

Within Our Reach participants feel better equipped to make their relationships last.

The Texas Tech University evaluation team highlights findings from the pre- and post-test surveys filled out by participants in Texas-based Healthy Marriage Development Program (HMDP).



Summary

The pre- and post-test surveys consisted of 24 questions designed to assess the impact of HMDP participation in the lives of participants. The following findings were observed as a result of *Within Our Reach* HMDP participation:

- Confidence in relationship longevity appeared to increase. Participants reported significantly stronger beliefs that they and their partners could “handle any conflict.”
- Participants were more likely to agree with the statement, “I try to listen to my partner when he/she is talking.” Similarly, they were significantly more likely to feel that their partners were listening when they were talking. This suggests that couple communication improved with workshop attendance.
- Participants seemed to become more committed to their romantic relationships,

voicing stronger agreement with the statement, “My relationship with my partner is more important to me than almost anything in my life,” and stronger *disagreement* with the statement, “I might *not* want to be with my partner a few years from now.”

- Participants indicated feeling that there was significantly more harmony and unity in their relationships. They also felt that they had acquired the skills to make their relationships last.
- Another positive effect of the workshop was that participants reported that they felt better equipped to solve interpersonal problems, while also being less critical of their partners.

Within Our Reach is a strength-based PREP curriculum designed to help economically disadvantaged couples achieve their familial and marital goals. The program emphasizes participant strengths and teaches strategies for controlling individual thoughts and reactions.

The findings from this evaluation indicate that the *Within Our Reach* curriculum meets its objectives. Participants were more likely to feel confident in their speaking and listening skills, to feel better equipped to handle relationship conflicts, and to indicate commitment to their romantic relationships.

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