



The Teen Outreach Program

Wyman's evidence-based Teen Outreach Program® (TOP®) is a positive youth development program designed to build teens' educational success, life and leadership skills, and healthy behaviors and relationships. As a result, teens are better able to navigate life challenges during the teenage years – a time when decisions matter.

Specific components to achieve outcomes include curriculum-guided, interactive peer group discussions, and community service learning with high quality facilitation by trained adults. TOP is designed to be delivered by trained facilitators over the course of a school year to groups of teens, called "TOP Clubs." Facilitators guide teens through a unique combination of engaging curriculum and community service that helps teens build on their strengths and hone social and emotional skills. The program is designed to meet the developmental needs of middle (6th – 8th grades) and high school teens (9th-12th grades) in a variety of settings, including in school, after-school, through community organizations or in systems and institutional settings.

Curriculum topics include: emotion management, problem-solving, decision-making, goal-setting, health and wellness, healthy decision making, self-understanding, social identity, empathy, communication, relationships and community.

TOP Goals

Improve social emotional and life skills: Valuable skills help teens cope successfully with life's demands, responsibilities and interpersonal interactions, including decision-making, problem-solving and goal-setting.

Support development of a positive sense of self: To foster teens' self-awareness and self-understanding, including understanding of physical and sexual development and self-care strategies. Teens also develop a sense of purpose.

Strengthen relationships with others and connections to community: To strengthen teens' relationships with others, including connections to their communities, which buffers stress and plays a critical role in promoting positive growth.

Improve academic outcomes and lower risky behavior: Ultimately, teens who have acquired social-emotional and life skills, have a firmly established and positive sense of self, and have

strong relationships grounded in trust are more likely to make positive choices overall, including doing well in school and delaying sexual activity and childbearing.

Evidence-Base

Rigorous research, using randomized control and quasi-experimental methods, shows that TOP works, resulting in lower likelihood of pregnancy, risky sexual behavior, course failure, school suspension, and skipping school.

Summary of TOP Outcomes

TOP Teens Show Academic Improvements

- Lowers risk of failing grades and course failure.

TOP Teens Make Healthier and Safer Choices

- Lowers risk of risky sexual behavior and pregnancy.
- Lowers risk of suspensions and skipping school without permission.



National Recognition

Independent research reviews by federal agencies and organizations have recognized TOP for its evidence-base:

- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
- Health and Human Services Teen Pregnancy Prevention Services Evidence Review
- Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA), National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP)
- ChildTrends' What Works
- Horizon International Solutions Site (Yale University)
- The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy
- National Collaboration for Youth
- National Dropout Prevention Center/Clemson University
- The RAND Corporation Promising Practices Network
- Advocates for Youth
- Youth.gov
- Nest: What Works for Kids (Australia)

TOP has also been profiled by the Social Emotional Learning Challenge, a partnership between the Susan Crown Exchange and the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality, as an exemplary social emotional learning program for teens. Visit <http://wymancenter.org/top/> for the most updated version of TOP's evidence-based listings.

About Wyman

Wyman has been dedicated to serving youth from disadvantaged circumstances for more than a century. Wyman empowers teens, equips adults and strengthens systems. Wyman's engaging, empowering and experiential programs and services help teens build skills, develop a sense of self and connections to their world. As a result, teens achieve educational success, develop healthy behaviors and relationships, and exhibit life and leadership skills. From thousands of teens in St. Louis – to tens of thousands nationally – Wyman programs and services make a difference in the lives of today's teens and tomorrow's leaders.

Contact

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