

Reducing Unintended Teenage Pregnancy: A Movie-based Educational Approach

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Background

Reduction of unintended adolescent pregnancy rates remains on the international policy agenda, with recognition of the value of appropriate and engaging relationship and sexuality education (RSE) in this process. Building on nursing research which focused on adolescent men and teenage pregnancy (Lohan et al., 2010; 2011; 2012) the research team at Queen's University Belfast worked with key stakeholders and end-users to develop a classroom-based resource which aims to increase young people's intention to avoid teenage pregnancy and self-efficacy in communicating about this issue.

Project Overview

The current phase of this ESRC-funded project runs for 12 months from April 2012. It involves development, preliminary evaluation and promotion of the 'If I Were Jack...' relationship and sexuality education resource. The project aims to ensure maximum community-level impact by working with key stakeholder partners to develop a resource suitable for delivery within the RSE curricula of post-primary schools in Northern Ireland and Ireland and to develop mechanisms for promoting the resource internationally.



Innovative Approach

'If I were Jack...' is the only resource of its kind that combines the following elements:

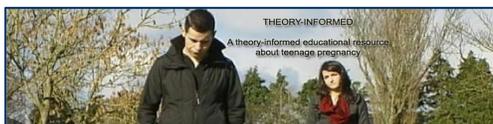
- uses an interactive video drama to immerse young people in a case scenario of an unintended pregnancy in their lives;
- develops this case scenario of an unintended pregnancy from a teenage man's point of view;
- targets the development of awareness and behavioural skills in boys as well as girls to avoid a teenage pregnancy; and
- incorporates communication about teenage pregnancy within the classroom as well with parents/guardians.



Ensuring Impact

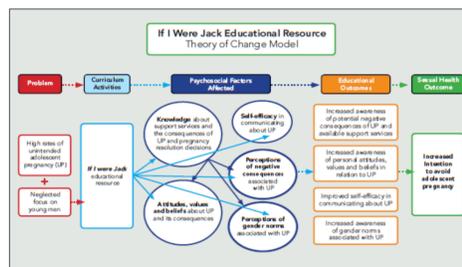
RSE can be a controversial issue and one of the key challenges has been ensuring that the resource reaches the target population and is included in the RSE curricula in Ireland and Northern Ireland. We have developed a number of strategies to ensure this is achieved:

1. **Maximising Credibility:** developing a theory-informed, evidence-based yet innovative resource which builds on previous research and is amenable to rigorous evaluation.



Theory-informed

The intervention is based on the application of the theory of planned behaviour to RSE intervention and targets a number of psychosocial variables which are hypothesised to lead to increased intention to avoid teenage pregnancy.



Evidence-Based

The development of the resource is informed by best practice principles derived from systematic reviews of effective RSE delivery:

- The mechanisms of change are explicit;
- The IVD is developed using local actors and local settings to facilitate a targeted and personalized message;
- There is active participation by users to increase self-awareness, 'stop and think' strategies, and build communication skills;
- It explicitly challenges gender norms relating to pregnancy prevention;
- It incorporates a substantive element of child-parental communication;
- It uses locally produced drama to make RSE more enjoyable.



2. **Maximising Acceptability:** ensuring acceptability by involving key stakeholders in resource development and using an educational modality that engages young people.

The intervention has been designed to fit within the RSE curricula in Ireland and Northern Ireland by a team of researchers working with experts from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Public Health Agency, the Council for the Curriculum Education and Assessment, the Crisis Pregnancy Programme Ireland and the Department for Education and Skills Ireland and is grounded in our research with teacher trainers, teachers, parents and young people.



If I Were Jack Project Research Team and Expert Advisory Group

3. **Promotion:** ensuring that the resource is promoted appropriately by utilising new technologies such as video and the internet to increase national and international impact.

Dedicated website



Expert-endorsed promotional video

References

- Lohan, M., Cruise, S., O'Halloran, P., Alderdice, F., & Hyde, A. (2010). Adolescent men's attitudes in relation to pregnancy and pregnancy outcomes: A systematic review of the literature from 1980-2009. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 47*, 327-345.
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- Lohan, M., O'Halloran, P., Cruise, S., Alderdice, F. and Hyde, A. (2012). *If I were Jack, Teenage Men's Attitudes and Decision-making in relation to an Unintended Pregnancy*. Final report. Dublin: Health Services Executive (Irl) Crisis Pregnancy Programme.

Supported by



For further information

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More information on the project can be obtained at www.qub.ac.uk/IfIWereJack

