Green Dot

Reviewer Comments

Reviewer 1 Comments:

- Because the Green Dot program is significantly different from other curricula that we have reviewed, it was a little difficult to assess the program according to the prevention matrics developed by the IDOE (assessing for the degree to which programs align with prevention guidelines). Significant differences include:
    - The curriculum wasn't specifically created for secondary school classrooms, but for broader university/community level prevention efforts. This doesn't mean that it won't work in this setting, it just wasn't created with that specific lens.
    - Rather than focusing on changing participants' attitudes and knowledge, Green Dot focuses mainly on behavioral change.
    - Instead of addressing the behaviors of potential victims or perpetrators, Green Dot engages all students as potentially active bystanders. The focus is more on this avenue for a solution than on discussing the causes and consequences of teen dating violence.
- Strengths:
    - Strong research base. Students are engaged with the expectation of future action; as such, skill practice is emphasized. Strategically designed to foster an active bystander ripple effect. Adaptation according to population is encouraged.
- Limitations:
    - Because the emphasis is on bystander action, there is little discussion of social justice. Similarly, healthy relationships and sexuality are hinted at as the end goal, but are not intentionally articulated. I would have liked to see the outcome evaluation information or tools. The workbook wasn't included so I was unable to assess the exercises.

Reviewer 2 Comments:

General Notes About Green Dot: Green Dot is an innovative, comprehensive strategy that may be better described as a social change movement than a prevention curriculum or program. It is a broad-based strategy that uses research from multiple disciplines to generate action from influential people to prevent violence within their spheres of influence. Behaviors and actions that counter violence are called "green dots" (to counter the "red dots" of violent acts). The

general idea is that leaders of subgroups within communities influence others through their thoughts, attitudes, actions, and behaviors. If leaders are given the tools and skills to create social change on some level within their communities, their resulting actions and behaviors will diffuse across their peer groups, slowly affecting social norms and culture. Additionally, a "brand" must be created to build consensus around no-tolerance for violence, and the brand must be as explicitly inclusive of as many subgroups as possible and not exclude anyone. There are three major Green Dot strategies: a) a persuasive speech that introduces a community to the concept of Green Dot; b) a bystander intervention education and skill-building seminar, targeting community and subgroup leaders; and c) a social marketing campaign to spread awareness of the Green Dot concept and visually demonstrate where action is taking place.

Green Dot is highly research-based and theoretically sound. Its major weakness in the context of this evaluation is the adaptability issue. Green Dot is based on several social theories that may not be readily understood by a middle and high school audience, and although it is important to develop leadership in those age groups to normalize anti-violence values at a young age, the manual does not offer much message adaptation assistance. Although in the instructor's manual there are some general ideas and principles offered about adaptation, the reviewer believes significantly more guidance would be required to make the strategies (in particular the bystander intervention thought changing processes) understandable for and relevant to a younger audience.

Additionally, Green Dot is an outcome-based strategy, and outcome-based prevention strategies are notoriously difficult to evaluate, so there is little to no evaluation capacity. This is reflected in the score. I chose to qualify this because Green Dot is could be a very promising strategy as it has such a strong research base. At this point, the field of prevention lacks sophisticated enough techniques to evaluate such outcome-based strategies in communities.

Green Dot could be very useful to schools and youth-serving organizations if staff and student leaders are identified to participate in the bystander intervention training modules and "diffuse" what they have learned. However, the modules would need quite a bit of adaptation to be age-appropriate for certain groups. **Because of its theoretical base and construction, Green Dot has the potential to be a very effective and high-quality social mobilization and change strategy; it may just not be the most appropriate tool for middle and high school demographics without significant adaptation.**

Guideline 1: There is really no emphasis on healthy sexuality in Green Dot, but through promotion of community values that communicate no-tolerance for violence, there is plenty of emphasis on the essential components of respect and healthy relationships in the bystander intervention modules.

Guideline 2: All four levels of the social ecology are addressed through the persuasive speech, the bystander intervention modules, and the social marketing campaigns. Green Dot is unique in that although the bystander intervention component does work primarily with individuals in helping them to recognize their thought processes around taking action to prevent violence and providing opportunities for skill development, emphasis is placed on the power of leaders to affect change in their communities through higher-level community and policy actions. For example, the training module provides examples of how business leaders, faith communities, politicians, school administrators, community leaders, etc. can define acceptable behavior and identify no-tolerance parameters and priorities in their spheres of influence. The Green Dot bystander intervention model is not just about intervening in relationship-level situations; it is also about changing community and policy environments to normalize no tolerance for violence.

There is not really an explicit statement of risk and protective factors targeted in the manual, although it is implied that gender socialization, institutionalized oppression, and other societal-level factors are major contributors to a culture that still tolerates violence.

Guideline 3 &4: Skill building and self-awareness activities provide excellent opportunities for participants in the bystander intervention modules to understand their own boundaries and reasons for not intervening to prevent violence in the past.

Guideline 5: Again, a common causal foundation (a theoretical explanation) for power-based personal violence" (Green Dot's term) is not really explicitly discussed in the manual. However, the intervention strategies of which Green Dot is comprised are based on solid research on social change processes drawn from multiple fields. Specifically, the bystander intervention modules were developed based on bystander literature, and the idea that people of influence can be effective in changing community beliefs and behaviors through their actions is based on social diffusion/diffusion of innovation theory. Finally, the idea of creating "green dots" to spread awareness of the actions people have committed to take comes from marketing/branding research.

Guideline 6: See general notes/comments.

Guideline 7: The Green Dot strategies emphasize inclusion and developing a "brand", or motivations for why groups should get involved. Green Dot recognizes that the strategies will not work if there is no "buy in" from different groups.

Guideline 8: See general notes/comments. There are some basic process evaluation tools, including facilitator self-evaluation forms, available in the manual.

Guideline 9: See general notes/comments.

Reviewer 3 Comments:

Somewhat difficult to review. Opening persuasive speech is one time exposure, so review is based on totality of program, including training. The training could impact a potentially small number of students, and the message may be a bit difficult for younger audiences to grasp. It may be difficult for a school to use this curriculum because they must have a person go through training with Green Dot, and the trained individual cannot train others. The presenter must use the curriculum in its entirety, which could be difficult for some schools. The content is very focused on college-aged students, and there is not much instruction on how to adapt the curriculum to a younger audience. I thought the material was a bit "wordy" and difficult to narrow down to main points at times, and there was a lot of build up to the actual curriculum. The program doesn't address broad social change, only immediate action.

Guideline 1: There does not seem to be much focus on healthy sexuality, and the healthy relationships piece only comes from trained bystanders encouraging others to become involved. The curriculum specifically does not look at gender, race, and other oppression issues, but they do emphasize that it is about power-based personal violence.

Guideline 2: Green Dot works at multiple levels, and within multiple settings in each level of the social ecology. It works well at individual, peer, and community levels, though it is somewhat weak with societal level. There does not appear to be a common set of risk/protective factors, aside from unequal power in relationships.

Guideline 3: The persuasive speech is a one=time presentation, but the training takes place over 6 hours, which can be done in one day, over several weeks, or in a weekend retreat. The curriculum encourages follow-up activities, and makes some suggestions, but does not include specific activities.

Guideline 4: This was the strongest aspect of the curriculum. The training offers multiple opportunities for participants to be engaged and active. The curriculum uses power point, small group, individual group, and activities, to engage multiple learning styles.

Guideline 5: The only common causal foundation noted is that violence is power-based, though there is little information about why this is true. The curriculum is based on solid scientific research and often encourages instructors to use participatory research to adapt the curriculum to their particular audience.

Guideline 6: The risk/protective factors addressed appear to be after the developmental state in which the problem behavior typically emerges. The content can be adjusted to make it developmentally appropriate for high school and college, though I'm not sure it would be appropriate for middle school as written.

Guideline 7: The curriculum encourages the presenter to consider the norms, culture, etc of the audience when planning the training, though the curriculum itself does not appear to specifically address the range of cultural beliefs, practice, and norms within a given set of participants.

Guideline 8: It was hard to determine if there was an evaluation plan or not. There was a speaker feedback form to help the instructor improve their speaking style and content, but I could not discern other process evaluation materials. It is clear that evaluation in encouraged, but I do not see any specific materials for outcome evaluation.

Guideline 9: The curriculum provided strong instructions for teachers and offered multiple teaching strategies. It also provided comprehensive support to help inform and enhance instruction.