

Evaluation of the GRADS Program

At Elko High School

by

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ABSTRACT

With the teen pregnancy rate for 15 – 19 years old in Nevada recorded as the highest in the Nation, the Graduation Reality and Dual Role Skills Program (GRADS) was initiated at Elko High School in 1996. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the GRADS program at Elko High School, by answering four questions:

1. Are repeat pregnancies being reduced by participation in this program?
2. Are birth weights in the average range for mothers enrolled in this program?
3. Is the dropout rate being reduced for teen parents in this program?
4. Are GRAD students developing into responsible parents for their children?

The data was collected from a survey designed specifically for this evaluation. There were 117 surveys sent out, of those 106 were returned (91%). The surveys were completed by former and current GRADS participants.

The literature review looked at five areas of special concern when dealing with teen parenting: Teens May Not be Prepared to be Parents, Keeping the Teen Parents in School, Need for Quality Childcare, Prenatal Care/Information and Social Support Groups. By comparing the results of the returned surveys and the literature review the effectiveness of the GRADS program will be evaluated for effectiveness of the program, now and for the future.

The survey and research yielded the following results: Birth weights are in the average range for 91.4% of teen mothers enrolled in the GRADS program compared with Nevada's average of 80.6% for teen mothers (NV Dept of Health and Human Services, 2006). Drop out rates decreased with 96.1% graduating from the GRADS program and earning their high school diploma, compared with Elko High School's graduation rate of 86.9% (NV Dept of Education, 2007). Ninety two of the 128 (71.8%) first born children are currently living with the mother, father or both the mother and father. Of the 128 participants 226 children are now with these teen parents. Long term rates will indicate the exponential value of the GRADS program in developing responsible parents.

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Chapter I: Introduction

The United States has long held the highest teen pregnancy rate in the industrialized world. Nevada in turn is leading the United States pregnancy rate in girls 15 – 19 (Meana & Thaler, 2004). Teen pregnancy affects three groups in adverse ways, the mother, the child and the community.

Teen mothers have lower graduation rates, higher odds for finding and keeping a steady job, higher poverty rates and marital instability. Children of teen mothers are likely to have lower birth weights which lead to health problems later in life. They are 50 percent more likely to repeat a grade and are less likely to graduate from high school than those children of older parents (Meana & Thaler, 2004). The community is affected by the added costs of teen pregnancy. The federal and state government spends over fifteen billion dollars in assistance to families that were started with a teen birth. These costs are passed on to taxpayers to pay for welfare, health costs, foster care, and the criminal justice system (Henshaw, 2004).

In response to the ongoing problem of teen pregnancy in Nevada in 1995 – 1996, the researcher wrote a grant to start the Graduation Reality and Dual Roles Skills Program, also known as GRADS. This program is designed to help facilitate parenting teens' graduation and economic independence, promote healthy multi-generational families and to help reduce risk taking behaviors. The grant was approved by the Nevada Department of Education and Elko High School (EHS) offered GRADS for the first time in the 1996 – 1997 school year. GRADS is offered as an elective in the Family and Consumer Sciences Department.

Statement of the Problem

Since the early 1990's the teen pregnancy rate has declined. Our school has several different programs aimed at reducing the teen pregnancy rate. The Family and Consumer Science (FCS) Department uses the "Baby Think it Over Program™" with our students. The purpose of this program is to show students they may not be prepared to become parents. The Public Health Nurses come to the Health and FCS Classes to talk about contraceptives. The nurses cover how to obtain contraceptives, how to use them and the consequences of unprotected sex. As middle school students our kids are exposed to the abstinence program "Not Me, Not Now". The GRADS program does not focus on the prevention of teen pregnancy. It is designed to help students who have made some poor decisions, to develop skills to help them develop into responsible parents and community members. Since the GRADS program is in its twelfth year at Elko High School it is time to evaluate the effectiveness of the program.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the Elko High School's GRADS program. By looking at the program and checking on past and present students, the researcher hopes to be able to keep the program relevant for students in the future.

Research Objectives

It is hoped that the evaluation of the GRADS program will answer the following four questions:

1. Are repeat pregnancies being reduced by participation in the GRADS program?
2. Are birth weights in the average range for mothers enrolled in the GRADS program?
3. Is the dropout rate being reduced for teen parents in the GRADS program?
4. Are GRADS students developing into responsible parents for their children?

By answering these questions the researcher will be able to determine if the goals of the program are being met.

Assumptions of the Study

It is assumed former students will be willing to spend the time to fill out and return the survey related to the EHS GRADS Program.

Definition of Terms

Elko High School (EHS) is the ninth – twelfth grade high school where this program has been offered from 1996 – present. It is located in Elko, Nevada.

Graduation Reality and Dual Role Sills Curriculum (GRADS). It was originated at Ohio State University and has been adapted to meet the needs of our community. This curriculum focuses on teen parenting and the completion of high school.

Study and Evaluation – These terms are used interchangeably in this paper. They refer to the process of looking at the GRADS program through the comments of former and present GRADS students.

Survey and Questionnaire – These terms are both meant to describe the instrument used to gather information to complete the Evaluation of the GRADS program at Elko High School.

Limitations of the Study

In dealing with an issue like teen parenting and reducing teen pregnancy many of the subjects may answer how they think they should answer the question instead of answering truthfully. The researcher will have to stress that the responses to the surveys are kept confidential to improve the reliability of the results.

This evaluation is meant only to critique the GRADS program at Elko High School. It is not in any way an evaluation of GRADS program.

Chapter II: Literature Review

The literature regarding teen parents varies on what would serve the student best; however, all seem to have common underlying threads. This chapter will present the five areas of consideration to keep teen parents enrolled in high school.

Teens May Not be Prepared to be Parents

The role of a teenager is very difficult and provides hardships for almost any adolescent. When paired with the additional responsibilities of becoming and being a parent the odds may seem insurmountable for many teens. With the probable immaturity of teen parents, the needs of their offspring often go unnoticed. It is difficult for the adolescent parents to distinguish between their wants and needs and the needs of the child (Lowenthal & Lowenthal, 1997).

Teen mothers are usually still dependent on their own mother which makes it hard to accept all the responsibilities that are now theirs as a mother (Musick, 1994). Minimal knowledge and unrealistic expectations may lead to child neglect and abuse. Teen mothers can be more impatient, punitive and less nurturing to their young children. (Cooper, Dunst & Vance, 1990) With all these facts it should be obvious to the educational system that the specific needs of teen mothers and teen fathers need to be addressed.

Keep the Teen Parents in School

Most traditional schools do little to keep the teen mother in school. Many schools set up a self contained classroom to keep the teen mothers separate from the other students (Roxas, 2008). Without additional resources for these students it will likely not be successful. Many of these students had problems with the school system prior to their pregnancy. The same system will not automatically fit after they return in a dual role – parent and student (Whitman, Bokowski, Keogh and Weed, 2001).

In response to the special needs of the teen parent, schools and communities are realizing that the way to break the teen parent cycle is to educate parents so better role models will be available for their children (Kelly, 2004). The innovative school system does not have to reinvent the curriculum; however, it does need to focus on the needs and aspirations of our parenting teens (Finkel & Thompson, 1997). Teen mothers who are able to stay in school after their delivery are less likely to have a repeat pregnancy within the next 24 months. With an education, the financial outlook will be better, keeping their families off social services (Stephens, Wolf & Batten, 1999).

Need for Quality Childcare

One of the biggest problems that face all teen parents/high school students is reliable childcare. Few high schools have a child care center on campus so for the majority of the time family members, unlicensed childcare centers and friends make up the child care network for these teen mothers. Although all those involved with this type of child care system seem to care, the realities are that schedules change and the teen parent is often left without care for the child. (Belsky, 1984) It is this uncertainty that causes many teen parents to leave school.

If the school can arrange for some type of on or off campus child care students will be able to concentrate on their school work knowing that their children are safe and are receiving quality care. These arrangements are beneficial for both the teen parent(s) and the child. The teen parent is able to take part in the normal school day without the added worry related to the care of their child. The child as well is in a safe learning environment which will help with their early development (Sadler, Swartz, Ryan-Krause, Seitz, Meadows-Oliver, & Grey 2007).

Prenatal Care/Information

Teen girls are two times more likely to deliver a low-birth weight infant than adult females (Ventura, Martin, Mathews & Clarke, 1996). There are two likely explanations for this fact. One school of thought looks at the nature aspect. This stresses the biological factors such as under development of the reproductive system, immaturity and inadequate prenatal weight gain. The low weight gain may be attributed to the desire to hide the pregnancy. The other school of thought looks at the nurturing aspects, stressing sociocultural factors such as poverty and ethnicity. When all of these factors – nature and nurture – are taken into account the true picture is revealed (Parenell, Sargent, Thompson, Valois & Kember, 1996).

The teachers and administrators in the schools need to work with other community members/resources to inform pregnant teens of the risks associated with low birth weight babies, such as neurological impairment, gross and fine motor dysfunctions, developmental delays and even still birth death (Roth, Hendrickson & Shilling, 1998). By educating teens during their pregnancy some of these birth deficiencies can be avoided.

Social Support Groups

At a time when teen parents may believe that no one else knows how they are feeling it is very important for them to develop a support group. This support group will provide conversation among friends; which will lead to positive social and mental health. Positive feedback will develop into helpful advice and opportunities for the teen parents. “Such social support systems may offer encouragement, financial help, resources for housing and jobs, as well as respite care. Social support systems, ultimately act as buffers against the stresses encountered by teen parents” (Cooley & Unger, 1991, p 220). Research states that teens with reliable support

systems are much more likely to succeed in completing school, finding and keeping a job and feeling more confident about their role as a parent (Brooks-Gunn & Chase-Lansdale, 1991).

Summary

From reviewing the literature it is clear the teen parents present critical challenges in the educational system. By focusing on the needs of these students the graduation rate may be increased. Job skills and career information will improve the prospects of employment and financial security for teen parents. Information about the effects of low birth weights and prenatal care will encourage mothers and fathers to take better care of themselves during pregnancy so healthy children are more likely to be born to the teen mother. Support groups for pregnant and parenting teens help them to adjust to and accept the many changes and challenges they will be experiencing. By understanding and working with these five considerations about teen parents there will be a higher level of success for the teen parents within the educational system.

Chapter III: Methodology

The object of this evaluation is to look at the Elko High School GRADS program. The results of this evaluation will be used to ensure that the GRADS program is meeting the needs of the participants, both now and in the future.

Subjects Selection and Description

Past and present participants in the GRADS program will be the most reliable subjects to question. Records from Elko High School will be used to create the list of subjects. The researcher will ask the Administration for the list of names.

The researcher will complete the Human Subjects training from University of Wisconsin – Stout. The survey and other correspondence included with the survey will be on file at the Elko County School District office and the Elko High School Principal's office through the 2008 – 2009 school year.

Instrumentation

The survey will be created specifically for this study. (Appendix A) The survey begins with participant's information and their experiences in the GRADS program. The second part of the survey includes spaces for answering questions about each of their children. The survey ends with a space for other comments that they would like to make. This will allow the participants to include personal thoughts about their experiences. Strict confidentiality of the results will be maintained. The completed surveys will be shredded June 1, 2009.

Data Collection Procedures

Since the evaluation of the GRADS program at EHS involved minors and information about sexual behaviors, signed consent forms will be obtained from parents/guardians of any minor participating. Subjects who were over the age of eighteen will give implied consent by

simply returning the survey. Two sets of letters (Appendix B and C) and consent forms (Appendix D and E) will be produced to allow for participation of as many people as possible.

The addresses of participants will be gathered from the EHS Guidance Office, parents, family members and friends. The GRADS program has had one hundred and eighty four participants since 1996. Since students can take GRADS for more than one year, records indicate that there are 128 potential participants for this survey.

Permission will be sought from the University of Wisconsin - Stout to conduct this evaluation, a mailing will be assembled. This mailing will include:

1. Letters to all potential participants – separate letters will be available for minors (Appendix B) and those over eighteen, (Appendix C) – explaining why the evaluation is being conducted.
2. A form giving implied consent for those over eighteen. (Appendix D) A signed consent form for those under eighteen. (Appendix E)
3. The survey form.
4. A self addressed stamped envelope to help ensure the surveys would be returned.

The mailing will be sent out in late March. As the surveys are returned they will be filed in a locked cabinet for two months. Signed consent forms that are returned with the completed surveys will be filed in another file folder in a different locked file cabinet.

Chapter IV: Results

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the GRADS program at Elko High School. Surveys were sent to all past and present students in the program. This chapter contains the results of that survey.

Over the past twelve years, 184 students have been enrolled in the program. Since GRADS can be taken more than once for credit, we have many students take the class for more than one year. That left 128 potential participants for the survey. After an exhaustive search of guidance department records, family and friends 117 names and addresses were obtained. Of those surveys mailed out 106 (91%) were returned. The results in this evaluation were obtained from the returned surveys.

Participant Information

The average age when the GRADS students first became pregnant was 16.7 years with the youngest reported age of twelve years old and the oldest eighteen years old. (Since after that they will not be eligible for the GRADS program because they would no longer be in high school.) Only five of the 106 respondents admitted to trying to become pregnant.

When asked about participation in the GRADS program the average length of time in the program was 1.6 years. Figure 1 indicates why participants left the GRADS program.

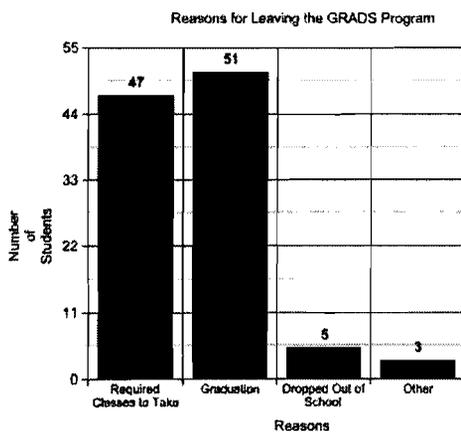


Figure 1 - EHS GRADS Survey

Of the three who marked other, one changed schools to move away from the father of her child and her new school did not offer a teen parenting class. The other two participants indicated that they had personal problems with other students in the class and preferred not to stay in the class.

Information about the First Child

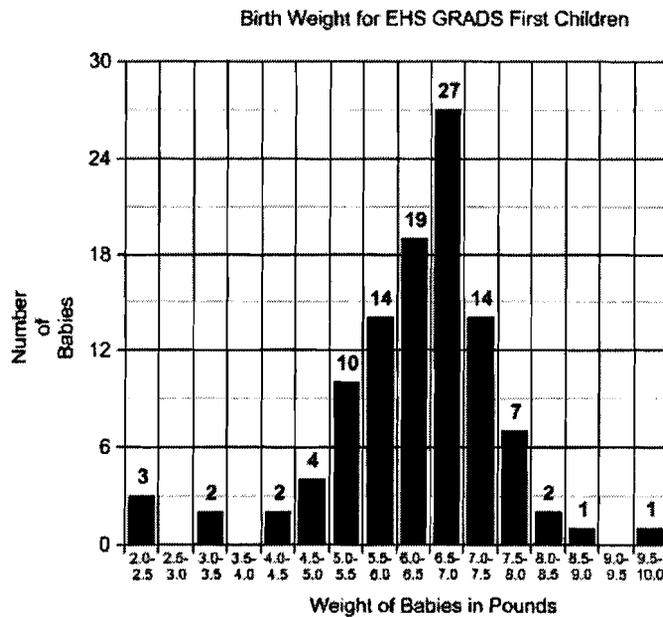


Figure 2 - EHS GRADS Records

Figure 2 shows the birth weight of the first child born to the GRADS students. Twenty one out of 106 (20%) were born below five and one half pounds which places the baby in the dangerous level for low birth weight children (Paneth, 1995). Fifteen of these children were life flighted to Children's Primary Hospital in Salt Lake City, Utah, due to complications. The average stay at Children's Primary Hospital was eight days.

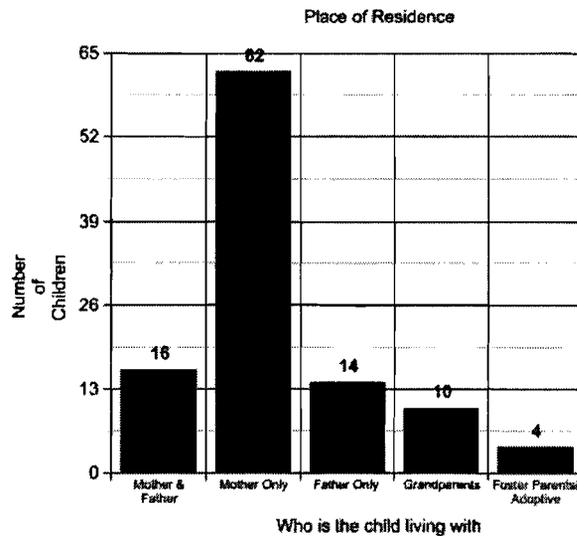


Figure 3 - EHS GRADS Survey

Figure 3 shows who the child is living with at the present time. If a teen parent was a first born in their own family and had younger siblings this teen parent chose to live on their own. However, if a teen parent was the youngest child in their family the teen parent remained in the home of the ten parent's mother.

Few reports of special needs were reported. Seven out of 106 (7%) of the first born were listed as taking medication for Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). Fifteen out of 106 (14%) were enrolled in special education classes.

Other Children

This section of the survey showed that only two GRADS students had repeat pregnancies within the first twenty four months. Figure 4 shows the number of children that former GRADS students now have.

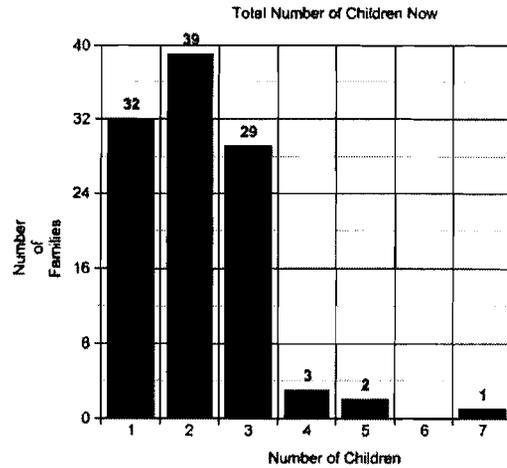


Figure 4 - EHS GRADS Survey

The children that were born later in the GRADS mothers' lives were more often living with their mothers and being financially supported by them. There were none of these children born below the five and one half pounds mark which shows prenatal training during GRADS has had an impact.

Additional Comments

There was a section where participants were able to add their own comments concerning the GRADS program. On the 106 returned surveys there were 69 added comments. A summary of these comments is listed below.

The comments can be grouped into seven different groups of similar comments.

1. I enjoyed being in GRADS so much. This class and my classmates helped me a lot!
(There were 32 similar comments.)
2. The friends that I made in GRADS are still important friends who I am in contact with
on a regular basis. (There were 17 similar comments.)
3. I was thinking of dropping out of school when I found out I was pregnant. GRADS changed my mind. (There were 10 similar comments.)

4. I am glad to know GRADS is still being offered. (There were five similar comments.)
5. My daughter is almost as old as I was when I got pregnant – I hope she doesn't have to take your class too!
6. I got married to the father, we are still together and doing well thanks to you and GRADS.
7. We just bought our first house. I remember the GRADS program explaining all the questions to ask before signing.

Chapter V: Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

The evaluation of the Elko High School GRADS program has been completed after eight months of planning, surveying and analysis of results. Students and former students were asked to participate in a survey to ensure that the GRADS program at EHS will remain relevant for the students in the future. With a response rate of 91% (106 of 128 returned surveys) the conclusions and recommendations are statistically representative of GRADS graduates and current GRADS participants.

After receiving the surveys back the researcher would have liked to have been able to clarify the answers with the participants. However, due to the confidentiality of the survey, follow up questions were not an option.

Conclusions

The literature review raised five considerations for the success of the teen parent. By looking at these five considerations the four original questions for the evaluation should be answered.

The survey set out to answer four questions.

1. Are repeat pregnancies being reduced by participation in the GRADS program at Elko High School?
2. Are birth weights in the average range for mothers enrolled in the GRADS program?
3. Is the dropout rate reduced for teen parents in the GRADS program?
4. Are the GRADS students developing into responsible parents for their children?

Teens May Not be Prepared to be Parents. The results of this survey helped answer question four. By helping the students in the GRADS program understand the needs of their children and how to meet these needs they have become more responsible parents. Since the

GRADS students meet as a group each day it is a time that the challenges of adolescent mothers and fathers are addressed. Resources in the community are willing to come in the classroom and work with the GRADS participants on specific issues. The Family Resource Center, Consumer Credit Counseling, Job Connect of Nevada, Headstart and Early Headstart of Nevada and the Elko County Early Childhood Training Center are a few of the community contacts.

Keep the Teen Parents in School. This concern was answered by the responses to question three. As one participant shared, she had purchased a house and knew the questions to ask before signing the papers. Another one stated she remains married and doing well thanks to GRADS. Of the 106 surveys returned only five students or four and seven tenths percent dropped out of school. This statistic in itself shows a very positive benefit of the class. Prior to the GRADS program, the dropout rate was higher at Elko High School for Teen Parents.

Need for Quality Childcare. Examining this special concern will look at the responses to questions three and four. Elko High School teen parents are fortunate to have the Elko Headstart and Early Headstart located three blocks from our school. In an agreement benefiting the GRADS students and Early Headstart, the GRADS mothers and children are placed at the top of the eligibility list for participation in this government program. Because of the young age and low incomes our students will automatically have their children admitted to Early Headstart from birth to three years old and the Headstart program from ages three to six years, if desired. Both Early Headstart and Headstart are structured programs that aid in child development and offers parental programs for our students. We are able to keep our GRADS students in school longer by offering this free, dependable licensed childcare. The low drop out rate of teen parents is an indicator of success in providing quality child care.

Prenatal Care/Information. Question two of the evaluation will be answered by looking at this consideration. Children born below five and one half pounds are considered to be a high risk for developmental delays, neurological impairment and even death (Paneth, 1995). The Family Resource Center works with GRADS students stressing the importance of prenatal care and checkups. By working with the students during their pregnancies the teen parents will benefit from the additional education. Many students not in GRADS try to hide the pregnancies and end up having a greater likelihood of a low birth weight baby. Figure 2 on page 11 of this study proves the prenatal information provided to GRADS participants has a positive impact on birthweight. The birthweights of the second children show a convincing improvement with the survey showing no low birth weight second babies.

Social Support Groups. This is probably the most important of the top five teen parenting concerns. As shown in the literature review teen parents had a hard time developing a support group. Without a support group they were more likely to suffer from low self esteem and depression. Those students with a support group are more likely to complete school, find and keep a job, and usually feel more confident about being a parent (Brooks-Gunn & Chase-Lansdale, 1991). From the results of the survey in the comments section 49 of the 106 surveys returned or 46% had a comment about the importance of the friendships made in the GRADS class. Even though EHS is not a large high school students often do not know each other well at the beginning of the school year. After nine months of sharing information about the development of their children and what they are experiencing, life long friendships are often formed. By forming these friendships they become advisors, confidantes and show support for each other, through a time when they are dealing with adult problems and decisions.

Recommendations for further study

1. The GRADS program should be evaluated every three years with results shared with stakeholders in the District.
2. In a future survey, groups would be included to clarify answers to the survey.
3. Survey impact of teen parent education in Nevada.

Recommendations for the GRADS program at Elko High School.

1. Expand the GRADS program to six high schools in the district.
2. Continue collaboration with community agencies dedicated to the success of teen parents and their children.
3. Continue to identify the needs of teen parents and evaluate programs designed to meet the needs of teen parents and their children.
4. Continue GRADS program aligned with Family and Consumer Sciences professionals. The needs of teen parents are within the professional preparation and advocacy skills and abilities of a Family and Consumer Science teacher.

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Appendix A



This project has been reviewed by the UW-Stout IRB as required by the Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Part 46



Evaluation of the GRADS Program At Elko High School

Age that you became pregnant..... _____

Were you trying to become pregnant?.....Yes _____ No _____

Number of Years in the GRADS Program..... _____

Reason for leaving the GRADS Program

_____ required classes to take

Did you go on to Graduate? _____

_____ graduation

_____ dropped out of school

_____ unsatisfied with the program – Did you go on to Graduate? _____

Give specific reason if desired: _____

Answer the following questions for each of your children

Child 1: Birthdate _____ Birthweight _____

List any health problems during pregnancy or birth for you or the baby:

Who does this child live with now? _____

Who is financially responsible for this child? _____

List any special needs that have developed since birth, i.e. health issues, learning disabilities etc.. _____

Child 2: Birthdate _____ Birthweight _____

List any health problems during pregnancy or birth for you or the baby:

Who does this child live with now? _____

Who is financially responsible for this child? _____

List any special needs that have developed since birth, i.e. health issues, learning disabilities etc.. _____

Child 3: Birthdate _____ Birthweight _____

List any health problems during pregnancy or birth for you or the baby:

Who does this child live with now? _____

Who is financially responsible for this child? _____

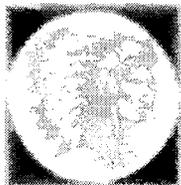
List any special needs that have developed since birth, i.e. health issues, learning disabilities etc.. _____

If there are more children please attach a separate sheet of paper.

If you have any added comments about your time in the GRADS program or how it has affected your life please add them here.

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey. Your participation will keep the GRADS program relevant for students now and in the future.

Appendix B



Barbara Hereford
Elko High School
987 College Avenue
Elko, Nevada 89801

March 24, 2008

Dear Elko High School GRADS Students Past and Present:

I hope that this letter finds you all happy and doing well. I think of all of you quite often when current students are looking at the frames of your past classes. I am still teaching in the Family and Consumer Science Department at Elko High School. I am also taking online classes from the University of Wisconsin – Stout to earn my Masters of Education. As part of my program I am carrying out an Evaluation of the GRADS Program at Elko High School.

Since all of you were at one time or another enrolled in this program I am asking for your help. Since you are under the age of 18, you and your parents/guardians should read the consent form and sign it before filling out the survey. Make sure that the consent form is returned with the survey. When they arrive the two forms will be separated so your identity will not be connected in any way to the survey form. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns about the survey. If you decide to participate please return the completed survey in the enclosed envelope. Feel free to stop by or contact me later this year if you would like to see the results of this evaluation.

Thanks in advance for your participation in this survey.

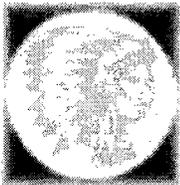
Sincerely yours,

Barbara Hereford
Family Consumer Science Teacher
University of Wisconsin Stout Graduate Student

3 enclosures

Consent Form
Survey Form
Self Addressed Stamped Envelope

Appendix C



Barbara Hereford
Elko High School
987 College Avenue
Elko, Nevada 89801

March 24, 2008

Dear Elko High School GRADS Students Past and Present:

I hope that this letter finds you all happy and doing well. I think of all of you quite often when current students are looking at the frames of your past classes. I am still teaching in the Family and Consumer Science Department at Elko High School. I am also taking online classes from the University of Wisconsin – Stout to earn my Masters of Education. As part of my program I am carrying out an Evaluation of the GRADS Program at Elko High School.

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Thanks in advance for your participation in this survey.

Sincerely yours,

Barbara Hereford
Family Consumer Science Teacher
University of Wisconsin Stout Graduate Student

3 enclosures

Consent Form
Survey Form
Self Addressed Stamped Envelope

Appendix D



Consent to Participate in UW-Stout Approved Research

Title: Evaluation of Elko High School's GRADS Program

Investigator:

Barbara Hereford
Elko High School
987 College Avenue
Elko, Nevada 89801
775-738-3179
herefordb@uwstout.edu

Research Sponsor:

Carolyn Barnhart, EdD, CFCS
University of Wisconsin-Stout
415 Tenth Avenue
Home Economics Building – Room 205
Menomonie, Wisconsin 54751
715-232-2545
barnhartc@uwstout.edu

Description:

The GRADS program has been in existence for twelve years at Elko High School. It is time to look at the participants; both graduates and dropouts of the program and see if the goals of the program are being met. An evaluation of the GRADS program will answer the following questions:

1. Are repeat pregnancies being reduced by participation in this program?
2. Are birth weights in the average range for mothers enrolled in this program?
3. Is the dropout rate being reduced for teen parents in this program?
4. Are students developing into responsible parents for their children?

Nevada ranks second in teen pregnancy in the nation. Along with the teen birth rate being high this also affects the number of low birth weight babies being born with health problems and a higher High School Dropout rate. If the GRADS program is meeting its goals then these statistics should be reduced in the Elko area.

I will be contacting as many of the students who have been enrolled in the GRADS program over the past twelve years, as possible. It is my hope that you will consent to fill out the survey concerning the Elko High School's GRADS program.

Risks and Benefits:

Participation in this study will be optional. The risks to the participants are low. Participation may bring back some memories of choices made without considering the consequences. The benefits of participating in this evaluation are not direct for the participants. A successful evaluation of the GRADS program will allow for assuring that it is meeting the needs of the students today and in the future.

Special Populations:

Any student under the age of eighteen must have the written consent of their parent or guardian to participate in this evaluation. Please use the Signed Consent form; it will not be kept with any of the other documents completed with this project so your confidentiality will be maintained.

Time Commitment and Payment:

Participation in this evaluation will require only a short amount of time to fill out the survey form. There will be no monetary compensation for participation in this evaluation.

Confidentiality:

Your name will not be included on any documents. We do not believe that you can be identified from any of this information. All surveys will be destroyed after the evaluation is completed.

Right to Withdraw:

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may choose not to participate without any adverse consequences to you. However, should you choose to participate and later wish to withdraw from the study, there is no way to identify your anonymous document after it has been turned into the investigator.

IRB Approval:

This study has been reviewed and approved by The University of Wisconsin-Stout's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined that this study meets the ethical obligations required by federal law and University policies. If you have questions or concerns regarding this study please contact the Investigator or Advisor. If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the IRB Administrator.

Investigator:

Barbara Hereford
775-738-3179
herefordb@uwstout.edu

Advisor:

Carolyn Barnhart, EdD, CFCS
715-232-2545
barnhartc@uwstout.edu

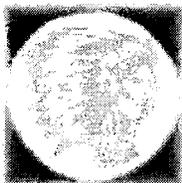
IRB Administrator:

Sue Foxwell, Director, Research Services
152 Vocational Rehabilitation Bldg
University of Wisconsin - Stout
Menomonie, Wisconsin 54751
715-232-2477
foxwells@uwstout.edu

Statement of Consent:

By completing the following survey you agree to participate in the project entitled, Evaluation of Elko High School's GRADS program.

Appendix E



Consent to Participate in UW-Stout Approved Research

Title: Evaluation of Elko High School's GRADS Program

Investigator:

Barbara Hereford
Elko High School
987 College Avenue
Elko, Nevada 89801
775-738-3179
herefordb@uwstout.edu

Research Sponsor:

Carolyn Barnhart, EdD, CFCS
University of Wisconsin-Stout
415 Tenth Avenue
Home Economics Building – Room 205
Menomonie, Wisconsin 54751
715-232-2545
barnhartc@uwstout.edu

Description:

The GRADS program has been in existence for twelve years at Elko High School. It is time to look at the participants; both graduates and dropouts of the program and see if the goals of the program are being met. An evaluation of the GRADS program will answer the following questions:

5. Are repeat pregnancies being reduced by participation in this program?
6. Are birth weights in the average range for mothers enrolled in this program?
7. Is the dropout rate being reduced for teen parents in this program?
8. Are students developing into responsible parents for their children?

Nevada ranks second in teen pregnancy in the nation. Along with the teen birth rate being high this also affects the number of low birth weight babies being born with health problems and a higher High School Dropout rate. If the GRADS program is meeting its goals then these statistics should be reduced in the Elko area.

I will be contacting as many of the students who have been enrolled in the GRADS program over the past twelve years, as possible. It is my hope that you will consent to fill out the survey concerning the Elko High School's GRADS program.

Risks and Benefits:

Participation in this study will be optional. The risks to the participants are low. Participation may bring back some memories of choices made without considering the consequences. The benefits of participating in this evaluation are not direct for the participants. A successful evaluation of the GRADS program will allow for assuring that it is meeting the needs of the students today and in the future.

Special Populations:

Any student under the age of eighteen must have the written consent of their parent or guardian to participate in this evaluation. Please use the Signed Consent form; it will not be kept with any of the other documents completed with this project so your confidentiality will be maintained.

Time Commitment and Payment:

Participation in this evaluation will require only a short amount of time to fill out the survey form. There will be no monetary compensation for participation in this evaluation.

Confidentiality:

Your name will not be included on any documents. We do not believe that you can be identified from any of this information. All surveys will be destroyed after the evaluation is completed. This signed consent form will not be kept with any of the other documents completed with this project.

Right to Withdraw:

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may choose not to participate without any adverse consequences to you. However, should you choose to participate and later wish to withdraw from the study, there is no way to identify your anonymous document after it has been turned into the investigator.

IRB Approval:

This study has been reviewed and approved by The University of Wisconsin-Stout's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined that this study meets the ethical obligations required by federal law and University policies. If you have questions or concerns regarding this study please contact the Investigator or Advisor. If you have any questions, concerns, or reports regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact the IRB Administrator.

Investigator:

Barbara Hereford
775-738-3179
herefordb@uwstout.edu

IRB Administrator:

Sue Foxwell, Director, Research Services
152 Vocational Rehabilitation Bldg
University of Wisconsin - Stout
Menomonie, Wisconsin 54751
715-232-2477
foxwells@uwstout.edu

Advisor:

Carolyn Barnhart, EdD, CFCS
715-232-2545
barnhartc@uwstout.edu

Statement of Consent:

By signing this consent form you agree to participate in the project entitled, Evaluation of Elko High School's GRADS program.

 Signature of Participant

 Date

 Signature of Parent or Guardian

 Date