



Example of Innovative Research: Youth Violence Prevention Training for Health Professionals

The Project

In *Youth Violence Prevention for Health Professionals*, Vida plans to produce, evaluate, and distribute an e-learning course for health practitioners to learn about violence involving youth and how to prevent it. Phase I of this project produced a prototype module on bullying. Phase II will include modules on child abuse, peer-on-peer violence, “dating” violence and suicide prevention. The course will include strategies for:

- incorporating violence prevention and intervention into well-child care;
- counseling families;
- building partnerships with local resources for assistance with case management; and
- advocacy in the community to increase initiatives around preventing violence involving children and youth.

The Evaluation Research

The objective of the *Youth Violence Prevention for Health Professionals* e-learning course is to improve the competency – i.e., knowledge and skills – of health professionals. As with other evaluations of Vida programs, the Researcher proposes to test the effectiveness of the intervention using a **rigorous experimental design**. Participants will be medical residents and physicians in the disciplines of pediatrics, medicine-pediatrics, or family medicine. They will be randomly assigned to either the control or the intervention condition.

Because a primary aim of the course is to develop practitioners’ clinical skills, the Researcher elected to measure the outcomes using **Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)**. OSCE is the medical education equivalent of a flight simulator: learners have the opportunity to use and demonstrate newly acquired skills without any danger of causing real damage. Using the OSCE methodology in this study to evaluate the curriculum itself – not the learners – is an important innovation.

Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) is the medical education equivalent of a flight simulator.

Using OSCE to evaluate the curriculum itself – not the learners – is an important innovation.

The evaluation will also include more conventional testing of knowledge about youth violence, measured by a **computer-based self-report instrument**. For participants in the intervention condition, these will be integrated with the relevant segments of the web-based intervention.

Finally, the evaluation will elicit learners’ reactions to the intervention, through collection of process data, to aid in interpreting results, and continually improve the product.

