

SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATOR (SHE) TRAINING PROGRAM IS EFFECTIVE IN PREPARING PARTICIPANTS TO PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE SEXUAL HEALTH EDUCATION TO YOUTH IN CALIFORNIA

Background

In 2016, California enacted the California Healthy Youth Act (CHYA), a law that mandates comprehensive sexual health education (CSE) be provided in middle schools and high schools. In response to this law, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Sexually Transmitted Diseases Control Branch (STDCB) developed the [Sexual Health Educator \(SHE\) Training Program](#), a free program that trains educators working with middle and high school students to provide sexual health education aligned with CHYA. The program was originally developed to be delivered through both in-person and online trainings, but as of April 2021, all components could be completed online. To complete the program, participants must complete six required modules and at least five elective modules.

We aimed to answer three questions: **1)** Is the SHE Training Program providing participants with background knowledge and skills to provide CHYA-Aligned CSE to youth? **2)** Who is participating in the program? **3)** Are educators who complete the program more likely to provide CHYA-aligned CSE to youth? To answer the evaluation questions, STDCB analyzed pre- and post-test data from 1,502 participants from April 2021 to August 2023. Pre-tests were completed before taking the first module and post-tests were completed after completing the final module (equivalent to 15 hours of training content). Because modules were self-directed, time to complete the program varied. The average time to complete the program was 71 days.

Reach

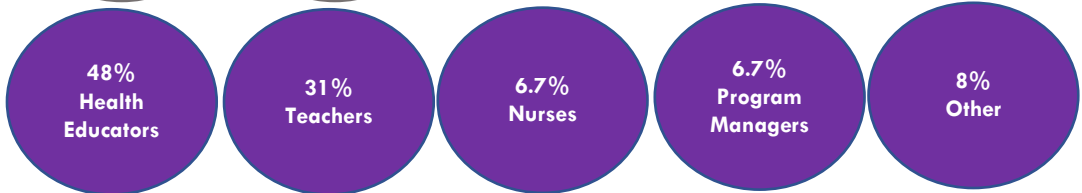
The SHE Training Program reached the intended audience of health educators and teachers in priority areas.

Teachers and health educators made up 52% of all CA participants and 79% of those who completed the program.

Participants who registered for program (n=1,502)



Participants who completed program (n=231)



61% of participants were in areas with a greater need for adolescent sexual and reproductive health services.

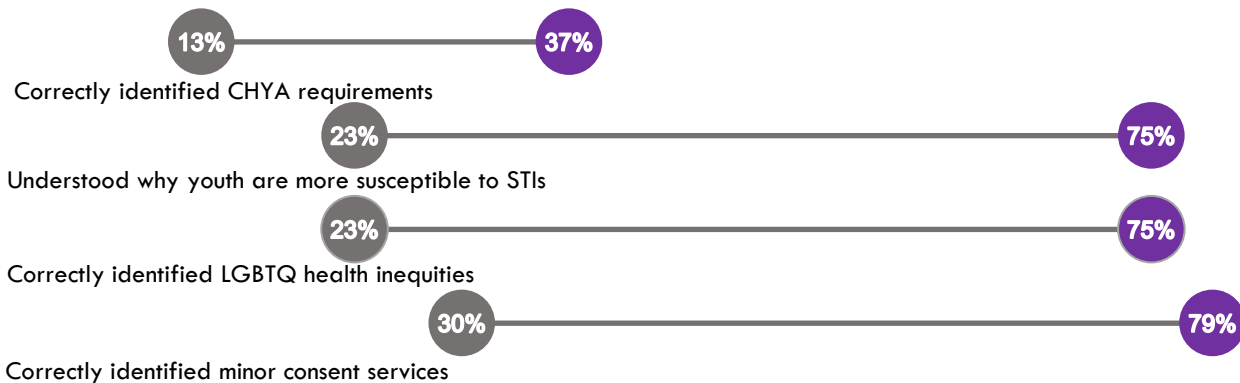
99% of participants who completed the program said it met their professional development needs.

Most participants (57%) who enrolled learned about the program from a supervisor or colleague.

Impact

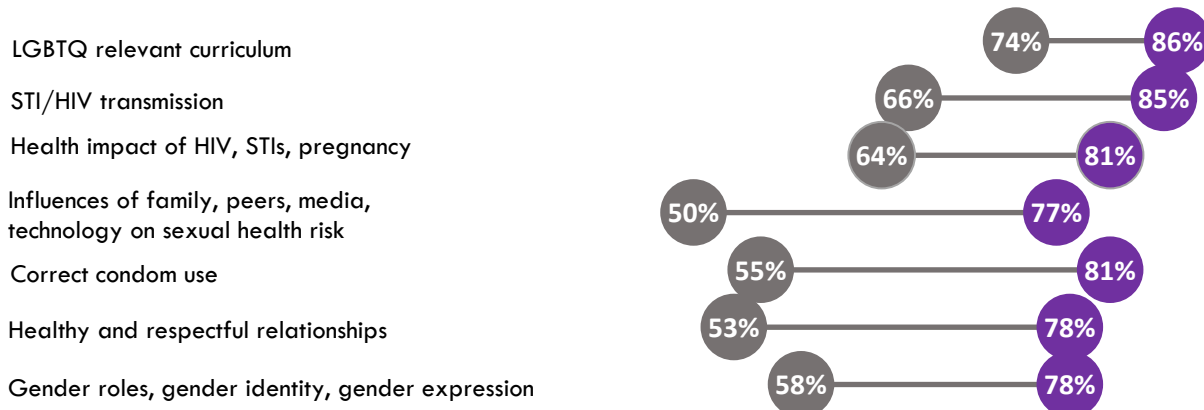
The SHE Training Program provided educators with background knowledge necessary to provide CHYA-aligned comprehensive sexual health education to youth in California.

The percent of participants selecting the correct answer for CHYA-related questions increased from the pre-test to the **post-test** (n=231)



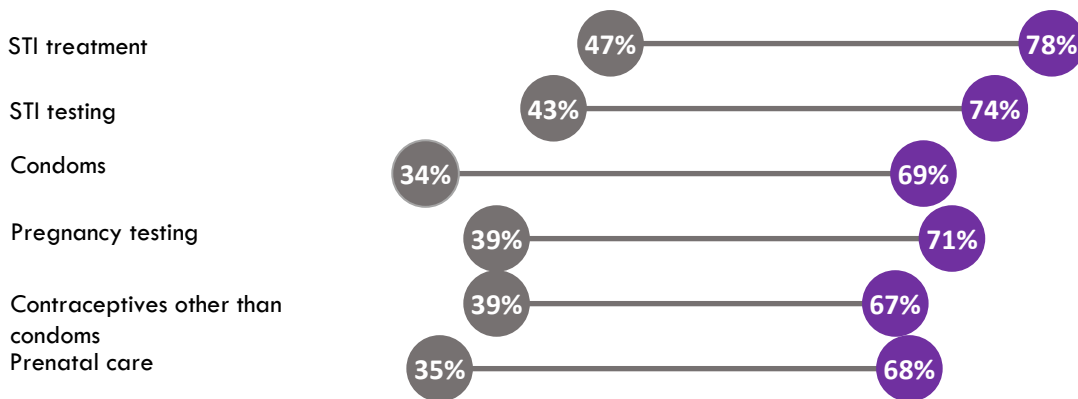
SHE Training Program participants who provide sexual health education in classrooms were more likely to provide CHYA-aligned sexual health education to youth after completing the program.

The percent of participants who reported teaching CHYA requirements in their sex ed course increased from the pre-test to the post-test (n=102)



SHE Training Program participants who provide sexual health education in classrooms were more likely to provide students with referrals to sexual health services after completing the program.

The percent of participants who reported providing referrals to students increased from the pre-test to post-test (n=70)



Conclusion and Next Steps

The virtual SHE Training Program is reaching the intended audience of educators working with middle and high school students and meeting their professional development needs. It provided participants with background knowledge and skills to provide CHYA-aligned CSE to youth, and educators who completed the program were more likely to provide CHYA-aligned CSE after the program. SHE Training Program staff continue to analyze participant registration and completion data to understand where gaps remain in participation. They plan to use the [California Adolescent Sexual Health Needs Index \(CASHNI\)](#) database to identify geographic areas with higher need for program promotion. To supplement the asynchronous, online training, SHE Training Program Staff developed a series of live, virtual trainings to provide more interactive opportunities for participants to learn about the program and address timely topics that are not already covered in the on-demand training offerings. Volunteer adjunct trainers are beginning to return to in-person SHE trainings in their communities post-pandemic.

Limitations

The pre and post-tests used in this analysis were developed in 2018 while building the program. If we had developed the tests after the program was launched, we likely would have approached the questions differently. For example, we included several CDC [School Health Profiles survey](#) questions, a national survey that asks teachers about school health policies and practices, thinking we could do a comparison between program participants and educators throughout the state. However, this comparison was not possible due to power limitations, and it would have been more ideal to use questions we developed that are specific to California CSE requirements. We also discovered technical issues with the pre and post-test administration and the evaluation report which were corrected but that may have impacted the quality of data.