peers. All race and ethnic groups demonstrate significant gains in knowledge, but the gains are smallest among Black males, and the level of pre/post knowledge is lowest among Hispanics.

## GENDER DIFFERENCES

**Female students have higher levels of pre and post knowledge on the issues addressed in p.a.p.a., however boys demonstrate significantly larger increases in knowledge.** On average, girls scored approximately 5 percentage points higher on the pre-test and 4 percentage points higher on the post-test. Boys' knowledge increased by 13% compared to 11% for girls.

**Gender differences are greater among Black and Hispanic students, as compared to White students.** For example, the average score on the post assessment was 74% for Black boys compared to 79% for Black girls. For Hispanic boys the average post test score was 72%, compared to 77% for Hispanic girls. The corresponding numbers for White students were 81% and 84%.

## SCHOOL DIFFERENCES

**More advantaged schools have significantly higher levels of prior knowledge.** These schools also have higher levels of post **p.a.p.a.** knowledge than most other types of schools. Gains in knowledge were similar across all types of schools, although schools characterized as rural and poor demonstrated the greatest gains in knowledge.

## SUMMARY OF STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE

With regard to the content covered in the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**, students who are most at risk of becoming a teen parent have lower levels of knowledge than their more advantaged peers. Gains in knowledge are relatively similar across students, regardless of their characteristics,

indicating that the program is beneficial for all students. However, students at risk of early parenting may benefit from additional information.

## SELECTED STUDENT COMMENTS

**Students shared the primary message they took from their experience with the p.a.p.a. Curriculum.** Below is a representative sample of their responses:

### On parenting:

- ❖ You learn alot [sic]about parenthood. You learn how to take care of [your] children.”
- ❖ “It tell you [about] the things how to take care of the child and to tell how to get acknowledgement of peternity [sic].”

### On relationship violence:

- ❖ “I, personally, liked how it goes into detail about how to avoid abusive relationships, and how it tells you what to look out for.”
- ❖ “They made me aware that children get affected when their parents argue. Also that your kids should always come first.”

### On paternity establishment:

- ❖ “[I learned] that the father’s name can not [sic][always] go on the birth certificate.”
- ❖ “It talked a lot [sic] about establishing paternity for your child. I didn't know what paternity meant until p.a.p.a.”
- ❖ “Knowing I can establish paternity if the situation ever calls for it is somewhat comforting, and I'd want the father of my child to be an active part of his or her life.”

### On the financial realities of parenting:

- ❖ “It takes like half the money you make if you're working... it gets expensive!”
- ❖ “**p.a.p.a** helped me realize how expensive a baby can [be], and how tough it can be to go to school, work, and support your child all at the same time.”

**TABLE 5:**  
**CHANGE IN STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE BY SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS**

	% Correct Pre-Test	% Correct Post-Test	% Change Pre/Post
<b>Average Score</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>13*</b>
<b>School Characteristics</b>			
LEP, Rural, Poor	63	72	14*
Rural & Poor	66	78	18*
LEP & Poor	66	74	12*
Poor	68	75	10*
Rural	69	79	14*
Neither LEP, Poor, or Rural	72 <sup>a</sup>	80 <sup>a</sup>	11*
<b>Gender</b>			
Girls	72	80	11*
Boys	67 <sup>b</sup>	76 <sup>b</sup>	13*
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
White	73 <sup>c</sup>	82 <sup>c</sup>	12*
Black	69 <sup>d</sup>	76	10*
Hispanic	66	75	14*
Other	69	79	15*

\*Indicates post test and pre test scores differ significantly at the  $p < .05$  level.

a. Schools that are neither LEP, poor, or rural score significantly higher than all other schools at the  $p < .05$  level.

b. Boys' score is significantly lower than girls' at the  $p < .05$  level.

c. White students' scores are significantly higher than Black or Hispanic students' scores at the  $p < .05$  level.

d. Black students' scores are significantly higher than Hispanic students' scores at the  $p < .05$  level

## STUDENTS' ATTITUDES PRIOR TO p.a.p.a.

Students generally held pro-social attitudes regarding family formation and parenting decisions prior to being exposed to p.a.p.a. For example (see Table 6), prior to p.a.p.a.:

- ❖ 86% of students agreed or strongly agreed that it is important for a child to have two actively involved parents, even if the parents do not live together.
- ❖ 83% of students reported that they would be sure that paternity is established if they were to have a child outside of marriage.
- ❖ Three out of four students claimed that it was important to be married before having children.
- ❖ Fewer than 10% of students agreed that marriage usually changes a relationship for the worse.
- ❖ Only 8% were confident that they could raise a baby by themselves as a teen.

**Students' attitudes were more neutral with regard to cohabitation, divorce, and nonmarital childbearing.** Indeed, students' attitudes are consistent with national trends showing greater acceptance of these life events. In particular:

- ❖ About half of students think that living together before marriage is a good way to test a relationship.
- ❖ Only about one-third of students claimed that divorce is almost always bad.
- ❖ Fewer than 60% of students think that having a baby while in high school would be "one of the worst things that could happen."
- ❖ Approximately one-third of students thought having a child while single would hurt their subsequent chances of marriage.

## CHANGES IN STUDENTS' ATTITUDES

Students' attitudes toward marriage and children changed significantly after exposure to the p.a.p.a. Curriculum. Following p.a.p.a.:

- ❖ More students agreed or strongly agreed that it is important to be married prior to having a child.
- ❖ A significantly higher number of students agreed that having children while single will hurt their chances of marriage in the future. Despite this increase, fewer than 40% of students believe that early childbearing will hinder their marriage chances.

**Students' attitudes toward paternity establishment and father involvement became significantly more pro-social following p.a.p.a.**

These issues are generally not discussed in other elements of the health curriculum or other programs, indicating that the p.a.p.a. Curriculum likely influenced these attitudinal changes. Following p.a.p.a.:

- ❖ Students were significantly more likely to think that it is important for a child to have two actively involved parents, even if the parents do not live together
- ❖ More students agreed that they would be certain to establish legal paternity if they had a child outside of marriage.

**Students' attitudes regarding cohabitation and divorce were largely unaffected by p.a.p.a.**

Approximately half of students believe that living together prior to marriage is a good way to test a relationship, and fewer than 40% believe that divorce is almost always bad. These attitudes did not change following p.a.p.a.

## PROJECTED CHANGES IN STUDENTS' BEHAVIOR

**More students plan to delay childbearing until after marriage.** Students were asked the age at which they plan to have their first child and the age at which they plan to marry. After exposure to the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**, fewer students want to have a child at an earlier age than they want to marry. This finding may have the strongest implications for longer-term behavioral changes.

- ❖ In the evaluation sample, 78 students (2.18%) had a child at the time of the pre-assessment and 25 students were married (0.70%).<sup>2</sup>
- ❖ The vast majority of students want to have a child (95%) and to get married (96%) in the future.
- ❖ At the pre-assessment, most students want to get married between the ages of 20 to 24 (55%) and students are evenly split as to wanting to have a child between ages 20 to 24 (45%) and 25 to 29 (44%).
- ❖ On the pre-assessment, 12.4% of students wanted to have a child at an earlier age than they plan to get married.
- ❖ On the post-assessment, only 9.5% of students want a child at an earlier age than marriage, a significant reduction of 23%. If these students alter their behavior, this would lead to a substantial reduction in the number of women having a nonmarital birth.
- ❖ Importantly, fewer than 6% of students desire to have a child prior to the age of 20, even prior to **p.a.p.a.**, and this number declines slightly (but not significantly) after exposure to **p.a.p.a.**

**Many students do not get a strong message from their parents to delay childbearing until they are out of high school.** Prior to **p.a.p.a.**, 63% of students commented that their parents

would be very disappointed in them if they had a child prior to graduating from high school. This number increased significantly to 65% following **p.a.p.a.**, yet one-third of students report that their parents would not be very disappointed in them if they became pregnant while still in high school.

By contrast, 85% of teens report that their parents would be very disappointed in them if they did not graduate high school (both pre and post). Approximately 54% of students report that their parents would be very disappointed in them if they did not graduate from college.

To the extent that parental expectations affect student behavior, then parents need to send a stronger message to their teens regarding education and family formation. Indeed, fewer than half of students report talking about their future jobs and education with their parents, and even fewer discuss issues of avoiding early childbearing.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To further increase student knowledge in the areas in which prior knowledge is limited and to further affect students' attitudes regarding marriage and childbearing, we recommend that the OAG :

- ❖ Focus the teacher training sessions and subsequent email communication with teachers to emphasize the rights of unmarried parents, the cost of raising a child, child support awards, and pathways to establishing paternity. Teachers have limited knowledge in these areas, and increasing their knowledge is essential to improving students' learning.
- ❖ Implement the elements of the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** that emphasize sequencing behavior and healthy relationships to middle school students while maintaining the legal content and financial information for high school pupils. Student feedback suggests that students appreciate **p.a.p.a.**'s realistic message, but they feel the information comes too late to change the behavior of young people.

<sup>2</sup> These students were generally equally distributed by gender; 45 boys and 33 girls had a child and 13 boys and 12 girls were married. Eleven of the students with children were married to their partner.

**TABLE 6:**  
**CHANGES IN STUDENTS' ATTITUDES FROM PRE TO POST ASSESSMENT**  
**PERCENT RESPONDING AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE**

	%	%	% Pt.
	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Difference
<i>How much would you say you agree with the following statements?</i>			
It is important that a child has two actively involved parents, even if his/her parents do not live together.	86	88	2*
If I have a child before I am married, I will do everything possible to make sure paternity is established.	83	87	4*
It is important to be married before having children.	76	78	2*
Having a baby before I graduate high school would be one of the worst things that could happen to me.	57	57	0
Living together before marriage is a good way to test your relationship.	49	47	-2
Getting divorced is almost always bad.	38	37	-1
Having children while you are single hurts your chances of later getting married.	34	38	4*
Marriage usually changes a relationship for the worse.	8	9	1
I'm confident I could afford to raise a baby by myself as a teenager.	8	7	-1

Scores based on a 5-point Likert scale from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree.

\*Indicates post test and pre test differ significantly at the  $p < .05$  level.

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## KEY TEACHER FINDINGS

To determine teachers' implementation of and fidelity to the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**, as well as their opinions regarding **p.a.p.a.**, we surveyed teachers who participated in the evaluation study and all teachers who were trained throughout the state as of December 2008. The findings below are based on survey data from 73 teachers from the 44 sample schools and 363 other teachers who taught **p.a.p.a.** during fall 2008 and completed the online survey.

### SUPPORT FOR **p.a.p.a.**

**The p.a.p.a. Curriculum is unique in its emphasis on paternity establishment and father involvement.** Most teachers who have taught **p.a.p.a.** have previously taught about issues relating to child development (87.5%), healthy relationships (79.2%), relationship violence (60.5%), and the responsibilities of parenting (54.9%). By contrast, only 1.4% of teachers had previously taught about the legal aspects of paternity. This finding suggests that **p.a.p.a.** is filling an unmet curriculum need.

**Teachers overwhelmingly agree that the issues covered in p.a.p.a. are relevant and should be taught to their students prior to graduating high school.** For example:

- ❖ Almost 85% of the sample teachers agree or strongly agree that the issues discussed in **p.a.p.a.** are relevant to their students (see Table 7).
- ❖ Two-thirds of the sample teachers believe that all students should be taught **p.a.p.a.** prior to graduating from high school.
- ❖ The numbers are slightly higher among all of the teachers who taught **p.a.p.a.** in fall 2008 and completed the online survey (85% and 80% respectively).

**Teachers are less likely to believe that the issues covered in p.a.p.a. will alter their students' attitudes and behaviors.** Despite this high level of support for the curriculum, teachers are slightly less likely to believe that **p.a.p.a.** will influence their students' *attitudes* or *behavior*. For example:

- ❖ Approximately 63% of the sample teachers agree or strongly agree that **p.a.p.a.** will change their students' attitudes or behaviors towards parenting.
- ❖ 65% of sample teachers agree or strongly agree that it will alter their students' attitudes towards developing healthy relationships.
- ❖ Fewer teachers (53.5%) believe it will change their students' relationship behaviors.

### FIDELITY TO THE **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**

**Many teachers reported little difficulty in incorporating the p.a.p.a. Curriculum into their existing health curriculum.**

- ❖ Almost two-thirds (64.9%) of teachers taught **p.a.p.a.** within 14 school days or less.
- ❖ 63.4% agreed that the length of the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** was appropriate.

**Most teachers modify the p.a.p.a. Curriculum to fit it into their class schedules and existing health curriculum.**

- ❖ Approximately 79% of teachers reported that they modified the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** and did not teach it exactly as it is written in the teacher's guide.

Those teachers who modified **p.a.p.a.** commented that the curriculum was too long to teach within the existing timeframe, and they reported condensing areas that overlapped with the existing health curriculum or shortening assignments. In addition, some teachers skipped sessions all together because they could not fit the entire curriculum into their semester.

Other teachers reported that they modified the health curriculum to incorporate **p.a.p.a.** without any changes to its content. While some of these teachers felt this was the most appropriate means of structuring the semester, others expressed concern over portions of the health curriculum that had to be cut to accommodate **p.a.p.a.**

Some teachers reported that the content provided too much information for their age-level of students, and they modified **p.a.p.a.** to make it more appropriate.

- ❖ Almost 30% of teachers reported that the legal issues in **p.a.p.a.** are too complex for many of their students to understand.
- ❖ Approximately 11% of teachers reported that the social issues in **p.a.p.a.** are too sensitive for their students, and teachers who reported these concerns were more likely to modify the curriculum.

## QUALITY OF THE **p.a.p.a.** Curriculum

Teachers generally think the quality of the curriculum is high. Of Texas teachers who have taught **p.a.p.a.**:

- ❖ 38% report that the overall quality of the curriculum is excellent (See Table 8).
- ❖ An additional 60% regard the curriculum as acceptable.
- ❖ The teachers report that the student workbook, teacher's guide, discussion questions, and the DVD are acceptable to excellent, with very few rating them as unsatisfactory.

The three sessions that teachers in the statewide survey identified as containing the most important information for their students are *Establishing Paternity*, *What it Takes To Be A Parent*, and *Choosing Healthy Relationships*. The results are similar for teachers in the sample, with the exception that sample teachers reported that the *Benefits of Legal Fatherhood* is more important than *Choosing Healthy Relationships*.

By contrast, the sessions that teachers would like to see improved are *Introducing p.a.p.a.*, *Establishing Paternity*, and *What Can You Expect?* They commented that these sessions were either too complex, repetitive, not engaging, or not as relevant to their students' needs.

## Teachers appreciate the resources and support they have received from the OAG.

- ❖ Almost 85% of the larger sample of teachers who completed the online survey thought the training workshops provided by the OAG adequately prepared them to teach the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** and that they have the necessary resources and support to teach **p.a.p.a.**
- ❖ Additionally, nearly three-quarters of the teachers report that the monthly emails that the OAG sends to the trained teachers are a helpful resource.
- ❖ The teachers found the PowerPoint presentations and the interactive games the most useful in helping them teach.
- ❖ Approximately half of the teachers use the downloadable teaching resources from the **p.a.p.a.** website, however, over 13% of teachers did not know they existed.
- ❖ Fewer than 5% of teachers use the Spanish language materials.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers made several suggestions as to how the OAG could provide additional support including on-going trainings, a speakers bank for classroom guests, a PowerPoint presentation to accompany each session, additional assessment tools (e.g. quizzes, graded worksheets), and updated and revised statistics and information about new legislative developments. The OAG has begun providing these resources as a result of preliminary feedback.

Teachers also suggested that printed workbooks for students would be valuable because it is difficult for teachers to photocopy all of the materials they need and some teachers have limits on the number of copies they can make. The OAG is considering producing these workbooks, but the trainings are now emphasizing to teachers that they should increase the use of student projects and discussions rather than relying too heavily on the student handouts.

The teachers report that the legal aspects of paternity establishment are complex and that they need more information in these areas to feel more competent to teach **p.a.p.a.** Indeed, 22% of teachers reported that their students had questions about the curriculum that they were unable to answer. Teachers noted that these questions were mostly specific legal instances.

Limited teacher knowledge is associated with lower levels of student learning. In addition, teachers are more likely to eliminate elements of the curriculum that they are not confident in their ability to teach.

Identifying the few key issues that the OAG wants to ensure all students learn, and narrowing the focus of the trainings and curriculum to target these areas may increase teacher knowledge and student learning.

Additionally, the OAG is working to provide a resource for teachers that will provide more detail on the legal aspects of the curriculum, and the OAG continues to act as a valuable resource to teachers who have specific questions.

Although most teachers are successful, teachers find it very difficult to cover all of the **p.a.p.a.** units, and many comment that it is repetitive in some ways. Teachers are modifying the curriculum, which generally means shortening it.

To increase fidelity to the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**, the OAG should identify areas in the curriculum that are repetitive and highlight how each session is distinguished from all others. In addition, the OAG should identify areas of the curriculum that are complementary or similar to elements of the existing health curriculum. Helping teachers and principals understand how to incorporate **p.a.p.a.** into their existing health program will likely increase fidelity to the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** across the state.

The OAG is beginning to modify their trainings to address the fact that many districts are beginning to teach **p.a.p.a.** to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. The OAG may consider modifying the curriculum for various age group students; one for younger students that focuses primarily on healthy relationships and optimal

sequencing behavior, and one for older students that focuses more heavily on the legal aspects of paternity establishment and the rights and responsibilities of early parenting.

**TABLE 7:  
TEACHERS' OPINIONS REGARDING THE  
RELEVANCE OF THE p.a.p.a. CURRICULUM**

	(%) Agree or Strongly Agree
The <b>p.a.p.a. Curriculum</b> addresses issues that are relevant to my students.	83.8
The curriculum should be mandatory for all Texas high school students.	67.5
The curriculum will change my students'...	
Attitudes toward parenting.	62.8
Behavior with regard to parenting.	62.8
Attitudes toward relationships.	65.0
Behavior with regard to relationships.	53.5

Responses from sample of 73 **p.a.p.a.** teachers.

**TABLE 8:  
TEACHERS' OPINIONS REGARDING THE  
QUALITY OF THE p.a.p.a. CURRICULUM  
(%)**

	U	A	E
The Student Workbook	7	65	28
The Teacher's Guide	2	54	44
Discussion Questions	3	62	35
The DVD	8	52	40
Overall Quality of Curriculum	1	61	38

Results based on statewide teacher survey. N= 363.  
U=unacceptable; A=acceptable; E=excellent

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## PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

In fall 2008, we spoke with 59 principals to solicit their participation in the evaluation study and to determine their opinions about the **p.a.p.a.**

**Curriculum.** Most principals admitted that they had not actually reviewed the curriculum, but all had reviewed the curriculum summary provided by the OAG's office, and many had spoken to their health teachers about the curriculum.

### **Principals support the goals of p.a.p.a. and believe it is relevant to their students.**

Overwhelmingly, principals laud the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum.** They believe that the concepts covered in the curriculum are essential for their students to know prior to graduating from high school, and they appreciate the balance **p.a.p.a.** provides between technical information regarding parental responsibilities and paternity establishment with discussions about making responsible choices.

Almost all principals understood that **p.a.p.a.** is not a "sex-ed" curriculum. Most, however, commented that **p.a.p.a.** provided a valuable addition to their current "abstinence-only" curricula. The principals consider **p.a.p.a.** to be "reality based" and something that their students can relate to.

One principal of a large high school in the study commented: *"I like that these topics will reach more students. I think this will help students think about responsibility and reality. Currently we have 62 girls who are pregnant in our school."*

Another principal said: *"I am enthusiastic about it and feel like the program will be useful. It will enlighten them to make better decisions down the road. If it makes a difference for one student, it is worth it."*

**Principals have limited concerns regarding the content of the curriculum.** A few principals worried initially that the curriculum would "glamorize" being pregnant, but these concerns were largely put to rest when they actually examined the curriculum and observed students in the classroom.

Several principals anticipated that their students' parents would have concerns with the curriculum. All principals reported that the parents were either supportive of its content or that they had not heard any parental feedback. No teacher commented that parents had raised concerns, although principals from more advantaged schools were more likely to anticipate parent concerns.

**Principals have mixed feelings regarding the curriculum being mandatory, but demonstrate strong willingness to implement it.** Many principals were unaware that the curriculum was now a mandatory part of the health curriculum. The letter the OAG's office sent about the evaluation study that indicated that the curriculum is mandatory was the first information that some had received about **p.a.p.a.** Most learned that this curriculum was to be offered in their health classes because of the training that their health teachers received.

Principals are not opposed to **p.a.p.a.** being taught in their schools, but some principals are concerned about an additional mandate. Principals from more advantaged schools showed the most concern for the mandate, and these principals were the least likely to feel that the curriculum was relevant to their students. Below are a few selected comments from principals who opposed the mandate:

*"It's just one more thing that has to be done."*

*"We are mandated to death and it should not be up to the schools to fix all of the social woes."*

*"No administrators like another mandate to keep up with, but this is very important information for the kids to learn."*

Many of the principals strongly supported the mandate and thought that making it mandatory is the only way to ensure that all children will receive it. One principal commented:

*"I have no problem with it being mandatory. Anything we can do to make kids more aware, we have got to do it!!! This is something schools have to do because there isn't enough parental support on this issue. They need to be taught to think before acting."*

**Principals have some concerns about how to incorporate p.a.p.a. into their existing schedules and curriculum.** Many high schools have begun using block scheduling which means that their courses meet every other day for 90 minutes at a time. The **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** was designed for 1 hour periods, and thus some principals shared concerns about how their teachers would modify **p.a.p.a.** to accommodate this difference.

Principals also had concerns about how their health teachers would modify their existing curriculum to incorporate the additional 14 hours required by **p.a.p.a.** Most principals were not sure how their teachers would make this modification, but recognized parallels between the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** and other elements of the existing health curriculum that could be replaced with **p.a.p.a.**

**Health courses are increasingly being taught to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students because of full high school schedules.** Many principals noted that health is taught in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade in their district or that the district is moving in that direction. Most high schools still offer health, but as an elective course that students can take at any time throughout their high school tenure.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The OAG's office has increased their communication with principals throughout the state, and increasingly principals are becoming more familiar with **p.a.p.a.**

To the extent possible, the OAG's office should provide guidance to the principals and districts on how to incorporate **p.a.p.a.** into the existing health curriculum.

They should also provide clear suggestions on how to modify the curriculum for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students, and how to modify **p.a.p.a.** for block scheduling.

These measures will help to increase fidelity to the curriculum and allay most concerns principals have regarding the implementation of **p.a.p.a.**

Overall, principals are highly supportive of the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**, but could use more guidance with regard to implementation.

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## SUMMARY

The **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** is an innovative and unique high school curriculum developed by the Child Support Division of the Texas Office of the Attorney General to teach adolescents about the rights, responsibilities, and realities of being a parent.

The program has wide support from principals, teachers, and students who believe that it provides "realistic" information to teens that educates them on the facts of being a parent and influences their attitudes toward marriage and childbearing.

The results of the evaluation showed that after exposure to the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**, students were more likely to want to delay childbearing until after marriage and they were more likely to value the importance of a fathers' legal and social involvement.

In addition, students' knowledge regarding the costs associated with being a parent increased and they had greater knowledge of the legal issues that unmarried parents face.

Students' overall level of knowledge increased by 13% between the pre and post assessments, and gains in knowledge were greatest on the issues that are most unique to the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum**.

Although gains in knowledge were similar for most students, students most at risk of becoming a teen parent have the lowest level of knowledge prior to **p.a.p.a.** and demonstrate the greatest need for the curriculum.

Teachers and principals overwhelmingly agree that the issues covered in **p.a.p.a.** are relevant and should be taught to their students prior to graduating high school. Principals are generally supportive of the mandate for the curriculum and consider **p.a.p.a.** to be "reality based" and an important complement to other programs.

Although this evaluation cannot determine whether increases in students' knowledge and attitudes regarding parenting, paternity establishment, and healthy relationships will lead to significant changes in students' behavior, the **p.a.p.a. Curriculum** is a necessary first step toward affecting teens and may provide a valuable intervention to help teens make more responsible choices.

For more information or to request a copy of this report, please contact Dr. Cynthia Osborne at  
cosborne@prc.utexas.edu

For more information on the Parenting and Paternity Awareness (p.a.p.a.) Curriculum, visit the OAG  
website: <http://www.oag.state.tx.us/cs/ofi/papa/>