

UNC INJURY PREVENTION RESEARCH CENTER ANNOUNCES RAPE PREVENTION EDUCATION EVALUATION STUDY

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Chapel Hill, NC– The UNC Injury Prevention Research Center announces today funding for an evaluative study of "Wise Guys: The Next Level," a rape prevention education (RPE)-funded program that focuses on adolescent and young men. This study, funded by the CDC, will assess the effect of "Wise Guys: The Next Level" on preventing rape and other types of sexual violence. It will also investigate the program's secondary effects of preventing dating violence, bullying, high-risk sexual behaviors, and sexual harassment.

The study will be conducted by a multidisciplinary research team at the UNC Injury Prevention Research Center, with faculty from UNC's Health Behavior department in the Gillings School of Global Public Health and UNC's School of Social Work. The program developer and implementer, Children's Home Society of North Carolina, based in Greensboro NC, will also be involved in planning and conducting the study.

"Sexual violence is a highly prevalent and deeply significant social and public health problem," said co-principal investigator for the evaluation, Dr. Kathryn E. (Beth) Moracco, a faculty member in the department of Health Behavior at the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health. "Despite the magnitude and severity of sexual violence, little is known about how best to prevent sexual violence perpetration. This critical gap in the sexual violence prevention evidence limits our ability to implement comprehensive programs to prevent and reduce sexual violence perpetration."

"Working through state health departments, such as Injury and Violence Prevention Branch in the NC Department of Health and Human Services, the CDC has provided financial support for many Rape Prevention Education (RPE) programs like 'Wise Guys: The Next Level,'" said co-principal investigator for the evaluation, Dr. Rebecca Macy, who is a faculty member with UNC's School of Social Work. "However the effectiveness of most of these community-based rape prevention programs remains unknown because there have been very few rigorous, randomized studies like this one. This study is also novel because it will add to practice-based evidence on strategies for sexual violence prevention."

Representatives from the Injury and Violence Prevention Branch in the NC Department of Health and Human Services and from the North Carolina Coalition Against Sexual Assault will serve on the study's Advisory Board, along with other research and practice-based experts in rape prevention from NC and the USA.

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