Background

Introduction
The importance of positive role models cannot be emphasized enough. Seeing people from similar circumstances excel and help you make smart choices can be a powerful tool in improving your life. Mentorship, especially in marginalized communities, can help young people stay in school, avoid risky behavior and give them the tools to deal with the struggles they face.

Target Population
- African American male adolescents (12-18) living in wards 7 and 8 of Washington D.C.-based at Ballou High School
- African American adolescents are more likely to experience psychological distress because they experience discrimination, are often marginalized in society, and underutilize available health services
- In Wards 7 and 8 include many low-income households which makes accessing care and living a healthy lifestyle challenging
- All the things they are going through create stress and can make them feel like they are alone
- Our program will focus on male teenagers who do not have male role models (father figures) and grow up around self-identified negative influences

Health Improvement Goals

Our vision for Everything 4 YOUTH
- Our main goal is to motivate and empower African American male teenagers who feel alone, face various barriers to health, and experience stress daily.
- The ‘Everything 4 YOUTH’ program we have created will improve the mental state of African American male teenagers in Ward 7 and 8 by providing the supports teenagers need
- They will learn the benefit of mindfulness, making healthy decisions, and be able to connect with local mentors who understand their situation
- Cultivate a culture of positivity and equip young men to reach their full potential and give back to their community

Program Activities

Intervention Objectives:
1. Engage mentees in activities with their peers.
2. Engage mentees in stress-relieving activities like yoga and meditation, giving them tools to cope with daily stress.
3. Teach mentees to have a healthier diet.
4. Encourage mentees to decrease participation in activities that can bring them into contact with the law while increasing their participation in school-organized activities.
5. Educate mentees so they have a positive perspective on their community and are motivated to improve their living conditions.
6. Provide mentees with tools for coping, a safe environment, structured learning activities, fun, and guidance for their future.
7. Provide mentees with mentors whom they can talk to.
8. Educate mentees about self-care.

Sample Curriculum

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Life lessons</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>How do they relate to making our health goals?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12-14</td>
<td>Making healthy meals</td>
<td>Pre-high school nutrition course</td>
<td>LIFESKILLS Prep</td>
<td>Planning and managing the health of others besides selecting courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-17</td>
<td>Life mapping</td>
<td>College readiness</td>
<td>SAT Prep Employment opportunities</td>
<td>By participating in these activities the mentees are encouraged to make healthy decisions from an early age that could benefit them later in life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18+</td>
<td>Open Mic</td>
<td>Community service hours</td>
<td>Internships</td>
<td>Each stage teaches the mentees how to improve and how to expand in different challenges in their future lives.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Program Evaluation

Program evaluation is an important tool that will allow us to assess whether or not we are meeting our objectives. A simple tool to collect feedback is a survey. As such, a pre-program survey among participants at Ballou High School will be conducted before the start of the program. At 3, 6, and 12 months, follow-up surveys will be conducted to allow us to track changes in attitude and/or productivity of students. These surveys will also allow us to get anonymous feedback about satisfaction with the program. To obtain qualitative data we will speak with the mentees that are willing to reflect on their experience and host casual conversations with the mentors as well. These focus groups are also useful because they can help us determine how engaged our participants are with the program.

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References


