Injury Prevention Poster #11

HOSPITAL-BASED INJURY & VIOLENCE INTERVENTION:
PROJECT READY (REALISTIC EDUCATION ABOUT DYING YOUNG)
Nichole Kent Spivey, MBA and Carol Ann Dean, RN, BSN
Palmetto Health Richland ACS Level I Trauma Center

Background: The reality is about one in five adolescent deaths are due to trauma. In the late 1990s, it was concerning that 9.4 percent of Palmetto Health’s (PH) trauma population was adolescents with preventable injuries. Henceforth, a reality-based education program called Project READY was created in 1999 to introduce adolescents to simulated experiences in a trauma center. The program presents a graphic and provocative look at risky behavior that is both shocking and riveting. The thought is if young people could see the broken bones, the disfigured bodies, and the blood splattered trail that results from risky behavior, then perhaps better decisions would be made and these behaviors deterred. Over time, Project READY has evolved into a multifaceted injury and violence prevention program due to a rise in falls/sports, all-terrain vehicle, and violence related-injuries among adolescents.

Method: During a five-and-a-half-hour Project READY session, participants converse with trauma surgeons; observe an operating room, emergency department (ED), and morgue; witness an actual trauma resuscitation or mock trauma scene in the ED; and interact with the rehabilitation team to experience daily challenges of patients. PH offers free monthly sessions to persons aged 13-21 and exclusive sessions for the Department of Juvenile Justice’s mandated referrals from judicial sentencing. The operational budget is roughly $12,000 annually. When considering cost of the program, the question arose as to whether there was statistical evidence to prove the program’s effectiveness in changing behaviors. Therefore, in 2014, PH sought to answer the question through a one-year IRB approved study by measuring the participants’ level of risky behavior prior to and after the program.

Results: In 2014, 221 adolescents participated in Project READY and 100 (45%) of the participants completed both the pre and post-test surveys. The survey consisted of injury and violence related questions from the validated National Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) questionnaire. The questions varied from how frequent the participant uses a seat belt while riding in a motor vehicle to how many physical fights they were involved in over a period of time. Demographics of the participants were, 66% black and 27% white. There were 120 males (54.8%) and 99 females (45.2%) with a median age of 15. Among several questions there was a significant decrease (21%) in the risk-taking behavior of participating in physical fights in the past thirty days. In the pre-test, 29 participants selected “Sometimes/Often/Always” involved in physical fights. Thirty days after participating in the program, there was a reduction from 29 to 8 participants selecting “sometimes/Often/Always” involved in physical fights.

Conclusion: There was a general trend of “decreased risky behaviors” which showed a behavioral change among participants and proved the hypothesis that the occurrence of risky behavior among adolescents will decrease after completing the program. Among certain questions, the decreases were not statistically significant (p <0.05) due to the small sample size. However, due to the findings of several decreased risk-taking behaviors, continued evaluation is warranted. A comprehensive curriculum lends the program for implementation at any trauma center.