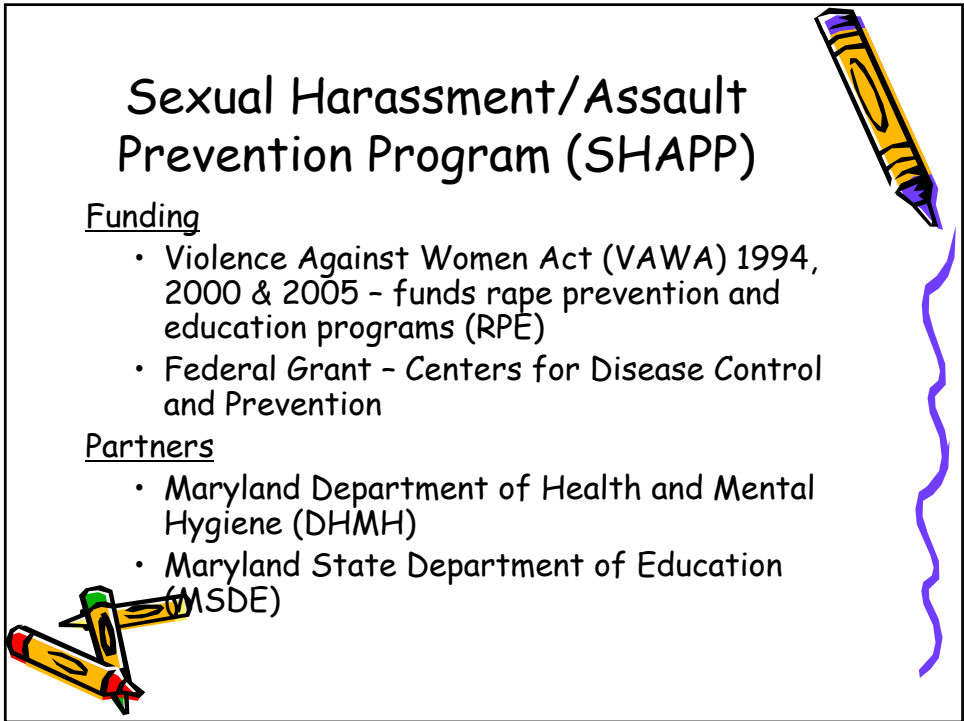


# Integrating Sexual Assault Prevention into the School Curriculum

**Men Can Stop Rape Conference  
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# Sexual Harassment/Assault Prevention Program (SHAPP)

Funding

- Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) 1994, 2000 & 2005 - funds rape prevention and education programs (RPE)
- Federal Grant - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Partners

- Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH)
- Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)

## COMAR (Code of Maryland Agency Regulations) - .03 School Safety

- All students in Maryland's public schools, without exception and regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, language, socioeconomic status, age, or disability, have the right to educational environments that are: (A) Safe; (B) Appropriate for academic achievement; and (C) Free from any form of harassment



## Maryland Voluntary State Curriculum (Health Education)

- 5.0 Safety and Injury Prevention - Students will demonstrate the ability to apply prevention and intervention knowledge, skills, and processes to promote safe living in the home, school, and community.



## Maryland's Model Policy to Address Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation

- Directive of Maryland General Assembly
- MSDE collaborated with various local school systems
- Finalized February 2009



## Sexual Harassment/Assault Prevention Program (SHAPP)

### Launch

- September 1997 with 5 school systems
  - 2009 - 10 school systems
- Initially a public health block grant - required 25% earmark for education of school-aged children
- VAWA 2000 - no longer required 25% earmark but continued school-based program initiative



## Sexual Harassment/Assault Prevention Program (SHAPP)

### Funding for:

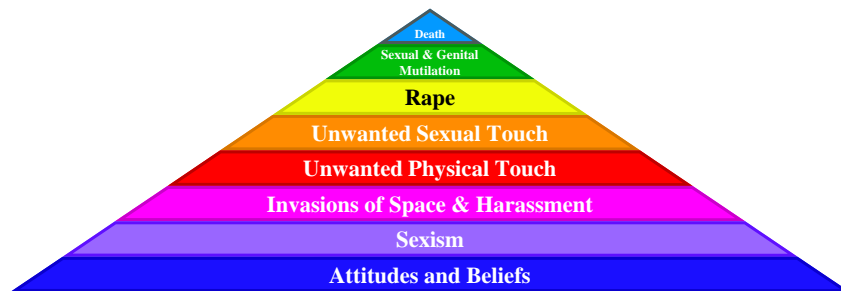
- teacher training
- curriculum materials
- student activities

Topics - bullying, dating violence, sexual harassment, healthy relationships, role of bystander, sexual assault, etc...



## Continuum of Sexual Violence

Source: NSVRC 2007 presentation



## Implementation

- Interagency contract between DHMH & MSDE
- MSDE receives funding from DHMH to administer SHAPP
- School systems submit proposals to MSDE
  - DHMH assists with proposal review and approval



## Implementation

- Team approach/Multi-Disciplinary
  - Health Education Specialists
  - Pupil Personnel Workers
  - Administration
  - Classroom teachers
  - Curriculum Specialists
  - Resource Officers
- Mandatory bi-annual grantee training hosted by DHMH & MSDE



## Implementation

- Implementation of a sexual harassment & assault prevention action plan developed by school systems
- Instruction delivered primarily in health education classes
  - Augmented with special assemblies and programs



## Implementation

- Curriculum: In-house & Pre-packaged
  - Age appropriate
  - Culturally sensitive
  - Approved by local school board
  - Examples: Second Step, Olweus, Be The Change, Steps to Respect, & Dating Violence 101



## "If I Knew Then What I Know Now"

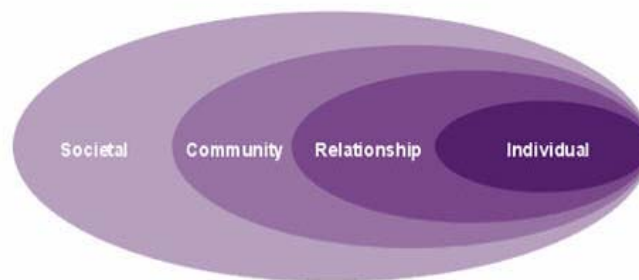
- High School
  - Friend being tormented by two classmates
- College
  - Best friend in an abusive relationship



## The Ecological Model

Source: *Sexual Violence Prevention: Beginning the Dialogue* by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2004.

- Four-level model; framework for understanding complex interplay of individual, relationship, social, political, cultural, and environmental factors that influence sexual violence.



## Use of Ecological Model

- Individual - counseling
- Relationship (classroom) - Bystander intervention skill development
- Community (school) - change school climate
- Societal (district) - institute supportive policies



## Primary Prevention Strategies

- Bystander intervention/response
- Engaging youth as agents of change
- Healthy relationships
- Healthy sexuality
- Challenging male stereotypes and gender roles
- Respect & tolerance of diversity





## Keys To Success

- Institutionalization
  - School System Ownership
  - Comprehensive Health Education Curriculum
  - Local policies and procedures
  - Each school system allowed to implement & tailor program for their audience



## Keys To Success

- Collaborations
  - School Environment
    - Multi-disciplinary team approach
    - Between elementary, middle & high schools
  - Community
    - Law enforcement - resource officers
    - Local rape crisis center



## School System Testimony

- Local school system involved in SHAPP for years experienced an alleged sexual assault incident at one of their high schools
- Superintendent convened a task force to study sexual assault/harassment prevention & intervention



## School System Testimony

- The lead person for the SHAPP program appointed lead on the task force
- Actions completed as result:
  - Sexual assault/harassment prev. curriculum created on all grade levels (health & guidance)
  - PK-3 Personal Body Safety program
  - Created protocol to respond to victims of sexual assault
  - Increased attention to staff & student safety (before, during & after school)
- Prior SHAPP involvement provided foundation & seamless inclusion of new initiatives



# SHAPP Evaluation

Goals of Evaluation:

1. To identify best practices in the implementation of school-based sexual violence prevention education and
2. To compare perceptions of need for programs that address sexual harassment and assault in schools by teachers, parents and students in a community involved in SHAPP as compared to a non-involved community.



# SHAPP Evaluation

- Evaluation Challenge - The Curriculum
  - The school systems were using a variety of curricula from in-house developed to pre-packaged.
  - School systems were using either one or the other or a mix of both



## SHAPP Evaluation Phase One

- Gathering and evaluating the sexual harassment/bullying prevention curricula or programs used in the 13 participating SHAPP schools
- Draft version of the Health Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (HECAT) (CDC, 2004).



## SHAPP Evaluation Phase Two

- 36 participants completed the Best Practices Questionnaire (BPQ)
- Six domains were assessed: 1) Curriculum Credibility; 2) Curriculum Efficacy; 3) Curriculum Integration/Readiness; 4) Curriculum Training; 5) Curriculum Implementation and 6) Monitoring and Evaluation.



## Phase Two: Key Finding

- Based on the results of the HECAT review and BPQ, one jurisdiction participating in SHAPP was deemed the most representative jurisdiction to participate in the evaluation (used Olweus).



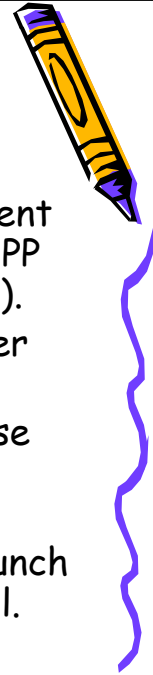
## SHAPP Evaluation Phase Three

- School climate surveys.
- Focus groups (teacher, student, and parent).
- Assessment of behavioral incidents from public school records.



## Comparison of SHAPP & Non-SHAPP Schools

- SHAPP middle school had a larger student body (852 students) than the non-SHAPP (NSHAPP) middle school (555 students).
- Both schools had almost an equal number of male and female students.
- SHAPP school was less ethnically diverse than the NSHAPP school,
- Students from the SHAPP school were less likely to receive free or reduced lunch than students from the NSHAPP school.



## Participants

- 113 faculty and staff completed school climate measures
- 48 faculty/staff, students, and parents participating in focus groups.



## SHAPP: Key Findings "School Climate Survey"

- In the SHAPP participating school relative to the non-participating school:
  - School climate was rated better
  - Teachers and administrators more frequently communicated about and fairly enforced rules against sexual harassment
  - Staff reported students and teachers were more likely to feel safe



## SHAPP: Key Findings "Focus Groups"

- SHAPP participating school had more positive opinions about their school's prevention efforts than those from the NSHAPP participating school.
  - A major theme throughout both groups was the need for consistency, fairness, and accountability for the prevention of sexual harassment/assault and bullying.
- Both schools were experiencing some problems in these areas; however the NSHAPP participating school reported having more severe problems.



## SHAPP: Key Findings "Behavioral Incidents"

- In both schools, the reported suspension rates for sexual harassment/assault behavioral incidents from academic years 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 were low.
- Both schools experienced a 50% decrease in incidents during the 2004-2005 academic year from the prior year.



## SHAPP: Key Findings "Behavioral Incidents"

- However, the NSHAPP participating school experienced higher levels of suspensions for physical threats and fights than did the SHAPP participating school.
- Both schools had an increase in the number of suspensions from academic year 2003-2004 to 2004-2005. However, the NSHAPP participating school experienced more of an increase than did the SHAPP participating school.





## SHAPP: Implications

- The implementation of sexual harassment/sexual assault and bullying prevention programs may well result in a more positive school climate, and an increased sense of safety among students and staff.
- School records of behavioral incidents of students were also suggestive of the benefits of systematic school programming to prevent and address bullying and sexual assault.
- Maryland is showing true leadership in advancing a statewide agenda to prevent and address this important public health concern.



## Challenges

- Time constraints - professional development & classroom time
- No Child Left Behind/"teaching to test"
- Reluctance to discuss rape prevention in some school systems



## Challenges

- In-house developed curriculum vs. Evidence-Based pre-packaged curriculum
- School systems using a variety of curricula to implement the program



## Lessons Learned

- Collaborate with your state education agency
- Collaborate with your community partners
- Use a multi-disciplinary team approach
- Use evidence-based curriculum
- Institutionalize the program



## Contact Information

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## QUESTIONS????

