



# Development of a Healthy Behaviors Curriculum Resource for Low-Income and At-Risk Youth in Newark, NJ

*Student Interns:* Onenu Egbelo (SPH), Robert Grembowitz (SPH), and Jennifer Marie Wright (SPH)

*Community Preceptor:* Wendy Cubano

*Academic Preceptors:* Pauline Thomas, MD, (UMDNJ-NJMS), Stephan K. Schwander, MD, PhD (UMDNJ-SPH) and Lois Grau, PhD, MS (UMDNJ-SPH)

## Healthy People 2020 Bridging the Gaps

### Focus Areas:

Health Communication

Injury and Violence Prevention

Mental Health

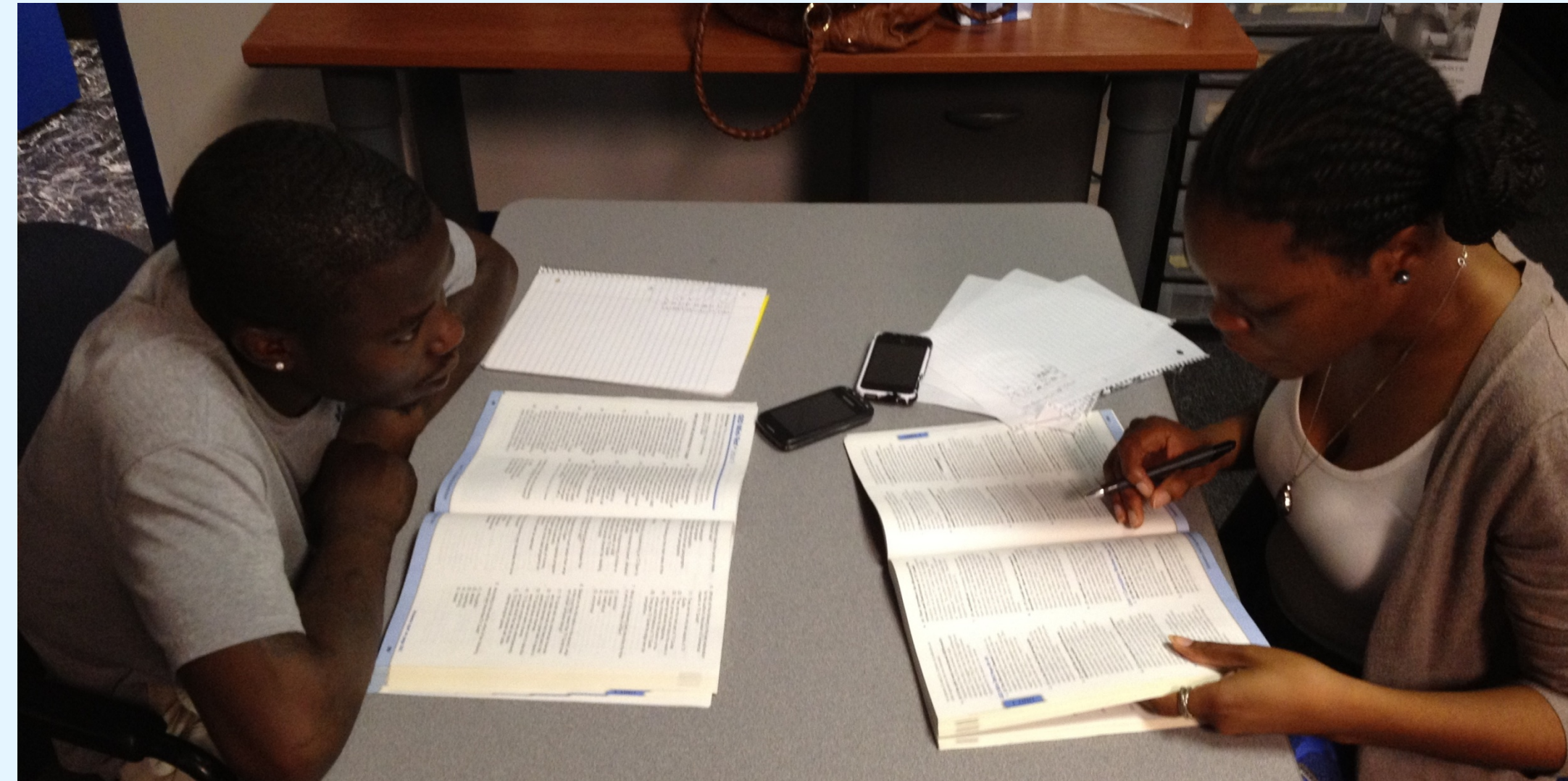
Responsible Sexual Behavior

Substance Abuse

## YouthBuild Newark

YouthBuild Newark enables low-income youth, ages 16 to 24, to complete their secondary educational goals and lead productive, self-sufficient lives. As part of the program students are required to attend academic classes and learn construction skills while rebuilding low-income housing. Service is a driving force behind YBN. Students are taught to be engaged citizens and leaders who understand the value of giving back.

YBN students learn as young people, they are the most valuable resource available to the survival of their community. YouthBuild Newark has established itself as one of the most effective youth development programs in the Greater Newark Area and the State of New Jersey. The effectiveness of YouthBuild has garnered local, state, federal support



## Site Tasks

- We provided academic instruction to the students in preparation for the General Education Development Test (GED).
- Instruction was provided in the areas of Mathematics and Language Arts
- We conducted an Oral Health Workshop addressing : proper oral hygiene, tobacco use in relation to oral cancer, and the effects of oral sex on oral health
- Provided one on one mentoring involving discussion s on education, career opportunities, personal relationships, and social issues
- Participated in Men/Women's Group Sessions alongside staff addressing relevant health & social topics

***“Equipping students with viable credentials to sustain themselves, their families, and make a valuable contribution to society.”***



## The Project

For our project we developed a curriculum resource for case managers to conduct health education workshops. We conducted focus groups with students and staff to determine the needs of the program .The covered topics included Sexual and Reproductive Health, Substance Abuse, and Mental Health. In addition we designed a framework for the creation and implementation of a comprehensive substance abuse policy.

## Personal Statements

“Working with the students at YouthBuild Newark demonstrated that tackling the social, political, economic and educational inequities within our communities is just as important as addressing the health disparities that contribute to negative health outcomes. It was a fulfilling experience that I am truly grateful to have been a part of.”  
Onenu Egbelo

“Working with YouthBuild has provided me with a firsthand account of the health, economic, and educational inequities that affect underprivileged communities. I consider the time that I spent with YouthBuild invaluable. It is an experience that I will carry with me throughout my career.”  
Robert Grembowitz

“Overall the experience with YouthBuild Newark was challenging, enlightening and unforgettable. Working with the students allowed me to put a face on the outcomes of an unsupportive educational and social system in Newark.”  
Jennifer Wright