

What was the effect of the No Kidding Straight Talk from Teen Parents Program from September 2006 to August 2007?

Introduction

This report addresses the question, “What was the effect of the No Kidding Straight Talk from Teen Parents Program (No Kidding) from September 2006 to August 2007?” We answer this question by examining: (1) the numbers of participants affected by the program and cost per participant; (2) the effect of participation on the program’s interns; and (3) the changes in knowledge and attitudes of students who attended a No Kidding presentation.

No Kidding is a peer-delivered paternity and child support information program that is presented to secondary students and other young people in one to three sessions. The No Kidding program began during fall of 2004 in Austin and during spring of 2006 in El Paso. Sessions are delivered in an interactive format and are approximately one hour in length. Goals of the program are to increase participants’ knowledge of paternity and child support and to change attitudes such that participants acknowledge the time and maturity necessary in parenting and the desirability of establishing paternity. During the fall of 2006 and spring and summer of 2007 (2006-07) the program was presented in Austin and El Paso, Texas. See www.youthlaunch.org for more information about No Kidding.

Data presented in this report summarize the number of program participants and the learning that occurred for interns (the No Kidding presenters) and students during 2006-07. Data available vary by site (see below). Austin data were collected by the authors of this report. El Paso data were collected by a researcher from New Mexico State University for the Paso del Norte Health Foundation which provides funding for the El Paso No Kidding site.

Evaluators collected data in *Austin* from nearly all interns and 660 students to examine the influence of No Kidding. Interns and students completed self-report surveys of knowledge and attitudes regarding paternity and child support. Program managers and interns completed ratings of the interns’ knowledge and skills in implementing No Kidding. Interns also answered questions regarding their interactions with the community and others in No Kidding. Focus groups were conducted with interns and interviews were carried out with No Kidding program specialists that examined a variety of topics. Teachers were also surveyed regarding the

effectiveness of the class presentations. *El Paso* site data were collected via email with staff of Paso del Norte. Paso del Norte staff requested data from their site evaluator and then provided summary data to Shore Research, Inc. Participation rates for 2006-07 in El Paso are examined in this report; however data on intern and student learning are not included. For additional El Paso site data, contact Paso del Norte directly.

Findings indicated that:

- During 2006-07, the No Kidding program reached 7,596 secondary students and nearly 200 community members in six Texas school districts and several community organizations. The program cost in Austin was approximately \$196,000 or \$29 per participant.
- At the Austin site, interns showed improvement in general employment skills and in skills specifically related to presenting No Kidding. Interns were well versed regarding knowledge of child support, establishing paternity, and the functions of the Office of the Attorney General. Interns' attitudes towards parenting and paternity remained fairly static based largely on highly favorable responses at the beginning of 2006-07.
- In Austin, students showed significant *knowledge* gains in the areas of establishing paternity, child support, and how the Office of the Attorney General assists with these matters. Students' *attitudes* changed significantly in the desired direction for eight of nine areas assessed.

Based on the results of the evaluation, the following actions are recommended:

- For the program: (1) consider carefully the *amount* of growth that can be maintained while continuing to have an effective program; (2) consider continued use of interns in summer to present to community groups and for other YouthLaunch employment opportunities; and (3) begin to evaluate the program effect in the Austin location with organizations other than Austin Independent School District.
- For interns: (1) ensure pre-training data are collected for each new cohort so that later comparisons can be made; (2) realize that interns come from a variety of circumstances and may not always have attitudes that align with "ideal" program expectations; (3) consider a more in depth qualitative examination of the interns to better understand their growth process.
- For students: (1) consider setting target levels for student knowledge gains and attitude changes that will assist in defining "success;" (2) examine ways to improve the rate of return of parental consents so that a larger number of student surveys can be used in the analysis; (3) consider a more in depth examination of student learning by gender to examine if the program needs modification to ensure full effect for both males and females.

How many participants were affected by the No Kidding Program and what was the cost per participant?

More than 7,700 total participants were involved in the No Kidding Program during 2006-07. Participants came from two different cities in Texas (Austin and El Paso) and were from a range of settings that included in school and after school programs as well as community groups. Over 500 presentations were given in these settings. Participant groups include No Kidding interns, students, teachers, counselors, and community members.

Methods

Data collection and program records were examined to determine the extent of the program's reach in 2006-07. Records included the number of: (1) classrooms, schools, and districts where the program was presented; (2) teachers, students, and community members who attended No Kidding presentations; and (3) interns at each site. Counts are provided for Austin and El Paso (where available), but all other analyses utilize Austin data only.

Participants

Two sites participated in the No Kidding Program in 2006-07 – Austin and El Paso (See Tables 1 and 2 for participation rates). Participants included No Kidding interns who were young parents between the ages of 16 and 24 years; teachers and students at the secondary schools located in districts in Austin and El Paso; staff at both sites; and, in Austin, community members who attended No Kidding presentations in community centers. The Austin site included students and teachers at both the middle and high school level in five school districts¹. In El Paso, high school students and teachers from one school district participated in the program.

Table 1. Number of No Kidding Presentations, 2006-2007.

	Total Presentations	Presentations in Schools	Presentations to Community Groups
Austin	255*	238	17
El Paso	246	246	0
Total	501	484	17

Source: No Kidding Program data 2006-07. * Nine presentations were abbreviated due to time constraints.

Table 2. Number of Participants in No Kidding, 2006-2007.

	No Kidding Presenters	Youth Participants	Teachers and community leaders	Other adults
Austin	19	6,613	74*	79
El Paso	11	983	**	**
Total	30	7,596	74	79

Source: No Kidding Program data 2006-07. * 19 teachers participated in both fall and spring. **These data are not available.

¹ Districts were Austin, Del Valle, Eanes, Manor, and San Marcos.

Interns. In Austin, 19 interns were employed during 2006-2007. Of that group, three were program specialists and 16 were peer educators. Table 3 shows the demographic characteristics of the Austin interns.

Table 3. Demographic Characteristics of No Kidding Interns 2006-07

	Male	Female	Hispanic	White	African American	Other
Austin (n=19)	32%	68%	26%	26%	37%	11%

Source: No Kidding Program data 2006-07.

Teachers. In Austin, youth in the classrooms of 74 teachers and community leaders participated in No Kidding. Teachers were located in eleven middle schools, eleven high schools, and two alternative facilities. Additionally, 79 other adult individuals observed the presentations. These adult observers included other school staff and administration; representatives from the Office of the Attorney General; YouthLaunch staff; and other leaders from community agencies.

Students. Some 7,596 youth participated in the No Kidding Program during 2006-07. Participants included 6,613 students from Austin and 983 students in El Paso. Data were collected on 4,497 students in the Austin Independent School District (AISD)² that participated in No Kidding (see Table 4).

Table 4. Demographic Characteristics of AISD Students in Classrooms where No Kidding was Presented 2006-07.

School Type (number of students)	Male	Female	Hispanic	White	African American	Other
Middle Schools (n=2,290)	51.4%	48.7%	74.0%	12.9%	11.0%	1.9%
High Schools (n=2,207)	50.6%	49.4%	59.6%	26.4%	11.7%	2.2%
Total (n=4,497)	50.8%	49.2%	67.0%	19.5%	11.4%	2.0%

Source: Austin ISD, 2006-07. Data are available on 4,497 students.

Cost per Participant

In Austin 6,613 students saw presentations and the overall budget of No Kidding Austin was approximately \$196,000.³ Hence, cost *per student* in Austin was approximately \$30. In addition to students, 183 additional individuals also participated. The overall cost *per participant* was approximately \$29 per individual.

² Currently, Shore Research, Inc. only has data collection agreements with AISD.

³ Figures received from No Kidding Program Coordinator.

Recommendations:

- *Continue to examine how much growth is desired.* For spring 2007, the Austin site saw a 51% increase in number of students who saw a presentation from fall 2006 and a 100% increase from spring 2006. Evidence below suggests that the program continues to be presented in an effective manner as students continue to make significant gains in knowledge and their attitudes change in the desired direction. However, it will be important to ensure that infrastructure and staff are readily available to continue successful delivery of the No Kidding program.
- *Consider further use of interns in summer to present for community groups and other Youthlaunch employment opportunities.* If funds are available, this opportunity will provide both remuneration and practice with varied groups for interns who present the No Kidding program during summer.
- Currently, Shore Research, Inc. only has data agreements with AISD. However, as the program expands to other districts and community organizations *it is recommended that assessment of sites in the Austin location other than AISD be considered* to examine the reach and effectiveness of the program in different environments.

What did interns learn as a result of participating in the No Kidding Program?

Upon completion of training and at the end of the program, Austin interns were well versed concerning knowledge of child support, establishing paternity, and the functions of the Office of the Attorney General (OAG). Interns' attitudes towards parenting and paternity remained fairly static during the course of the year because of favorable responses at the beginning of 2006-07. Interns showed improvement in general employment skills and in skills related specifically to presenting No Kidding. Interns felt they were gaining skills that would be useful in future employment opportunities and were gaining confidence in their knowledge and abilities.

Interns (this section reports only on the *Austin* site) received two kinds of training: (1) formal training in the concepts and skills to be mastered to correctly implement No Kidding; and (2) ongoing support in the areas where interns needed additional assistance to become skilled presenters of the material. Through training and program participation, No Kidding's aim is to influence interns' lives in three areas: (1) improved intern knowledge, attitudes and presentation skills regarding parenthood and paternity; (2) increased intern employability; and (3) positive intern social and emotional growth. We focus on these three areas in the following section.

Methods

An online survey was administered to interns in Austin after the initial program training and at the end of the program year. Ideally, interns would have also been surveyed prior to training, but this did not occur because of scheduling difficulties. Interns were asked about their knowledge of the program; paternity and child support facts; to rate their level of skill with the various tasks that they would have to perform as a part of the program; and their opinions related to issues of parenting. Program managers also rated interns' program-related skills and knowledge *after* the training and again at the end of the program.⁴ Focus groups with (1) male interns, (2) new interns, and (3) program specialists were conducted to elicit additional information regarding intern learning (see Appendix A for a description of focus groups). Data from all of the above sources were used to examine what interns learned from participating in No Kidding.

Evaluation Participants

In Austin, a total of 19 interns were involved with No Kidding during 2006-07. Over the course of the year several interns left the program. In all, 13 remained by the end of the program year. Participation rates for each survey vary and are indicated below in Table 5. The intern self report data is longitudinal because the same set of ten interns took both the post-training and post-program survey. In Austin, the program specialist rated the interns on the post-training and post-program skills surveys. The program staff ratings of interns are longitudinal because the same set of 11 interns was evaluated at both time periods.

⁴ The program staff did not feel it was appropriate to rate interns pre-training with no knowledge of their skills. Additionally, the post-training rating was made after the interns had been observed in the classroom at least once.

Table 5. Austin Site Survey Participation Rates 2006-07.

Respondent Group Survey	Pre Training	Post Training	Post Program
Interns self report ratings	*	10	10
Program staff ratings of interns	*	11	11

Source: No Kidding Online Surveys, 2006-07. *Interns were scheduled to be surveyed prior to training however this did not occur for 2006-07.

Results

Intern knowledge, attitudes and presentation skills of parenthood and paternity

This section focuses on program elements that interns should master in order to be effective presenters. Knowledge of the facts and presentation skills specific to the program were influenced by training and ongoing program participation. Intern attitudes about parenthood and paternity changed to some extent, but a more in-depth examination of the relationship between attitudes and intern performance may be warranted.

Intern knowledge of parenthood and paternity. We examined whether participation in the NK training improved participants' knowledge of paternity and child support to the point where they could be effective presenters. Analysis for this section utilized a survey⁵ that included items that examined interns' knowledge in the following areas: (1) the role of the Office of the Attorney General in child support and paternity (2) parents' financial responsibilities in matters of paternity and child support; (3) the legal definitions associated with paternity; and (4) the responsibilities of biological parents. A "total knowledge" score was also calculated by adding the scores of each of the categories together for an overall total.

Unfortunately, data were not available on interns prior to No Kidding training and so we were not able to specifically examine change based on the training. However, data from spring of 2006 showed that interns answered ~80% of questions correctly prior to training which can serve as a baseline for comparison for 2006-07. With such a high initial score further improvement was capped to a possible 20% improvement. Although this was not the same cohort, the fact that after training the 2006-07 interns answered over 95% correct on the survey point to an effective training program. Interns' knowledge remained static at the end of 2006-07 (96%) largely because high post-training scores left little room for improvement.

Intern attitudes of parenthood and paternity. We also examined whether the program influenced interns' attitudes such that participants would acknowledge the time, resources, and maturity necessary in parenting; to recognize the complexity of parenting; and to understand the desirability of establishing paternity. To do this we used nine key questions (see Table 6) in a survey format. It is problematic to report *percent* responding (because of the small sample size) to a specific question— so instead we have reported the *number* responding.

⁵ See Appendix B for list of items. This test of interns' factual program knowledge was adapted from an assessment originally created by the researchers at the Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) at Texas A&M University

Table 6. Austin Interns' Attitudes towards Parenting and Paternity Pre and Post Program 2006-07.

	Number Agree or Strongly Agree Post Training	Number Agree Or Strongly Agree Post Program
1. It is easier for parents in their 20s, 30s and 40s to care for their children than it is for teen parents.	6	4
2. It is very important to be married before having children.	6	7
3. Having a baby can negatively affect a couple's relationship.	6	6
4. Parenting involves a great deal of commitment and time.	9	10
5. If I was not married and had a child, I would do everything possible to establish paternity for my child.	9	9
6. If the parents are not married, a child can still have a very close and meaningful relationship with both of his or her parents.	9	9
	Number Disagree or Strongly Disagree Post Training	Number Disagree or Strongly Disagree Post Program
7. I could/can afford to raise a baby as a teenager*.	7	5
8. I could/can easily raise a child and continue my education.*	5	6
9. Being a teen parent would/does make me more important with my friends.*	7	7

Source: Intern surveys 2006-07, n=10. * For these items only, the aim of the program is "disagreement."

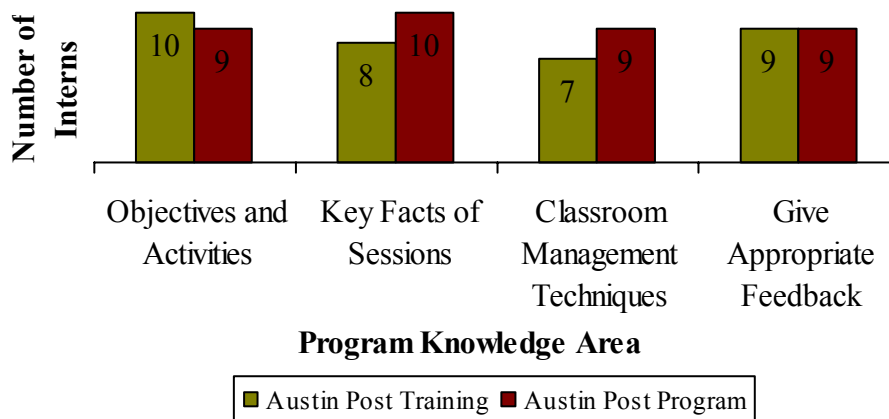
The sample size did not allow for meaningful statistical analysis, however, we note that some attitudes changed in the direction of the program goals, while others did not. It is clear that while some topics had near unanimous agreement, others reveal that interns continued to vary in their opinions on certain topics. The varied intern attitudes did not appear to have influenced their presentation of material on the topic as *students* continue to show significant changes in attitudes towards parenting and paternity after seeing the presentations. However, a more in depth examination of this issue may be warranted to better understand the interaction between interns' varied attitudes and their ability to present the material effectively.

Focus groups revealed that for some interns their particular situation may be counter to the ideal espoused by No Kidding and so they may vary from the desired responses. Concerning paternity establishment, for example, one intern stated that "I'm torn between two sides... it's not always the best situation [for dad to have rights] so it is hard to tell people 'you have to establish paternity.'" Interns acknowledged that they might not agree with everything in the curriculum

but the “fact or fiction” section of the program and speaking with groups like CHILL (Choosing How I Live my Life – a court mandated program) were opportunities for them to discuss some of the more difficult situations that exist regarding parenting.

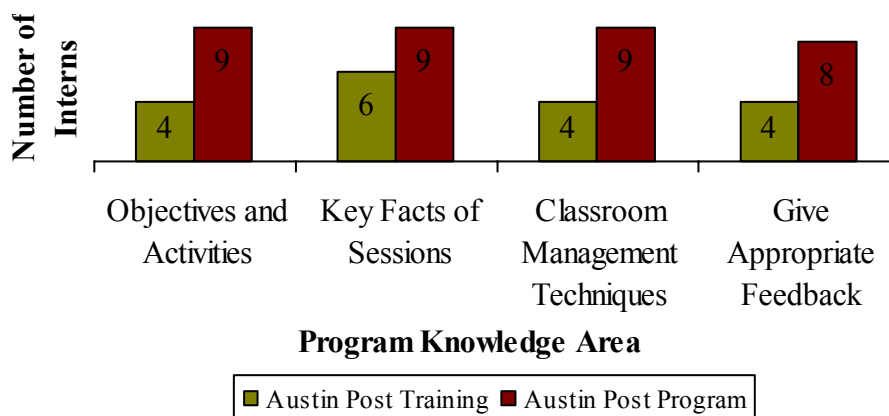
Interns’ presentation skills. Self-report survey data showed that nearly all interns had confidence in their program knowledge at the end of training and also at the end of the program year (see Figure 1). Figure 2 shows data from the Program Manager Survey that focus on the program knowledge area of the interns. A general increase of interns’ knowledge over the course of the program was observed by No Kidding program staff. Although intern self-report data may contain some bias, it is clear from the program manager survey that interns are improving over the course of the year in important program skills such as knowledge of the program objectives and activities, the key facts for each session, various classroom management techniques, and how to give appropriate feedback to others.

Figure 1. Number of Interns who **Rated Themselves** as Knowing "a lot" or "everything" for Program Knowledge Areas



Source: No Kidding Austin Program Manager Surveys 2006-07, n=10.

Figure 2. Number of Interns **Rated by NK Staff** as "Very Knowledgeable" or better for Program Knowledge Areas



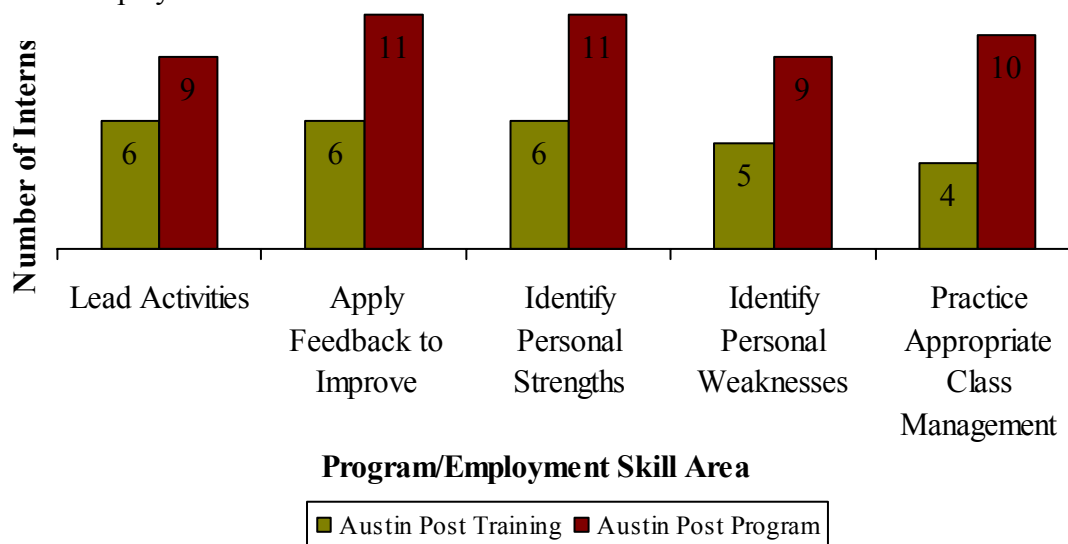
Source: No Kidding Austin Program Manager Surveys 2006-07, n=11.

Intern employability

In this section we examined if program participation enhanced the interns' employability. In general, interns believed they were gaining new skills that would serve them well in the future. It also appears that interns increased their employability in various skill areas that were rated by No Kidding program staff (see Figure 3 for list of skills).

Figure 3 shows the components of the Program Manager Survey that focus on the employment skills of the interns. Statistical tests were not appropriate with the small sample size, but these data did show that the program staff observed improvement in all employment skill areas. Program staff would observe such things as: (1) if an individual had used previous suggestions to improve their current performance; (2) an intern's ability to keep classroom order and maintain students' attention; or (3) if an intern could identify areas of their session that needed improvement. The largest improvements were in the areas such as "Apply Feedback to Improve," "Identify Personal Strengths," and "Practice Appropriate Class Management."

Figure 3. Number of Interns **Rated by NK Staff** as "Mostly Able" or better on Employment Skills



Source: No Kidding Austin Program Manager Surveys 2006-07, n=11.

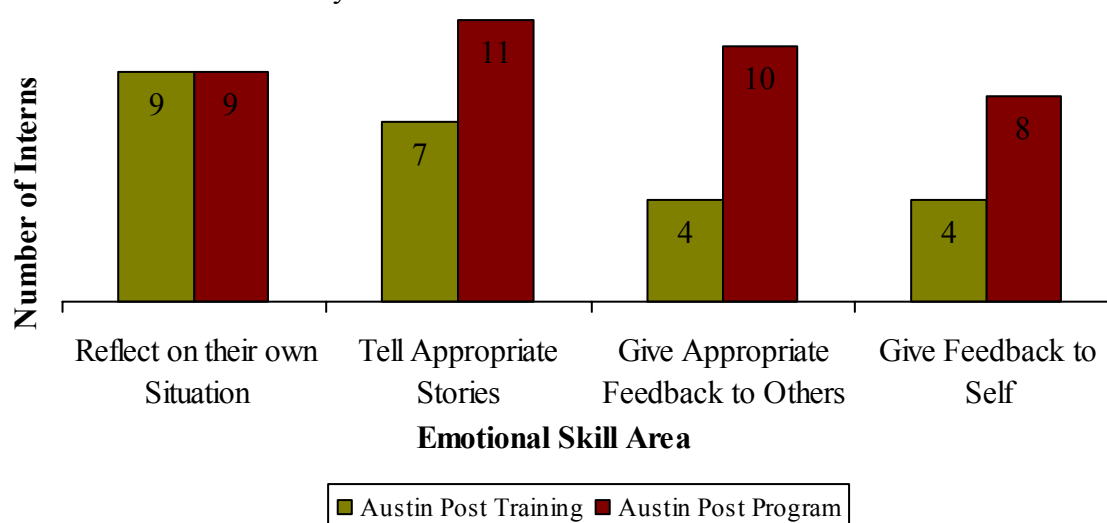
The focus groups revealed that interns believed No Kidding work enhanced their employability. They stated that they had "gained new skills" and increased their "self confidence." An intern stated that "it is good to learn how to talk about something tough like this to different types of folks." Participating in a team oriented organization that required flexibility would, according to interns, enhance their ability to work in various environments.

Working for a well-reputed non-profit and receiving extensive training in public speaking was also seen by interns as affecting their marketability to future employers. As one intern noted, "we work for a non-profit... and I think that is a huge asset for us...I have my nametag and so they [people] ask me about that so it is like a conversation starter [working for OAG] and our training certified [sic] us for public speaking... they are good things for our resume."

Intern social and emotional growth

In this section we examined whether the program influenced intern's social and emotional growth. Figure 4 shows the components of the Program Manager Survey that focus on the Emotional/Maturity skills of the interns. Program staff might observe the following: (1) how well the intern could discuss the story of their having a child; or (2) whether an intern was able to give feedback to co-presenter regarding the quality of the presentation. In general results were positive as program staff observed that interns were better able to "Tell Appropriate Stories," "Give Appropriate Feedback to others," and "Give Feedback to Self."

Figure 4. Number of Interns **Rated by NK Staff** as "Mostly Able" or better on Emotional Maturity Skills



Source: No Kidding Austin Intern and Program Manager Surveys 2006-07, n=11.

Interns felt that they were becoming more mature as a result of participating in the No Kidding program. Focus groups revealed interns felt strongly that they were "making a difference" in the lives of youth which gave interns a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. This sense of "empowerment" from helping others appeared to increase their sense of confidence and maturity. Acknowledging that one has made a "mistake" could be seen as an indicator of a mature perspective which was noted by one intern: "I think that making a difference also from this program is having somebody learn from my mistakes and not having to repeat it... not having somebody else go down the road that I did." Another intern stated that although she was a teenager having a child changed her perspective and interests as she stated that "I am more into womanly things than teenager things."

Male interns emphasized that their increasing sense of self resulted from emphasizing both "father" and "man" as role identities. They related that as the program seeks to provide support for both roles they were more comfortable being men in the program. In particular, the increase in bonding from activities just for the men, such as going to the movies, helped reinforce their dual roles as "father and man." Males did hope for more activities specific to their role as "man." One male noted that "you want to do something as a group where we're not going and

thinking about being fathers at this time. We're fathers all the time but today, at this time, let's go out and do some man-thing, you know? Let's go out and play some football."

One sign of social maturity is the fact that interns realized they have a role to play in their community. Based on the intern survey, most interns at the end of training (and end of program) responded positively to ideas such as: (1) it is up to everyone in a community to take care of those who need it; and (2) one should donate money or time to groups you believe in. The program could be hiring interns that already have a "societal orientation" and so a more in depth analysis of whether the program further influences interns' community focus may be warranted.

Recommendations:

- Utilizing data from spring of 2006 as a baseline, it appears that growth of intern knowledge and attitudes occurs during training. However *pre-training data are needed for each new cohort* to determine whether training influences interns' knowledge and attitudes. We recommend that surveying interns prior to training be a priority for 2007-08.
- *Interns come from a variety of powerful circumstances* and so their responses to attitudinal questions may not align fully with program expectations. This does not appear to affect their ability to effectively perform their roles in the program as students continue to have significant change in these areas after seeing the presentations.
- Generally, it is difficult to examine the how and why of intern attitude change regarding parenting using a survey format with only 10 respondents. Additionally, examining a change in interns' "community focus" is also problematic without a more in depth examination. *Using a more in depth qualitative examination of these issue should be considered to better understand the changes (or lack thereof) in intern's attitudes about parenting and their community orientation.*

What did students learn from seeing the No Kidding presentations?

Students from secondary classrooms at the two sites participated in the evaluation of No Kidding. This section reports on *Austin* site only.⁶ General results indicate that students increased in their content knowledge in all areas and that their attitudes regarding parenting and paternity changed significantly in the desired direction for the majority of topics.

Methods

Data addressing changes in students' knowledge and attitudes were collected through self-report surveys given before and after the No Kidding presentations. We examined changes in students' knowledge of these content areas and attitudes by comparing their answers before and after the program. The pre-survey contained demographic items such as students' race, age and gender. The knowledge portion of the survey⁷ included items about: (1) the role of the Office of the Attorney General in child support and paternity; (2) parents' financial responsibilities in matters of paternity and child support; (3) the legal definitions associated with paternity; and (4) the responsibilities of biological parents. The survey also contained items that assessed whether the program affected participants attitudes such that participants would acknowledge the time, resources, and maturity necessary in parenting; recognize the complexity of parenting; and gain awareness of the desirability of establishing paternity.

In Austin, a short, two-page survey was administered to teachers of classrooms in which a No Kidding presentation occurred. The surveys were collected by No Kidding staff and a total of 16 were garnered for 2006-07. The survey's content focused on what worked well and what did not and was a mix of multiple choice and open ended items. The teachers were overwhelmingly positive in their ratings of the curriculum and presentations. Open-ended questions are utilized in this section to elucidate findings regarding student learning.

Evaluation Participants

In Austin, evaluators collected survey data for 2006-07 from students in 43 classrooms (see Table 7 for participant demographics). Collecting data from 50 classrooms had been planned, but a last minute change in scheduling presentations resulted in a less than optimal return rate for middle school classrooms in spring 2007.

⁶ For information on the El Paso site please contact Paso del Norte, El Paso, Texas.

⁷ See Appendix B for examples of the items. The survey was originally developed by PPRI (2003) to evaluate the No Kidding Pilot Program

Table 7. Demographic Characteristics of Austin Students in No Kidding Classrooms (n=43) that were Evaluated 2006-07.

School Type	Male	Female	Hispanic	White	African American	*Other
Middle Schools (n=122)	50.8%	49.2%	73.8%	8.2%	14.8%	3.3%
High Schools (n=918)	49.5%	50.5%	48.8%	40.4%	7.0%	3.7%
Total (n=1,040)	49.6%	50.4%	51.8%	36.7%	7.9%	3.6%

Source: Austin ISD, 2006-07. Note: Although teacher estimates place enrollment at 1189 students, data are available for 1040. *Other includes Asian-American, Native American and "Other."

Because student learning was assessed by examining data from only those students for whom we collected a matched pre and a post survey, demographics for that group are presented below in Table 8. The sample of potential survey takers was statistically similar in race/ethnicity to those who took the survey. However, female survey takers were over-represented at 57.7% compared to an expected 50.4%. Exploratory data analysis found that males and females had statistically similar responses to knowledge and attitude questions and so response bias should not be a factor in the analysis.

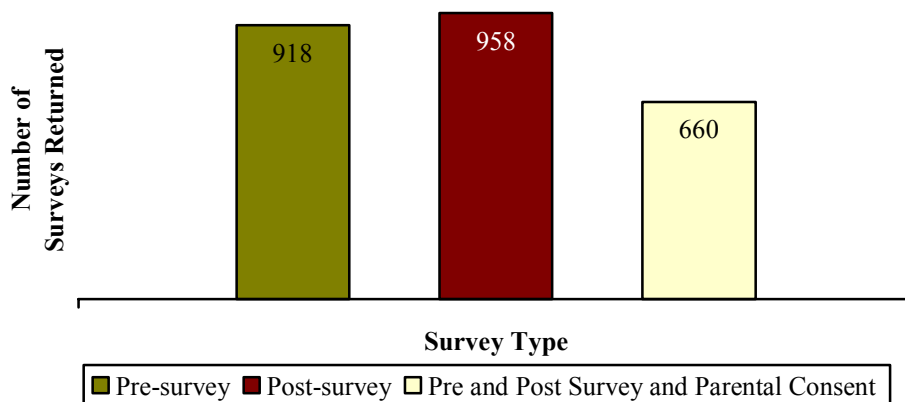
Table 8. Demographic Characteristics of Austin Students Completing Matched Pre and Post Surveys in No Kidding Classrooms 2006-07.

School Type	Male	Female	Hispanic	White	African American	Other*
Middle Schools (n=71)	45.6%	54.4%	74.6%	2.8%	14.1%	8.4%
High Schools (n=548)	41.9%	58.1%	43.6%	42.9%	6.4%	7.1%
Total (n=619)	42.3%	57.7%	47.0%	38.5%	7.2%	7.3%

Source: No Kidding Student Pre-surveys, 2006-07. 41 cases were missing demographic data. *Other includes Asian-American, Native American and "Other."

Student surveys. In *Austin*, students had to obtain parental consent to participate, complete the surveys on different days, and were required to place their student ID on each survey; therefore, not all of the pre surveys had a matching post survey. Some had no match due to student absence, others because students may not have put a correct ID on the survey or even an ID at all. Figure 5 indicates the numbers of surveys returned by survey type. Given that 1189 students could have potentially been surveyed (if all parents had given consent), and 660 students returned a consent form and had a viable pre and post survey, the effective completion rate is 56% for 2006-07. This compares to a 41% rate for spring 2006 (data were not available for fall 2006).

Figure 5. Numbers of Surveys Returned by Survey Type
2006-07



Source: No Kidding Austin evaluation data, 2006-07, figures are not mutually exclusive.

Results

Results are generally positive as students who participated in a No Kidding presentation had knowledge and attitude changes in the desired directions. Although some variability existed from term to term, the program was a strong success for student learning in 2006-07.

Students' knowledge of child support and paternity. In this section we examined whether participation in the No Kidding program increased students' *knowledge* of paternity and child support. Four topics were examined: (1) the role of the Office of the Attorney General in child support and paternity (Functions of the OAG); (2) parents' financial responsibilities in matters of paternity and child support (Conditions of Financial Responsibility); (3) the legal definitions associated with paternity (Legal Means of Paternity); and (4) the responsibilities of biological parents (Biological Role in Parental Responsibility). A "total knowledge" score was also calculated by adding the scores of each of the categories together for an overall total.⁸

Austin students showed substantial gains in knowledge for all areas over the course of the three days of presentations. Table 9 indicates the average percentage of items students answered correctly in each of the content areas both before and after the presentations. Results indicate a significant increase of knowledge as students' average scores increased from 47.4% correct on the pre-survey to 73.5% correct on the post-survey.

⁸ We first calculated the percent correct for each student in each area for both the pre and post tests. Then we calculated an average score for all participants and examined if that group average increased significantly from pre to post test. Finally, we used the proportion of correct responses in a t-test to examine significance.

Table 9. Austin Site Students' Average Percent Correct on the Survey of Paternity and Child Support Knowledge (Pre and Post Program) – 2006-07

	Pre Surveys	Post Surveys	Percent Change Pre to Post
Functions of OAG	43.5%	76.2%	32.7%*
Conditions of Financial Responsibility	42.9%	70.8%	27.9%*
Legal Means of Paternity Establishment	44.6%	78.2%	33.7%*
Biological Role in Parental Responsibility	70.9%	84.0%	13.1%*
Total Knowledge	47.4%	73.5%	26.1%*

Source: Student Pre and Post Surveys of Knowledge (Austin Site), 2006-07; n=660; *p <=.001.

Students' attitudes towards parenting. We also examined changes in students' attitudes regarding parenting and paternity (see Table 10). The second program aim was to change attitudes such that participants would acknowledge that time, resources, and maturity are necessary in parenting; recognize the complexity of parenting; and gain awareness of the desirability of establishing paternity. To see if the program affected students' attitudes in this way we assessed attitudes using a self report survey before the program and compared those findings with attitudes after the program.

Students' attitudes towards parenting and paternity issues changed over the three day series in all areas. Note that for six of the items the program goals are to promote an increase in *agreement* with the statement but for three items the aim is to promote *disagreement* with the statement. Table 10 shows that changes were significant and in the desired direction for *six of nine* items and marginally significant for an additional *two* items. The single item that did not change was "It is easier for parents in their 20s, 30s and 40s to care for their children than it is for teen parents."

It should be noted that in some cases an initially high percentage of the desired response to a question makes a significant finding harder to achieve. For example, the item "Parenting involves a great deal of commitment and time" started at 86.2% agreement and increased significantly to 92.3%. However, the item "It is easier for parents in their 20s..." had an 82.9% "agree" rating prior to the program and improved, but not significantly, to 87.3%. In both cases there was improvement, but there may be instances in which showing a statistically significant gain will be difficult.

Table 10. Changes in Students' Attitudes Related to Parenting and Paternity Pre to Post Program – 2006-07 (Austin site only)

	Percent Agree Pre-Program	Percent Agree Post-Program	Percent Change Pre to Post
1. It is easier for parents in their 20s, 30s and 40s to care for their children than it is for teen parents.	82.9%	87.3%	4.4%
2. It is very important to be married before having children.	60.8%	77.5%	16.7%**
3. Having a baby can negatively affect a couple's relationship.	49.6%	63.3%	13.7%**
4. Parenting involves a great deal of commitment and time.	86.2%	92.3%	6.1%*
5. If I was not married and had a child, I would do everything possible to establish paternity for my child.	65.1%	84.3%	19.2%**
6. If the parents are not married, a child can still have a very close and meaningful relationship with both of his or her parents.	68.7%	80.1%	11.4%**
	Percent Disagree Pre -Program	Percent Disagree Post Program	Percent Change Pre to Post
7. I could/can afford to raise a baby as a teenager***	64.3%	71.2%	6.9% ⁺
8. I could/can easily raise a child and continue my education.***	59.8%	68.2%	8.5%*
9. Being a teen parent would/does make me more important with my friends.***	59.2%	66.4%	7.2% ⁺

Source: Student Pre and Post Surveys of Knowledge (Austin Site), 2006-07; n=660; ⁺p<.1, *p<.05, **p<.01.

***Note: For these items only, the aim of the program is to increase "disagreement."

Information from the teacher survey provides evidence regarding why the students' knowledge and attitudes were affected as a result of the presentation. Teachers stated that the presentations were effective because they offered "straight talk" that provides students a "reality check" on issues. The fact that "presenters were close in age" and provided "real-life stories" to which students can relate was stated by teachers as a factor in No Kidding's effectiveness. Generally, the "laid back, non-judgmental, no nonsense, respectful presentation" was well-received by teachers and this, teachers believed, contributed to an effective program.

Recommendations

- Consider setting a target level for student knowledge gains and attitude changes. Students had substantial and significant knowledge gains regarding child support and

paternity establishment issues. In noting that the “total” knowledge score at the end of the presentations was ~74% it may be that the program could be considered successful in this goal. Funders have become more likely to require formalized targets for growth. Establishing a record of what is considered “success” would assist in reporting to stakeholders and with future grant applications. Items for which students provide a high rate of desired responses prior to the program should be examined for inclusion in future surveys.

- *The No Kidding Program and evaluation data indicate that participation for all stakeholders is high but the rate of return for parental consents can be improved.* Students are taking the evaluation surveys at high rates. However, the rate of return for the parental consents is relatively low. The active parental consent is required by the district so those surveys without consents cannot be used in the analysis. It is recommended that program facilitators and the evaluation team examine new ways to increase the rate of return on consents. The No Kidding staff and evaluation team have already met and are beginning to develop strategies to improve the rate of return such as utilizing teachers with past records of success.
- *Consider examining data by gender.* Exploratory analysis found statistically similar responses by gender, but some differences that are not statistically significant were observed. A more in-depth exploratory analysis of differences by gender would allow program staff to determine if male and female students are affected by the presentations in a similar manner. By doing so, this would allow the staff to maximize learning for both males and females.

Appendix A

No Kidding Intern Focus Group. A focus group with new interns (joined in 2006-07) was conducted on May 12, 2007. Two of the women were noticeably sick and did not participate as much as the other three, else there was equal participation from the other five participants. The group lasted approximately one hour. The interns were quite talkative and had a number of thoughts/ideas/concerns. Topics included: satisfaction with No Kidding; thoughts on influencing youth; and skill acquisition.

No Kidding Fatherhood FG. Two focus groups were conducted on February 3, 2007 with fathers in the program. The first had two participants, both fathers were new to the program (joined program in spring 2007) and lasted 50 minutes. The second group included fathers returning (joined program in fall 2006 or earlier) to the program, had three participants, and lasted 45 minutes. Topics included: recruitment and retention; satisfaction with the program; and personal growth.

No Kidding Program Staff Interview. The two program specialists for No Kidding were jointly interviewed on June 25, 2007. The interview lasted approximately 1 hour and was taped. A brief follow-up meeting was conducted for additional clarity on some issues. The specialists were forthcoming in their responses on a variety of topics that included various No Kidding training, procedures, and ideas for program improvement.

Appendix B

Measures of Child Support and Paternity Knowledge

Scores for the four topics utilized in the knowledge of child support and paternity were calculated based on the following groups of items. The grouping of the questions is based on a previous analysis performed by PPRI⁹

Topic 1: Functions of Office of the Attorney General

For this topic, students could receive a maximum of six points. Following are the items included in that topic and the point value associated with each answer.

- 1) Which will the Office of the Attorney General help someone do? Check all that apply.
- | | |
|--|----------|
| Identify the child's biological father. | 1 point |
| Locate a child's absent parent. | 1 point |
| Request a court order for child support payments. | 1 point |
| Collect and distribute child support payments | 1 point |
| Take enforcement actions against absent parents who fail to pay child support. | 1 point |
| Determine how much child support a non-custodial parent will have to pay. | 1 point |
| Don't know | 0 points |

Topic 2: Conditions of Financial Responsibility.

On this topic, students could receive up to nine points. Following are the items included in that topic and the point value associated with the correct answer.

- 1) If you are a parent, you are excused from helping pay for raising your child if...
- | | |
|--|-----------------|
| you don't have a job. | False = 1 point |
| you are in school. | False = 1 point |
| you are in the military. | False = 1 point |
| you are married to someone other than the mother/father of your child. | False = 1 point |
| you are in jail. | False = 1 point |
| you are under 18 years old | False = 1 point |
- 2) If someone is late in paying their child support, they can be made to pay interest on the money they owe. True = 1 point
- 3) If someone tries to get public assistance (TANF/Welfare) to help take care of their baby, they will be made to try and establish paternity. True = 1 point
- 4) If someone gets public assistance (TANF/Welfare) to help take care of their baby, they will eventually have to pay the money back to the government. True = 1 point

⁹ See "Evaluation of 'No Kidding: Straight Talk from Teen Parents'", PPRI, 2003.

Topic 3: Legal Means of Paternity Establishment

Legal Means of Paternity Establishment is a single question; reported scores are an average percent correct. Answer "D" is correct and is worth one point for the total knowledge gained.

1) How can a person establish legal paternity?

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|--|---------------|
| a. Marriage prior to a child's birth | b. By filling out the Acknowledgement of Paternity form | c. By a judge that issues a court order | d. answers a, b, and c are all correct | e. Don't Know |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|--|---------------|

Topic 4: Biological Role of Parental Responsibility

For this topic students could receive up to three points. Following are the items included in that topic and the point value associated with the correct answer.

- 1) It is possible for BOTH of a child's biological parents to be care givers. True = 1 point
- 2) It is possible for NEITHER of a child's biological parents to be care givers. True = 1 point
- 3) Who is the biological father of a child? A = 1 point
- | | | | |
|--|--|--|---------------|
| a. The person that provided the sperm that fertilized the mother's egg | b. The person that has to take care of the child | c. The person living with the woman when she has the child | d. Don't Know |
|--|--|--|---------------|

Total Knowledge Gained

Students scores' for the above four topics are added to the following items for a total score. A total of 24 points are possible.

Who is responsible for supporting a child financially?

Both Parents = 1 point

Which parent is legally responsible for taking care of a child? This is the parent the child lives with and who cares for the child on a daily basis.

Custodial Parent = 1 point

A child WITHOUT a legal father has a right to inheritance, social security, or knowledge of their father's medical history.

False = 1 point

If paternity had NOT been established, a father has a right to the child's school and medical records.

False = 1 point

If paternity has NOT been established, a mother has a right to financial and medical support from the father.

False = 1 point