Executive Summary

Scholars at Utah State University and elsewhere continue to document the efficacy of relationship education. See https://extension.usu.edu/hru/additional-resources/research

This report documents the impacts of the USU Relationship Skills contract for high school students. The Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS) partners with Utah State University (USU) Cooperative Extension to offer relationship education in select high schools. This report covers activities from July 2020 through December 2022. Significant accomplishments are highlighted below:

DWS Contract
- The interagency agreement with USU was executed on October 15, 2020.

Course Efficacy
- As the intent of this program is to support select TANF purposes, we measure related outcomes, such as healthy relationship boundaries, confidence in one's ability to form and maintain healthy relationships, and the ability to recognize warning signs in a potentially unhealthy relationship.
- Quantitative *and* qualitative analyses of survey data continue to indicate general improvement in key course concepts. The results demonstrate an increase in protective behaviors and attitudes and a decrease in risky behaviors and attitudes that research has shown correlate with the targeted TANF purposes.
- Survey results indicate very high levels of participant satisfaction.

Program Details

Courses and Venues

We served high schools during health and adult roles classes, offering the *How to PICK a Partner* program (also known as *How to Avoid Falling for a Jerk or Jerkette;* abbreviated *PICK).* High school courses provided 4 hours of programming to fit classroom schedules.

Program Reach

The table below shows the number of courses offered and completed. Between July 2020 and December 2022, we offered 405 high school courses and completed 387 courses. A total of 8,091 students participated.

Contract Fulfillment to Date

Our progress from July 2020 through December 2022 for our high school programs is detailed below.

	High School
Courses Offered	405
Courses Completed	387
Participants Served	8,091

The following table provides participants' demographic data.

Participant Demographics: High School Programs[1]

	High School
Total Attendance	8,091
Survey Participants	5,931
Mean Age	15.5 years ($SD=.75$)
Sex	
Male	55%
Female	44%
Other	1%
Ethnicity	
Caucasian	86%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%
African-American	2%
Native American	2%
Other	8%
Hispanic/Latino(a)	16%
Relationship Status	
Single	74%
Dating	26%

Participant Feedback

High school participants completed a course evaluation, which asked: (1) if participants would recommend the course to others, (2) how useful the information was, and (3) their assessment of the educator. Participant feedback on these questions was overwhelmingly favorable, as at least 85% of high school participants expressed agreement with all three formative evaluation measures (see the graph below).

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[1] Reflects data entered as of December 31, 2022.

High School PICK Formative Evaluation

Chart legend: Strongly Agree (green), Agree (blue), Mixed (orange), Disagree (yellow), Strongly Disagree (red). Categories on x-axis: Would Recommend, Information Was Useful, Educator Quality. Y-axis: 0% to 100%.
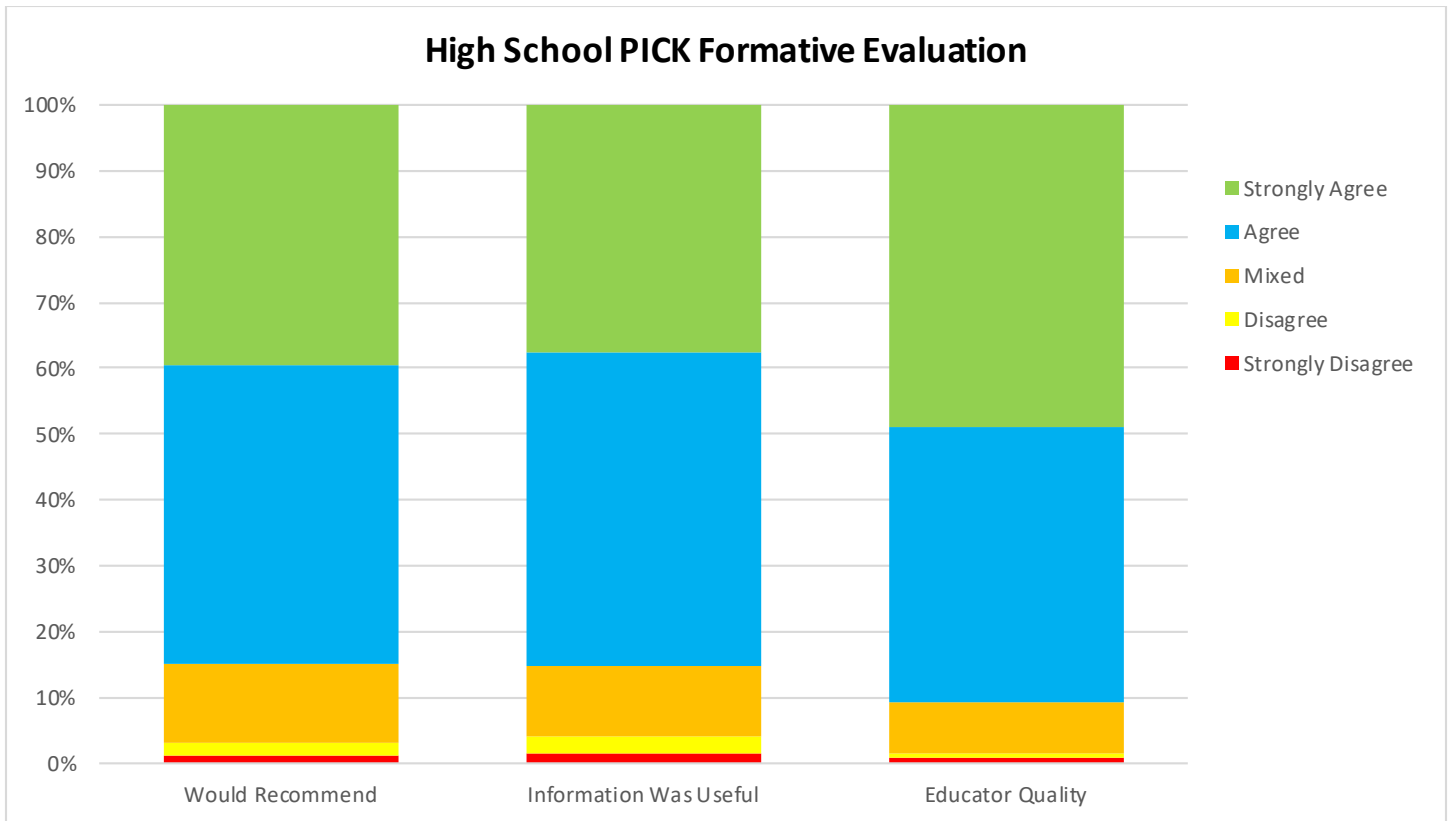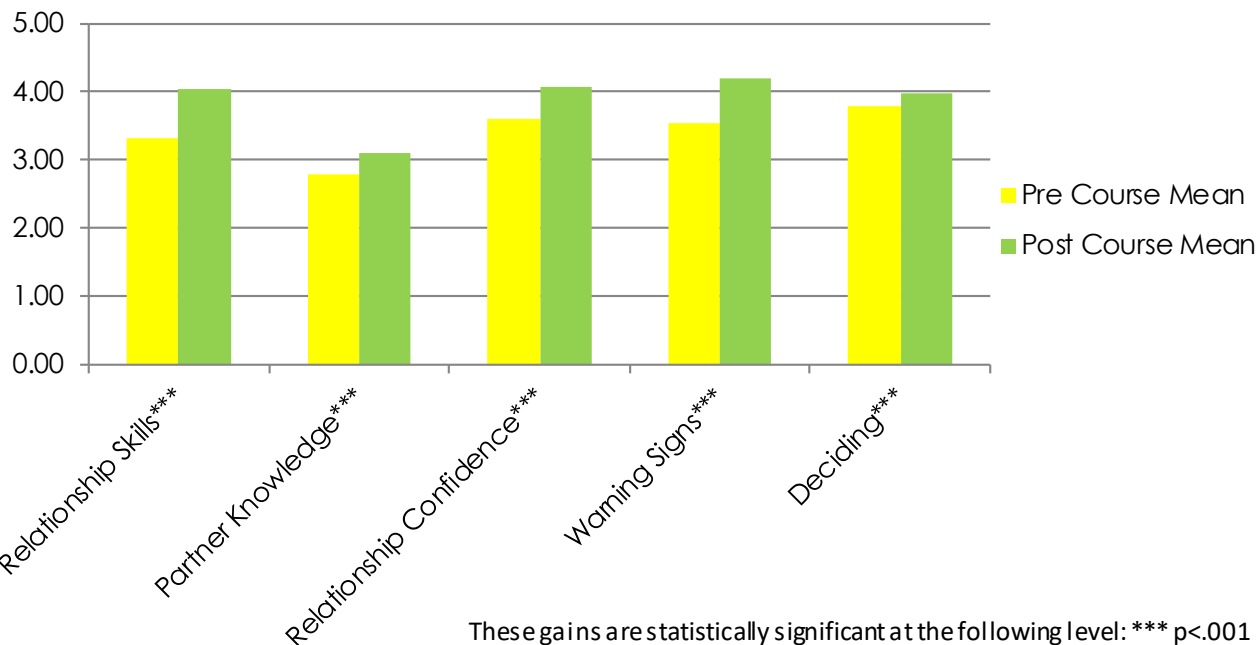
Course Impact

To examine program outcomes, we collected numerical (quantitative) data, and written (qualitative) data. We statistically compared quantitative responses to questions before and after the courses to see how participation led to changes in attitudes, beliefs, and understanding of key course concepts. We also gathered written statements from participants about their experiences. We begin with a brief description of course objectives, then we provide quantitative and qualitative data for key course concepts based on data available at the time of this report.

How to PICK a Partner – High School Sites

A youth version of the *PICK* curriculum was delivered to high school students. Participants learned steps to building high-quality, long-lasting relationships. Measured outcomes included the skills needed for a healthy relationship ("Relationship Skills"), knowledge of one's partner ("Partner Knowledge"), confidence in one's ability to form and maintain healthy relationships ("Relationship Confidence"), the ability to recognize warning signs in a potentially unhealthy relationship ("Warning Signs"), and the ability to make conscientious decisions within relationships. Higher scores indicated higher levels of agreement or perceived importance. From "Pre" to "Post," statistically significant improvement occurred for all outcomes.

PICK Program Outcomes
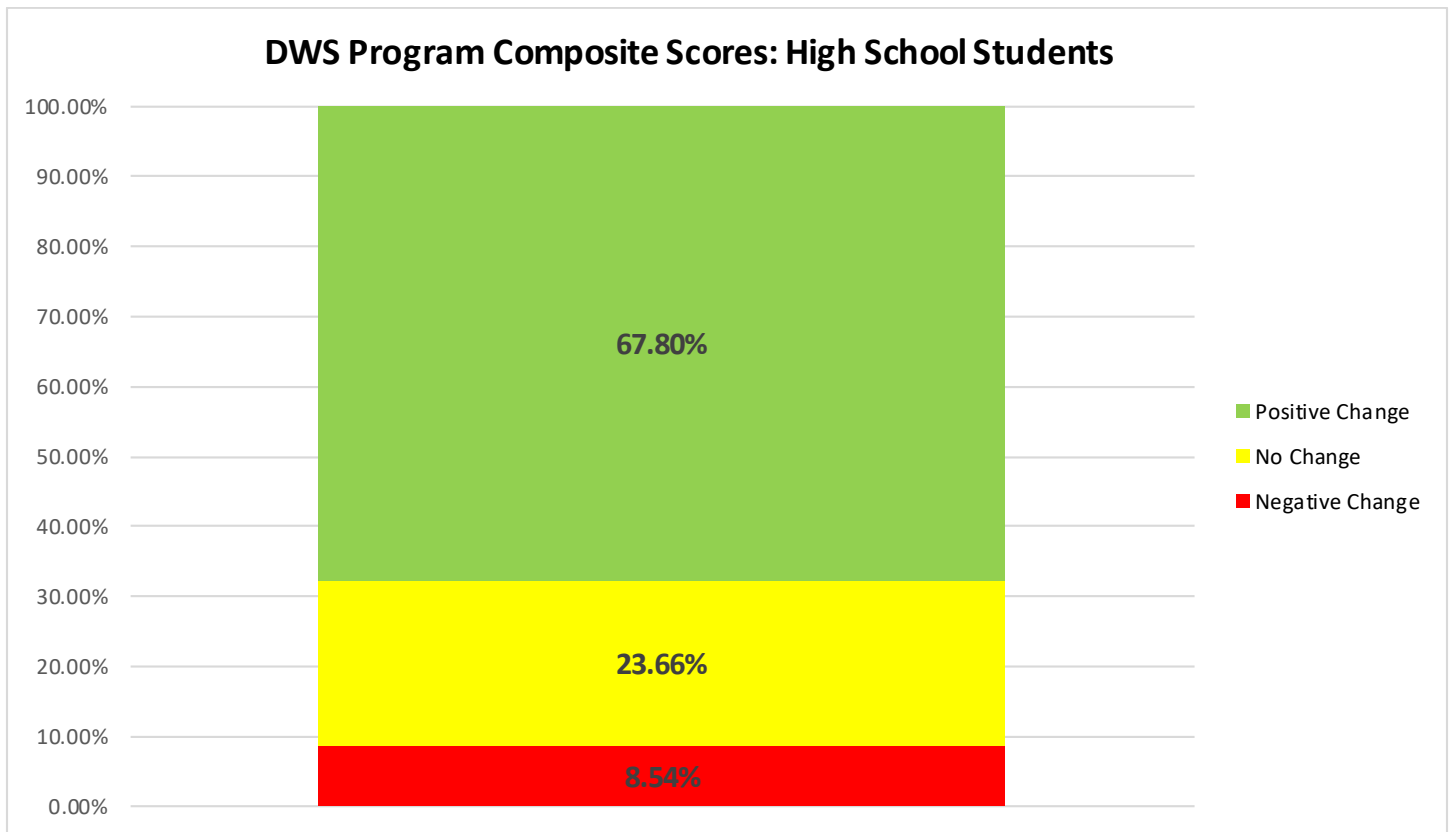## High School Sites
July 2020 - December 2022

These gains are statistically significant at the following level: *** $p < .001$

Representative Comments from Participants

PICK – High School
What did you like most about the course?
• *"The RAM order and how to have a good relationship with someone."*
• *"Discussing how family can influence you, but you can change things."*
• *"Exploring the different methods of how people interact."*
• *"The facilitator did a great job of getting us to interact."*

Is Anyone Better Off?

Pre- to post-test changes in participant skills and attitudes exceeded anticipated levels, as 91.46% of high school participants improved or maintained on targeted outcomes.

DWS Program Composite Scores: High School Students

Legend:
- Positive Change (green)
- No Change (yellow)
- Negative Change (red)

Values shown: 67.80% (Positive Change), 23.66% (No Change), 8.54% (Negative Change)

Conclusion

Overall, the data presented in this report highlight positive impacts for the vast majority of participants. Participants overwhelmingly reported positive outcomes and satisfaction with the course offered via this Utah Department of Workforce Services and Utah State University collaboration.

Our healthy relationship curricula are based on sound social science research and the data in this report showed participants learned important skills and knowledge. Specifically, participants demonstrated an increase in protective behaviors and attitudes and a decrease in risky behaviors and attitudes that research has shown correlate with the targeted TANF purposes:

- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies (TANF purpose 3).
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families (TANF purpose 4).