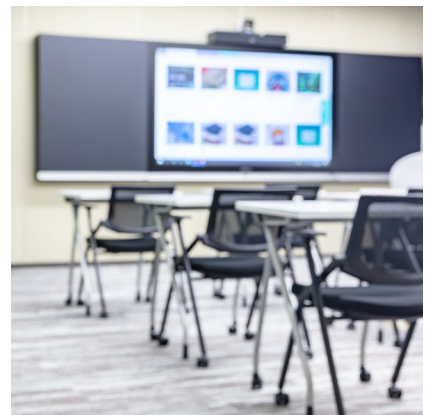
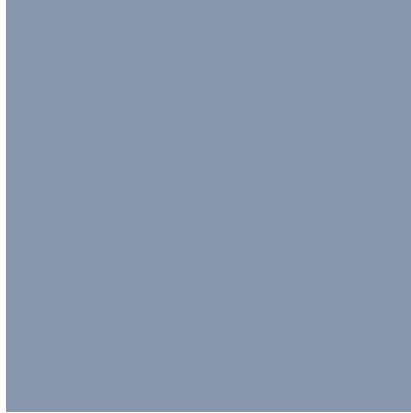


Implementing Universal, School-Based Teen Dating Violence Prevention Programs: Reflections From The Field



Literature Review Prepared for the Youth Violence Prevention Project
Delivered by the Thunder Bay District Health Unit (2018-24)



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Executive Summary

- This literature review was conducted by researchers at the Centre for Rural and Northern Health Research at Lakehead University in response to a request from Marianne Stewart, Manager, Family and School Health Team, Thunder Bay District Health Unit.
- The scan examines articles on implementing universal, school-based Teen Dating Violence (TDV) prevention programs that was commissioned as part of the Youth Violence Prevention Project in Thunder Bay and District, funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada.
- The resulting analysis was practically oriented, with the goal of identifying applied, real-world information, so we could summarize the insightful reflections offered by experts in the field. The hope was that compiling this information “all in one place” could be useful for those considering implementing school-based TDV prevention programs in their communities.
- This report presents the results of the literature review. The information has also been summarized into a planning tool that program planners may find useful: “Practical Tips for Implementing Universal School-Based Teen Dating Violence Prevention Programs”. That tool is attached to this report (Appendix A) and can be found at this link: <https://www.tbdhu.com/YVPP>.

In Summary, the review identified:

Common Implementation Challenges

- Across the TDV literature scanned, teams reported problems with obtaining resources, difficulties sustaining funding, and challenges with program fidelity. Implementation issues occurred due to too much content, overburdened teachers, and classroom management issues, including difficulties engaging students and scheduling problems.
- Additionally, teams encountered challenges when delivering TDV prevention programs in diverse cultural and community contexts, including stakeholder discomfort, teacher and parental disagreement with TDV topics, along with concerns adapting content to meet student needs.

Considerations & Recommendations

- Before beginning a new program, school and community teams should have in-depth discussions related to the implementation, feasibility, project scope and goals, any research or evaluation activities, and program fit within the school environment.
- School and community teams should focus on building close working relationships with the TDV prevention teams, exploring school staff and community partners’ views on the intervention, offering respect and reciprocation for their efforts and suggestions, and, overall, building multi-level buy-in for the project.

Recommended approaches for successful school-based TDV prevention interventions include:

- o Engaging schools, community partners, parents/caregivers, stakeholders, and students in the intervention planning process as early as possible to allow for the integration of their perspectives into the programming
- o Building clear strategies for team-wide communication to allow for alignment on project goals and theory, and for information to flow freely across the team
- o Taking time to consider whether chosen TDV prevention programming is realistic considering school resources and reflective of the community context and needs
- o Ensuring that TDV prevention programming is sustainable, with emphasis on confirming that sufficient resources and trained staff are available

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Introduction

Importance of School-Based TDV Prevention Programs

- Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a serious public health issue that can have lifelong physical, psychological, and social impacts
- Ongoing and early prevention efforts are a priority
- Universal, school-based Teen Dating Violence (TDV) prevention programs are an effective primary prevention strategy ; however, implementing these complex programs can be challenging
- Over the last decade and a half, TDV prevention program teams have been publishing papers reflecting on their implementation experiences providing insights from the field
- This review sought to identify the learnings embedded in that literature base and summarize the insightful reflections offered by experts in the field
- The hope is that by compiling this information “all in one place”, this report will be useful for those who may be considering school-based TDV prevention programs in their communities

Literature Review Method

- A thorough literature review identified articles describing promising or recommended practices for implementing universal, school-based teen dating violence prevention programs
- The authors searched PubMed and Google Scholar to locate information on a wide range of TDV prevention programs
- The scan examined 200 academic and grey literature sources, with a focus on material published since 2014; three key articles published prior to 2014 that were widely cited in the target literature were included in the report
- Eighteen of the reviewed articles are cited in this report
- All sources examined school-based TDV prevention programs, including those targeting related behaviours (e.g., bullying, healthy relationships).
- The full review methodology is provided in Appendix A

This Report

This report has five main sections: (1) Priorities; (2) Implementation Advice; (3) Cultural and Community Considerations; (4) Logistical Challenges; and (5) Supporting Sustainability.

- Each section begins with a brief introduction, followed by a detailed description of challenges, then a summary of recommendations for enhancing programs
- The report includes two appendices:
 - Appendix A: Search Strategies
 - Appendix B: Practical Tips for Implementing TDV Prevention Programs
 - » A practically oriented planning tool that may be useful to program planners and implementers

Section 1: Planning Priorities

Section 1: Planning Priorities

- The literature on school-based TDV programs emphasizes the need for teams to spend time in planning to support implementation of the program and ensure sustainability of the program once project funding has ended
- Initial efforts should examine available resources and school readiness in order to understand how to best match the scope of the intervention to the capacity of sites to deliver the program
- Priority planning should determine how the proposed intervention complements existing school programs and to ensure that it does not duplicate topics or unduly add to the workload of educators or other staff
- Suggested planning steps are to:
 - Examine previous TDV prevention programs implemented in a school district or community to assist the team in understanding the strengths and challenges encountered
 - Explore opportunities for developing multiorganizational partnerships and identify school and community champions, including parents, who can help promote programs and build support for TDV prevention interventions
 - Establish an advisory group to discuss program expectations and provide practical advice and guidance during program implementation

Ensure Sufficient Resources Are Available

- A lack of resources can hinder implementation; this occurs most often for resource-intensive multi-component programs (Debnam & Temple, 2020)
- In multi-site program implementations, sites often vary in the resources they can commit; as a result, schools will implement slightly different versions of the same program (DeGue et al., 2020)
- School systems with few available resources may end up reducing the time allocated for program implementations or excluding high-resource components (Eisman et al., 2021; Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b)
- Once the implementation has begun, shifting priorities within a school district over time may lead to fewer resources being available for TDV prevention programs, which can affect the sustainability of the program intervention (Debnam & Temple, 2020)

Assess School Readiness

- Assess schools' readiness for adopting new programming prior to making implementation plans (Debnam & Temple, 2020; DeGue et al., 2020; Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b); specific suggestions are to:
 - Discuss with the school team the availability of the resources and supports necessary for the implementation (e.g., funding, physical space, personnel, equipment, classroom, teacher, and administrator time) (Debnam & Temple, 2020; Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b; Orchowski et al., 2023)
 - Assess whether school teams can prioritize the TDV prevention intervention (Orchowski et al., 2022)
 - Ensure that there is support for the intervention from school and school district leadership to increase community receptivity to the project (Cascardi & Avery-Leaf, 2014; Orchowski et al., 2023)
 - Identify potential political pressures for and against TDV prevention programs, the project approval process, and potential program champions (Edwards et al., 2023)
 - Match the scope of the implementation with the capacity of the site to support it; this might mean offering only some components at the start with the goal of building capacity to eventually offer the full program (DeGue et al., 2020)
- Teams that set high requirements for assessing readiness often have difficulty matching their requirements to schools (Flaspohler et al., 2012); this approach can:
 - Require schools to submit implementation proposals, action plans, and staff assessments, which may be helpful in gathering information about potential partners and planning grant applications
 - High requirements, however, may exclude schools with the highest needs (and often, the lowest resources) from receiving important TDV prevention programming

Examine Fit Between Schools and the Program

- Seek school personnel opinions early in the implementation process to examine fit between the school and the program, including whether school priorities match with program targets (e.g., addressing shared risk factors) (Flaspohler et al., 2012; Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b)
- Recognize any efforts for preventing TDV that school systems have previously delivered, as past programs often set precedents for a new intervention on related topics (Orchowski et al., 2022)
- Ensure that the program is a good match with existing programs and services (Edwards et al., 2023; Flaspohler et al., 2012)
- If there are existing TDV prevention interventions in the school, it is worth assessing whether it is possible to add to the existing intervention to limit redundancy in the workload and in program topics (Flaspohler et al., 2012)

- Review the schools' policies/reporting guidelines/rules related to sexual violence, bullying, and other problem behaviours more broadly (e.g., to understand the current culture of the school system and examine whether the proposed TDV prevention programming addresses these issues) (Orchowski et al., 2022)

Develop Effective Multi-Organizational Partnerships

- Some larger projects report that multi-sector partners can enhance success:
 - Partners can share resources and supports such as leadership, funding, technical resources, feedback, political influence and school connections; they can benefit from expertise of various partner organizations; resource sharing also can help to sustain the implementation long-term (e.g., sharing organizational budgets to see who can offer financial resources) (Crooks et al., 2018b)
 - Connections between schools and community project partners can lead to building networks and support and foster collaboration at the community level (Exner-Cortens et al., 2021)
 - This type of large-scale implementation, however, is only possible when TDV projects have significant and ongoing funding (Flaspohler et al., 2012)

Identify School & Community Champions

- Work with an in-school program champion (e.g., teacher or administrator) who can coordinate on-the-ground programming and improve school buy-in (Orchowski et al., 2022; Orchowski et al., 2023)
- Seek out any school personnel who may be intrinsically motivated to be a program champion and/or are already "content experts" relating to violence or TDV prevention programming (e.g., health teachers) (Orchowski et al., 2022)
- Establish an advisory committee comprised of representatives of the school, community, and research teams early in the process to provide input into project planning and implementation; if feasible, budget for stipends and offer gifts or food at each advisory committee meeting (Edwards et al., 2023)

Involve Parents in Planning the Intervention

- It is important to invite parents and community members to be allies in TDV prevention efforts (e.g., discussing TDV that occurs outside of the school environment or online) as these types of TDV can be especially difficult for schools to influence (Orchowski et al., 2022)
- Parents/caregivers of students can help with program planning; they can offer views of program content and materials, discuss project goals and aims, and engage with the team before the program begins (Edwards et al., 2023; Orchowski et al., 2022)
- It is equally important to communicate with parents and caregivers throughout the intervention (Edwards et al., 2023); teams can: a) offer presentations to parent/caregiver groups to talk about content; b) send out letters and/or e-mails to give more information about program activities; c) post information on social media pages, YouTube, or other media sources

- Communication via social media must be done carefully in order to avoid community pushback: specifically, authors recommend that a staff member be assigned to monitor the pages daily and remove any offensive material; they suggest, however, that negative comments which are non-offensive should not be removed, as these can be an important forum for public discussion of the TDV intervention (Edwards et al., 2023)

Choose Community Partners with Experience Working in Schools

- Invite community partners to participate in school-based projects based on positive reputation and/or their previous experience working with educators; it is important to ensure that all external community partners are aware of ethical guidelines and expectations related to working with youth in schools (Fredland, 2010)
- Maintaining ongoing communication between and among the implementation team, school leads and community partners should be a priority; specific suggestions (Flaspohler et al., 2012) include:
 - o Having schools that are at various stages of the implementation process help with offering ‘lessons learned’ to schools in earlier implementation stages
 - o Creating an open flow of communication (e.g., quarterly meetings) with all school leads and community partners to focus on planning and developing the community of practice
 - o Holding consistent meetings to allow for problem-solving between school and community groups related to the program implementation or other program-related issues (e.g., grant writing)
 - o Offering on-site one to one consultation for each school team for program-specific capacity building, technical support, or other site-specific training objectives

Strategies for Success: Support School and Community Partners

- Research and community-based teams should support school partners in ways that do not directly benefit their team. This can include consulting on school-related issues, offering professional development seminars for the school, and/or offering referrals to other researchers (Edwards et al., 2023)
- Ensure that pro bono work is not contingent on the schools’ project participation to ensure ethical engagement (Edwards et al., 2023)
- Teams should show support for school and community partners through attending school event fundraisers or writing thank you notes at project end (Fredland, 2010)
- Resources and funding permitting, incentives should be offered to encourage participation by school staff; these can include:
 - o Continuing education credits for involvement (e.g., gift cards for survey participation, lunch and learn sessions, or stipends for participation) (Edwards et al., 2023; Orchowksi et al., 2022; Orchowksi et al., 2023)
 - o Professional consultation on school-related issues from the research team and professional development seminars for school personnel (Edwards et al., 2023)

Section 2: Implementation Advice

Section 2: Implementation Advice

- The literature reviewed for this report offered many practical suggestions for strengthening TDV prevention program planning, with a focus on creating consensus and common definitions of project goals, procedures, and expected outcomes
- Priority planning discussions should address resource issues, including constraints on funding available, contingency planning to accommodate unexpected events, and sustainability concerns
- As well, teams should collaborate closely with partners to ensure they understand the importance of any related research and evaluation processes, including requirements for fidelity, timelines for data collection and advice about ethical issues

Seek Consensus Around Project Goals, Research and Evaluation

- At the start of the project, school and community partners will benefit from discussions about overall project goals and key concepts (e.g., definitions of bullying and defining unhealthy vs. healthy relationships) (Fredland, 2010).
- Teams should hold discussions with program facilitators to align expectations about research and evaluation goals and processes, including any requirements for consistency in program delivery (Fredland, 2010).
- There may be a need to offer education to project partners about research processes, timelines, institutional Research Ethics Board expectations, and potential data contamination issues (e.g., other TDV prevention interventions active in school or community at the same time) (Fredland, 2010).
- Additionally, schools that have previously implemented non-evidence-based strategies may need guidance on delivering evidence-based TDV prevention interventions, including information about research and evaluation components (Orchowski et al., 2022)
- Researchers can provide teams with information on ethical issues to ensure that both teachers and community champions are aware of these issues before they begin discussions with community groups or representatives of parent organizations (Edwards et al., 2023)

Acknowledge Funding Constraints

- Applying for external funding on a continuous basis increases administrative stresses (e.g., meeting grant application deadlines) and creates uncertainty around whether schools can sustain implemented programs (e.g., when funding is dependent on the outcome of each application cycle); changing political climates can impact the amount of funding that is available to apply for each cycle (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022a)
- Schools note difficulties paying for the number of staff hours needed for a successful implementation, if additional funding is not continually sought; organizations may dictate funding restrictions, which can limit how schools implement TDV prevention programs (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022a)

- If there is not enough funding to pay for external program evaluators to complete the work, programs often do not collect required evaluation data (Exner-Cortens et al., 2021; Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022a)
- When programs cannot afford external evaluators, there can be negative impacts to future funding applications; without evaluation data, there is not enough evidence to support the effectiveness of the program implementation (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022a)

Recognize the Costs Associated with Staff Turnover

- From an administrative standpoint, turnover in staff who are directly involved in intervention increases costs, as programs must deliver additional sessions when new teachers join the TDV prevention project; offering ongoing training or “refreshers” for previously trained teachers represents an additional cost (DeGue et al., 2020)
- Changes in staff of schools or community organizations can negatively impact the work of advisory groups or teams; when new personnel join, it often takes additional time to build strong relationships (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b)
- Investment in teams through the provision of training and additional supports can foster sustained programming by decreasing staff turnover and staff burnout as well as increasing staff capability and capacity (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b)

Address Fidelity Challenges

- Across many papers, authors note a tension between maintaining program fidelity versus making changes to the program during the implementation process (Crooks et al., 2018b; Cutbush et al., 2017)
- Some authors note that this tension can come from differences between the goals of education vs. public health organizations (e.g., in how each views the importance of program fidelity) (Crooks et al., 2018b):
 - Some implementers request changes to make an implementation easier, faster to implement, or more personalized for implementers’ teaching style (Crooks et al., 2018b; Edwards et al., 2019; Eisman et al., 2021; Fredland, 2010)
 - Some facilitators push back against delivering an implementation verbatim (Edwards et al., 2019); however, inconsistency in scripts used makes it difficult to assess results (Fredland, 2010)
- Train the trainer models, while cost effective, can lead to substantial variation in fidelity; over time there can be significant drift in content taught by local staff (DeGue et al., 2020)

Create Whole Team Communication Plans

- Build early whole-team communication plans to allow for more cohesion in project planning and goals (Orchowski et al., 2023)
- Schedule regular times to meet with team members to check on process issues and discuss feedback and/or changes needed (Fredland, 2010)

- Have a single point of contact for each team to ensure clear pathways of communication (Orchowski et al., 2023); school resource coordinators may be helpful in this role (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022a)
- Plan for a platform to openly communicate issues and resolve potential disagreements related to the project (Fredland, 2010)
- Data collected through program evaluations can help to inform team discussions about potential program changes (Orchowski et al., 2023)

Support Implementation Fidelity

- During initial discussions with school and community partners, evaluators should emphasize the need for fidelity and create a list of negotiable and non-negotiable items; compromise when necessary (Fredland, 2010)
- Underline the reality that local adaptations often happen in school-based interventions; however, these may or may not have positive impacts on program goals (Cutbush et al., 2017; Fredland, 2010)
- However, high fidelity often requires increased resources (e.g., training, evaluation) which, in turn reduces feasibility (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b)

Create Contingency Plans

- Plan, as a team, to adjust project schedules to accommodate interruptions in school schedules (Fredland, 2010; Orchowski et al., 2023); specifically, teams must:
 - Plan TDV prevention interventions to accommodate expected breaks (e.g., holidays, end-of-term school breaks, early dismissal days, testing days, competing workshops or events)
 - Anticipate that unforeseen events will cause disruptions to TDV prevention programming (e.g., additional implementation time or personnel; unexpected time constraints)
- Develop alternate delivery options (e.g., different activities or formats) to accommodate any other changes that may occur during delivery of the intervention in the school environment (e.g., timing, room size, class size, or classroom behaviours) (Eisman et al., 2021)

Strategies for Success: Build Strong Teams and Strengthen Buy-Ins

- Focus on building relationships with school staff and supporting buy-in for programming to encourage a school to adopt and sustain TDV prevention initiatives; such investments can decrease staff turnover and increase staff capability and capacity (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b)
- Supportive and trusting professional relationships with school teams allow for open discussions of key information with school partners (e.g., when picking the best intervention for a given school) (Flaspohler et al., 2012)
- Connect with the entire team before programming begins. This can help to improve buy-in, support teacher engagement, and facilitate team-wide communication (Orchowski et al., 2023)
- Meet in-person with school representatives to begin to develop these relationships at the start of the project (i.e., individual meetings or team learning presentations are impactful) (Edwards et al., 2023)

Section 3: Cultural & Community Considerations

- The extensive literature on TDV prevention programs notes that universal programs are often not suitable to meet the needs of students from diverse cultural and community backgrounds
- Given differences in students' backgrounds, needs and expectations, adapting TDV prevention programs to reflect specific cultures or contexts is a priority; however, teams must make adaptations carefully to ensure program fidelity
- Close collaborations with cultural and community groups, with assistance of program champions, can improve awareness of TDV prevention program issues and generate support for local school programming
- Discussions with community parent groups and school staff can acknowledge and address hesitancy about TDV prevention programs
- Facilitators need opportunities to improve their understanding of cultural safety issues, recognize cultural and community differences among students, and how to follow school guidelines for responding to reports of TDV harms

Discuss Program Adaptions Related To Culture Or Context

- Before the implementation begins, consult with school and community partners to consider whether TDV content should be adapted to reflect students' culture, community context or developmental stage (Flaspohler et al., 2012; Genereux, 2020; Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b; Kerig et al., 2010)
- Seek opinions of local teachers and school administration on the appropriateness of the implementation content for their students and obtain student opinions to see if planned content is realistic and relevant to their lives (Genereux, 2020)
- Facilitators delivering the program should understand the demographics of the school population and include an ethnically diverse mix of people (Edwards et al., 2023; Fredland, 2010)
- When interventions are being delivered to minority populations, facilitators also need to reflect on their cultural competence for effectively delivering the implementation to specific student populations (Kerig et al., 2010)

Work Closely with Cultural and Community Groups

- Evaluations of universal TDV prevention programs have revealed that such programs are often delivered without attention to cultural and community needs
- Few have addressed the needs of specific groups (i.e., immigrant and racialized children and youth, Indigenous children and youth, LGBTQ+ youth, and youth who are not in school) (Exner-Cortens et al., 2021)
- Pushback or disinterest from parents, caregivers or other community members around cultural implications of TDV content taught in schools may negatively impact the implementation (Debnam & Temple, 2020; Edwards et al., 2023; Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022a; Orchowski et al., 2022)

- More politically conservative communities may not allow TDV prevention work in their schools due to views of this content as too socially progressive or otherwise clashing with community beliefs (Genereux, 2020; Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b)
- Cultural differences between facilitators and the community can negatively impact how well communities receive the programming (Kerig et al., 2010)
- Overall, it is difficult to balance the fidelity of implementation with adaptations intended to improve program effectiveness (i.e., making cultural or contextual changes to increase applicability of the content for a specific group of students may negatively affect fidelity) (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022a)

Enlist Champions to Resolve Community and Cultural Differences

- Collaborating closely with community-based champions can improve awareness of community and cultural issues and help teams to address community pushback when it occurs; they can provide advice on teacher and student recruitment (Edwards et al., 2023)
- Teachers or administrators who feel that TDV content does not align with their beliefs are unlikely to be enthusiastic about implementing the program (Cascardi & Avery-Leaf, 2014); they may not recognize TDV behaviours or see a need for change in such behaviours in their schools (Orchowski et al., 2022)

Engage Parents and Caregivers in Programming

- Parents, caregivers, and community members should be involved as much as possible from the beginning of an intervention (Edwards et al., 2023; Kovalenko et al., 2022; Orchowski et al., 2022); they can:
 - encourage program uptake within the school and help with student adherence (Edwards et al., 2019);
 - provide advice on developing meaningful and culturally strong parental resources (Exner-Cortens et al., 2021)
- Conversely, parents who oppose a TDV prevention program may opt their children out of the program or negatively influence student perceptions (Orchowski et al., 2022)

Explore Facilitator Hesitation About Implementing TDV Content

- Have open discussions with staff about their views of TDV and use role-plays to talk about any disagreements related to program materials (Cascardi & Avery-Leaf, 2014; Genereux, 2020)
- Discuss with staff whether they can see the content being important for their students' issues (Genereux, 2020)
- Ask facilitators to reflect on their own relationships and biases before they agree to work with students on the TDV prevention programming (Cascardi & Avery-Leaf, 2014)

- If staff and administrators strongly oppose certain TDV content as inappropriate for their school, discuss whether compromising on content (e.g., reframing or changing topics) may make the content more acceptable within that school environment (Edwards et al., 2023; Genereux, 2020; Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b)

Improve Facilitator Understanding of Cultural Safety

- Program facilitators should reflect on any cultural differences between themselves and the students they work with (Kerig et al., 2010). Specific suggestions for facilitators include:
 - o Create a nonjudgmental space for the youth to explore their own values; this space helps to ensure that facilitators do not impose their own values onto the students they are working with
 - o Effectively communicate their understanding of and respect for cultural norms and the meanings they hold for students; facilitators then will be in a better position to engage students in problem solving culturally relevant ways to prevent violence
 - o Avoid assumptions about relationships or values within a given community (e.g., what it means for a teen to be pregnant or traditional gender roles)
 - o Discuss the pros/cons of a given behaviour (e.g., getting into physical fights to protect one's honour) and discuss other ways to deal with the problem rather than not impose their own values

Recognize Cultural Differences Among Students

- When working with diverse students, facilitators must openly recognize and acknowledge cultural differences within the group and aim to appreciate how communities' gender dynamics have evolved and what their meanings and functions are (Kerig et al., 2010). Suggestions on how to approach cultural issues include:
 - o Discussing students' cultural and community norms related to relationships and sexual behaviour (e.g., some communities have a higher tolerance for men having multiple partners at the same time)
 - o Engaging with these issues directly and inviting group members to talk openly about racism and social class differences without feeling that they must apologize for their perceptions or experiences
 - o If youth are uncomfortable sharing information about intimate cultural norms, adapt programming by using vignettes of hypothetical dilemmas instead of asking youth to report on their own relationships
 - o Bicultural youth (e.g., recently immigrated or having raised in more than one culture) need space to discuss the difficulties of negotiating cultures and how these difficulties affect their responses to dating violence

Follow School Guidelines for Responding to TDV and Related Harms

- Ensure that implementation guidelines and research protocols align with school policies related to responding to TDV and related harms such as bullying and harassment (e.g., how to report perpetration or victimization to school authorities) (Orchowski et al., 2022)
- School personnel need to have a plan to facilitate help seeking for students who need it and how to communicate information about TDV situations to parents or guardians) (Orchowski et al., 2022)
- As disclosures of harm may be more likely to occur as students learn to recognize and label violent experiencing, teams should plan protocols for reporting harms well ahead of the implementation; it can help to:
 - o Have a decision-tree reporting path available for teachers and administrators to outline who to notify in case of reported harm (Orchowski et al., 2023)
 - o Create a help-seeking guide for facilitators to address students' questions about services for related needs (e.g., mental health supports, food insecurity) (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022a)
- If facilitators or teachers are uncomfortable discussing such issues, TDV prevention programs can invite community organizations to talk to students about their services (e.g., domestic violence or rape crisis centres can offer information about counselling or other supports) (Edwards et al., 2019)

Strategies for Success: Respect Community & Cultural Contexts

- Teams can assess whether community and cultural content is appropriate by integrating stakeholder input, including views of youth, teachers, and administrators; adaptations to fit local contexts help to maintain buy-ins from school and community partners (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b); ideally:
 - o Program content should reflect the students' community context (e.g., discussing how their community is different from others; how violence occurs in their neighbourhoods; and how youth may be frustrated and angry about their lack of access to economic and social opportunities (Kerig et al., 2010)
 - o Overall, teams need to balance fidelity concerns against needs to make adaptations to ensure that TDV prevention intervention fits with a community (Genereux, 2020; Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b; Kerig et al., 2010)
- Schools and prevention staff need to be well prepared to address student disclosures of harm and respond with relevant school policies; before the implementation begins, it is important to ensure that TDV prevention programs contain explicit instructions for facilitators about policies for responding to student-reported harms (Orchowski et al., 2022)

Section 4: Logistical Challenges

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- Evaluations of TDV prevention interventions reveal that educators face a wide range of challenges during program implementation
- From an administrative perspective, recruiting experienced facilitators and providing practical training to ensure they have the specific knowledge and skills required to deliver the program are priorities
- Once teams have begun implementing TDV prevention programs, they should turn their attention to addressing logistical issues that arise during program delivery
- Support for facilitators will help them deal with classroom management issues, facilitator workload concerns, and school scheduling conflicts

Recruit Experienced Facilitators

- Evaluations of TDV prevention programs suggest that selecting facilitators who have general program implementation skills (e.g., likeable personalities) contributes to stability in delivery of the program (Edwards et al., 2019)
- Ideally, facilitators should have knowledge of program content (Cascardi & Avery-Leaf, 2014; Edwards et al., 2019); prior experience with TDV prevention program delivery and existing relationships with students is very valuable
- Some teams report additional advantages in training “outside” facilitators: non-school facilitators can offer a fresh perspective to students (Orchowski et al., 2023); lower teacher facilitation burdens (Edwards et al., 2019); add legitimacy to content (Orchowski et al., 2023); and co-facilitate the TDV intervention with classroom teachers (Edwards et al., 2019)

Offer Facilitators Comprehensive Training

- Having more staff trained than are immediately required to deliver a TDV prevention program contributes to implementation longevity, as it ensures that the program can continue when staff leave or are reassigned (Genereux, 2020)
- Program facilitators should be highly trained and comfortable with the TDV materials and delivery (Cascardi & Avery-Leaf, 2014; DeGue et al., 2020; Edwards et al., 2023; Kovalenko et al., 2022); specific suggestions include:
 - o A two-stage training model helps to ensure program fidelity: a) universal training gives facilitators overall program information; and b) follow-up one-on-one training helps address weak areas (Cascardi and Avery-Leaf 2014)
 - o Additional sessions for previously trained facilitators may help to retain staff; such sessions are especially valuable to those who have forgotten content or would like to refresh skills (Edwards et al., 2019)
- Training should include information on research and evidence-based programs (Exner-Cortens et al., 2021); team check-ins (Flaspohler et al., 2012) and guidance on program adaptations, if needed (DeGue et al., 2020)

- Practical information about how to provide support and role modelling for the students is equally valuable (DeGue et al., 2020); this should include:
 - o Strategies to maintain safety and create a positive climate in classrooms (e.g., so students feel secure enough to voice their thoughts or opinions) (Orchowski et al., 2023)
 - o How to respond to questions in ways that make students feel they are essential, valued, and knowledgeable partners in the TDV program (Orchowski et al., 2023); the goal is to cultivate authentic relationships with students (Kerig et al., 2010)
 - o How to deal with student interruptions, disagreements about program content, or inappropriate behaviours (Eisman et al., 2021; Edwards et al., 2023; Fredland, 2010)
- Specific suggestions to reduce the costs and efficiency of training include:
 - o Virtual sessions to train newly recruited staff or offer additional training to existing staff (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b)
 - o Annual teacher training to keep everyone is up-to-date and can reinforce the same preventive messages (Genereux, 2020)
 - o Train the Trainer approaches can increase implementation (Genereux, 2020); however, this may lead to loss of fidelity (DeGue et al., 2020)
 - o Coordinating training of teachers and non-school staff across different sites and providing coaching from team leads may create cost efficiencies over time (Exner-Cortens et al., 2021)

Recognize Classroom Management Issues

- Classroom management issues, including the need for facilitators to respond to specific students with higher needs, and the practical challenges of delivering experiential activities in large classes with limited space and/or resources, can occur during implementations (Eisman et al., 2021)
- Technological issues during program implementations (e.g., not able to play video content) or external interruptions (e.g., people leaving or entering the room, or announcements and phone calls) can distract students, especially when facilitators are presenting sensitive topics (Edwards et al., 2019); frequently discussed topics, such as bullying, can be disengaging (Genereux, 2020)
- Facilitators often report that there are some students do not participate, are not interested in the TDV prevention intervention, and engage in disruptive activities (e.g., “goofing off”, making inappropriate comments or jokes, not paying attention, or using phones) (Edwards et al., 2019; Eisman et al., 2021; Orchowski et al., 2023)
- Facilitators also report it can be challenging to deliver content to students who are uncomfortable sharing their opinions or thoughts, do not understand the materials, become upset or express disbelief in the accuracy or relevance of TDV material (Edwards et al., 2019)
- Unfortunately, when classroom management issues occur, there are no alternative ways of delivering TDV content that are effective (e.g., assigning take home or homework activities is not a useful option, as students rarely complete such assignments) (Eisman et al., 2021)

Examine Facilitator Workload Concerns

- Teachers and facilitators often report that they have difficulty delivering TDV prevention programs because there is too much content to get through in the allotted time (Cascardi & Avery-Leaf, 2014; Edwards et al., 2019; Eisman et al., 2021; Exner-Cortens et al., 2021)
- Balancing programs with competing workplace demands and responsibilities is difficult (Edwards et al., 2019; Orchowski et al., 2023)
- Frequent consultations regarding facilitator workloads will ensure that workloads are sustainable and do not disrupt regular schedules (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b; Orchowski et al., 2022)
- When “outside facilitators” are employed (i.e., from community organizations), facilitator schedules and travel budgets should reflect travel time between sites; these adjustments are especially important when TDV prevention interventions are delivered in rural or remote areas with vast distances between sites (Crooks et al., 2018b)
- To address workload issues and lighten facilitator burdens, evaluators suggest that TDV prevention teams should consider whether program content meets curriculum standards and therefore could supplement or replace content already taught to students (e.g., mandated health class content) (Cascardi & Avery-Leaf, 2014; Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b)

Accommodate School Scheduling Whenever Possible

- Evaluations of school-based TDV prevention interventions recommend that team leads should regularly assess scheduling concerns and needs for additional support when they are delivering TDV content (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b)
- Coordinators should meet with the TDV team to discuss how to align the intervention to school schedules, accommodating varied class times, educational days, and unplanned class interruptions (e.g., snow days) so classes receiving TDV instruction do not miss activities or discussions that other classes complete (Eisman et al., 2021; Fredland, 2010)
- Finding time to complete TDV research and evaluation tasks within busy school schedules also can be difficult:
 - o Teachers and administrators have reported difficulties finalizing dates/times to meet with members of the research and education teams together (Crooks et al., 2018b; Orchowski et al., 2023)
 - o Deciding when to administer evaluation surveys and communicate results can be equally complicated (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b; Orchowski et al., 2022)

Support Effective Communications

- With implementation issues in mind, the TDV prevention program literature suggests it is important to provide teams with effective communications options:
 - o At the outset, sharing the key message that intervention can lead to desired outcomes encourages teams to overcome difficulties encountered and supports them in making any required changes (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b; Kovalenko et al., 2022; Orchowski et al., 2022)

- o Once teams have started delivering the programming, good communications are the key to identifying and resolving issues as they occur; in-person communication with project partners is preferable, as a full understanding of project-related needs is difficult to achieve when communications occur solely over email (Orchowski et al., 2023)

Strategies for Success: Ongoing Training and Staff Supports

Finally, all school-based program implementations should consider throughout the project how to ensure that programming is sustainable, considering needs for resources and trained staff. Specific recommendations are to:

- Plan for multiple waves of program training; this will support facilitators with classroom management issues, address workload and scheduling challenges, and sustain the number of trained facilitators over the duration of the TDV intervention (Genereux, 2020; Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b)
- Build site capacity by offering training to all interested individuals, regardless of whether they plan to implement programming right away or not (Exner-Cortens et al., 2021)
- Maintain regular contact with school and community champions who are working to improve the program and school buy-in to ensure continued interest in the TDV prevention programming (Edwards et al., 2023; Orchowski et al., 2022; Orchowski et al., 2023); team leads should:
 - o Establish strong and collaborative working relationships with school staff and keep in close contact with them to sustain programming (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b)
 - o Consult with teachers on an ongoing basis to understand how to implement programming with as little disruption as possible to schedules (Orchowski et al., 2022)
 - o Solicit feedback from stakeholders and students and integrate their suggestions into programs to encourage continued interest (Genereux, 2020; Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b)
 - o Show gratitude and appreciation for staff efforts by offering opportunities for them to participate in continuing education (e.g., professional development workshops) (Flaspohler et al., 2012; Orchowski et al., 2023)
- Overall investment in TDV prevention teams through the provision of training and additional supports can foster sustained programming by decreasing staff turnover and burnout while simultaneously increasing staff capability and capacity (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b)
- Teams can enhance sustainability of TDV prevention programming in the classroom if partners give facilitators, teachers and other staff continuing access to program supports (DeGue et al., 2020); ideally, programs should:
 - o Ensure that any online community of practice resources continue to be available and updated throughout the project; if possible, ensure access to such reports after the initial project has ended
 - o Allow facilitators to have perpetual access websites with program materials, manuals, or toolkits for continued technical support; offer printed materials if possible

Section 5: Supporting Sustainability

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- Evaluations of TDV prevention interventions reveal that sustainability should be part of the program planning process
- From an administrative perspective, it is important to investigate alternate funding sources and minimize the costs of delivering the program
- Once teams implement TDV prevention programs, leaders must turn their attention to building capacity and continuing buy-ins through strengthening connections to school and community partners

Include Sustainability in the Planning Process

- Plan for program maintenance and continuity early in the intervention development process (DeGue et al., 2020)
- Direct school, community, and research teams to explore strategies for ensuring program continuity beyond just completing immediate program goals (Cascardi & Avery-Leaf, 2014)
- Work closely with school administrators to develop program plans that align TDV topics with mandated health curricula; this can reduce teacher workloads and encourage program adoption (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b)

Investigate Alternate Funding Sources and Ways to Minimize Costs

- Loss of funding is one of the major reasons that TDV prevention programs fail to sustain (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b); teams should start looking for alternative funding well in advance of the end date funding (Flaspohler et al., 2012)
- When teams decide to apply for additional funding supports, grant applications should generally be written by the school/community/research team and aim to link project goals with school priorities (Edwards et al., 2023)
- Depending on the size and scope of the program, it may be necessary to apply for larger governmental or organizational funding and seek connections with larger projects or networks (Crooks et al., 2018b; Exner-Cortens et al., 2021)

Improve Program Buy-In and Strengthen Connections to Partners

- Multi-level program buy-ins are recommended as an important strategy to sustain partner investments in a TDV prevention intervention (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b); to support buy-ins, project administrators should:
 - Strengthen connections to school administrators, community partners, and funders; having strong and stable leadership can be a key to consistency and sustainability
 - Invest in provision of training and additional supports to sustain programming by decreasing staff turnover and staff burnout while simultaneously increasing staff capability and capacity

- Organizational and leadership efforts are equally important ways to sustain TDV prevention programs (Debnam & Temple, 2020; DeGue et al., 2020); these articles suggest that TDV prevention programs should aim to increase capacity of partner organizations to sustain preventive programs by strengthening:
 - o Team effectiveness and engagement
 - o “Fit” between the intervention and community needs
 - o Access to the resources and expertise necessary to sustain the intervention
- Research and evaluations can provide evidence to highlight the value of continuing TDV prevention interventions; data assessing potential improvements in student academics and/or other social/behavioural school goals (e.g., bullying) (Debnam & Temple, 2020; Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b; Orchowski et al., 2022); collectively teams can:
 - o Collect evaluation data from individual schools and/or school districts and share evidence of program uptake and positive outcomes to highlight the value of continuing the program (Jackson-Gordon et al., 2022b; Orchowski et al., 2022)
 - o Continue to present administrators and staff with any new research and evaluation data linking improved TDV behaviours to improved academic outcomes or other top school priorities (e.g., reduced bullying, improved student attendance) (Debnam & Temple, 2020)

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Appendix A: Search Strategy

QUESTIONS GUIDING THE REVIEW

1. What are the best practices for implementing and evaluating universal school-based teen dating violence prevention programs?
2. What challenges are common? How can they be overcome?
3. What strategies are successful (keys to success)?

SEARCH STRATEGY

- Databases searched: PubMed and Google Scholar, up to first 100 article results for each search
 - Including “cited by” and “similar programs” tabs
- Search Terms:
 - Teen Dating Violence (specified reviews only)
 - Teen Dating Violence + Implementation (specified reviews only)
 - Teen Dating Violence + Implementation Science (specified reviews only)
 - Teen Dating Violence + Implementation
 - Teen Dating Violence + Implementation Science
 - Teen Dating Violence + PDF (specified reviews only)
 - Teen Dating Violence + PDF + Implementation Science (specified reviews only)
 - Teen Dating Violence + Pilot
 - Teen Dating Violence + School-based
 - Teen Dating Violence + Universal
- Inclusion:
 - Target age groups including high school, elementary, junior high, and college.
 - Any article discussing program implementations related to teen dating violence or correlate behaviours, including bullying, promoting healthy relationships or other topics
- Exclusion Criteria:
 - Articles published prior to 2014
 - Article focuses on programs implemented outside of Canada or the United States
 - Note: The scan included three key articles published prior to 2014 that were cited extensively in the subsequent literature

Appendix B: Practical Tips for Implementing TDV Prevention Programs

A stand-alone version of this planning tool can be found at this link: <https://www.tbdhu.com/YVPP>

a Considerations prior to initiating a school-based implementation:

- Research potential school district partners
- Think about school demographics, previous TDV prevention programming and/or research, political views related to TDV, project approval process, and school policies
- Speak with school personnel early in the process to assess program fit, identify local priority needs, and assess school readiness

b Preparing for an implementation alongside a school-based team:

- Match the implementation plan with the resources that the school has available (e.g., funding, physical space, personnel, equipment, teacher and administrator time)
- Ensure that the implementation plan has sufficient resources to sustain the program beyond the initial period of programming
- Align the whole team on project goals, theory, and outputs
- Write a project agreement at the beginning of the project, to clearly outline expectations and obligations for each team member
- Show school staff the research on your TDV prevention program and explain how the program can make positive changes as it relates to school priorities
- Discuss research and evaluation processes for the project
- Discuss how the team will work towards program fidelity, especially regarding research goals
- Focus on finding funding to support and sustain the program implementation
- Decide whether school staff or external facilitators will teach the program
- Work with in-school and/or community-based program champions to informally promote the TDV prevention program within the school and community

c Contingency planning:

- Plan how to respond to students who disclose harms during the program, including reports of abuse, TDV, or bullying
- Contingency plan to resolve conflicts with implementation time (e.g., inclement weather, fire or lockdown drills, holidays, Professional Development days)

d Adjusting program content to better serve student needs:

- Reflect on whether adaptations will make the program more appealing to diverse groups of students (e.g., political beliefs, developmental stage, culture, or context of students)
- Reduce program content as much as possible to make the content easy to learn and to optimize the limited time for implementation

- Evaluate if program content meets curriculum standards and could supplement or replace that content (e.g., health class)
- Get student feedback on the program content to ensure that it is relevant and realistic
- Students are more engaged when interactive and “hands-on” activities, rather than lecture formats, are used
- Engage parents in the program implementation and seek their feedback on how the program can better meet the needs of their community

e Working effectively in a school during the program implementation

- Build good working relationships with school staff and administration through regularly scheduled team meetings and open team communication
- A project advisory committee of school and research team members can guide the project and foster open communication with school team members
- Train extra facilitators so that the program continue when staff turnover occurs
- Respect the time that school staff give to the project and offer incentives to encourage participation (e.g., professional development credits, lunches, stipends, professional consultation)
- Create as little disruption as possible to school staff schedules
- Solicit feedback from facilitators, school staff, parents, and students
- Integrate that feedback into program improvements/adaptations to encourage sustainability and improve the program
- Be conscious of program fidelity; if the program is adapted in any way, try to ensure that changes do not conflict with any ongoing evaluation efforts

f Planning for sustainability

- Allow school teams to have perpetual access to online problem-solving supports, websites with program materials, and accessible program toolkits for continued technical support
- Ensure that any online community of practice continues to be available and updated
- Maintain regular contact with the implementation team, in-school champions, and community-based champions to gauge needs for additional supports
- Consider whether annual teacher training sessions are feasible; annual training will ensure that all staff receive similar training and can reinforce the same TDV prevention concepts
- Alternatively, consider a Train the Trainer approach to increase access to training for facilitators and ensure it is available within school districts
- Use evaluation data from their school to provide evidence of positive outcomes, build buy-in, and highlight the value of continuing the program