



AMTC

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News

The findings of the CPIC study will not only positively impact our clients' programming and curricula, but they will also provide essential information for the entire APP/TPP field.

Angela Turner

AMTC News

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A Busy Summer to Impact the Future

As we gear up and look forward to the fall season, we reflect on a busy summer that will positively impact our clients moving forward. This summer, AMTC & Associates team members presented their research at two adolescent/teen pregnancy prevention (APP/TPP) conferences, first in San Francisco in June and then in Baltimore in July. Our long-time client, Trinity Church, was awarded a research grant to examine mental health's role in relation to teen pregnancy, which led to our presentation about the topic at the June APP conference. Our presentation focused on one aspect of mental health—resilience—and whether it can correlate with sexual behaviors in youth (further discussed on page 2). We were proud to present with Karen Johnson, Director of Mental Health Services at Trinity Church.

At the July TPP conference, our research associates presented phase-one results of our ongoing study, the "Content, Pedagogy, Implementation, and Context Components Study" (CPIC Study). CPIC analyzes multiple TPP programs extensively to identify core components that lead to the most significant TPP outcomes.

Not only will these findings positively impact our clients' programming and curricula, but they will also provide essential information for the entire APP/TPP field. For example, based on the CPIC study, curriculum developers can bolster content and educational interventions. Program implementors can improve teaching practices given what they know from the research. Please find more on page 3.

This month, we also invite you to discover our two newest associates: Kiley Floren and Michael Floren. Each brings a wealth of experience and expertise to the AMTC evaluation team, and we are excited to introduce them to you.

Wishing everyone a successful fall,

Angela Turner
Principal



UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF RESILIENCE IN TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION



Is there a connection between youth resilience and making good decisions about sexual health? AMTC & Associates and its client Trinity Church (of Miami-Dade County, Florida) are trying to answer that question, which was the topic of their presentation at the [June Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention \(APP\) conference](#). The conference was themed “2024WARD: Building Brighter Futures with Today’s Youth Leaders,” held in San Francisco and hosted by the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB).

In 2021, FYSB awarded Trinity Church a Personal Responsibility Education Innovative Strategies (PREIS) research grant with the overall aim of understanding the importance of mental health as it relates to teen pregnancy. Trinity selected AMTC as its research firm. As part of the study, AMTC and Trinity seek to understand the relationship between youth resilience and teen pregnancy prevention. AMTC Research Associate Immaculate Apchemengich, Ph.D., explained that resilience is one piece of mental health and was the focus of the presentation: “We are trying to understand whether resilience has an impact on certain behaviors like unprotected sex and partner communication. If there is a correlation—which has yet to be determined—perhaps building

resilience could result in fewer teen pregnancies.”

Researchers from AMTC are examining data collected from study participants who are receiving a teen pregnancy prevention curriculum with additional lessons on building resilience. Resilience is assessed based on a scale that asks youth to reflect on their ability to cope with challenges. The study is taking place in two settings, schools and community-based organizations. Participants reside in communities affected by lower income, higher teen birth rates, and elevated crime rates.

While it is too early in the study to make any definitive conclusions, the study points to insights in the area of resilience. For example, preliminary analysis shows that resilience is low among the study sample. This has implications for addressing mental health concerns and coping strategies in APP programs. Apchemengich noted that the overall study findings could be significant: “It lays a foundation for understanding the role of mental health in APP programs, and future research can build upon it.” She also finds the work fulfilling: “We can see the impact, the changes and shifts in outcomes, based on the work that our clients are doing and the ability to contribute to the APP knowledge base.”

“Youth mental health is more important than ever due to the challenges affecting young people today. Our goal with the PREIS research project is to see if aspects of the Mind Matters curriculum, combined with the Relationship Smarts Plus curriculum, are effective in building resiliency skills among youth. Recent research shows that Gen Z youth are more aware of their mental health than previous generations and are receptive to services if they are accessible. We are optimistic that the PREIS research project will result in meaningful outcomes that advance youth mental health.”

Karen Johnson, LMHC, CCTP
Director of Mental Health
Services, Peacemaker Family
Center, Trinity Church



GETTING TO THE CORE OF TPP PROGRAMS

For nearly two years, AMTC researchers have been studying the impact of core components in TPP programs through the “Content, Pedagogy, Implementation, and Context Components Study” (CPIC Study). In July, the AMTC research team, including Co-Principal Investigator Lori Roller and Senior Research Associate Dr. Brandon Osborn, presented the [study’s phase one findings](#) at the [TPP grantee conference](#) in Baltimore, sponsored by the Office of Population Affairs (OPA). (See the [AMTC Newsletter, Spring 2023](#), for more about the CPIC study).

The conference theme was “Ignite and Inspire: Uniting for Impact,” with focus areas that aligned to the theme. One of those areas was to “Advance innovation and spark ideas by sharing what’s new and groundbreaking in the field of adolescent sexual and reproductive health and positive youth development”¹; according to AMTC researcher Immaculate Apchemengich, Ph.D., the CPIC study is a perfect example.



Immaculate Apchemengich, Ph.D.,
AMTC Research Associate

The study takes a deep dive across five TPP programs to identify patterns and themes that are core—factors that drive the greatest results. At the study’s completion, stakeholders will be able to apply the findings to their specific roles and programs.

Curriculum developers, for example, can utilize CPIC study findings to develop new curricula regarding content and pedagogy. Program implementors who teach the programs can better understand the rationale for what is being taught and can utilize these findings to make adaptations. For evaluators, once they know what is core, they can prioritize what to measure. Study findings can guide policymakers and funders to emphasize certain core components. Anyone involved in TPP work can benefit.

The team is completing phase two of the project, which involves a quantitative descriptive study to empirically investigate questions related to core components and test phase one hypotheses and findings. Stay tuned for updates in the coming months.

¹Office of Population Affairs, <https://web.cvent.com/event/242e80d7-6702-4be8-a3a2-69fa99ca1690/summary>.



WHO WILL USE THESE FINDINGS?

AMTC findings on core components could guide:

- **Curriculum developers** in mapping new curricula concerning content, pedagogy, and dosage
- **Facilitators** in understanding the rationale behind a curriculum’s design and theoretical underpinnings as well as the importance of fidelity and making adaptations
- **Evaluators** in prioritizing what to measure
- **Policymakers and funders** in promoting best practices informed by an understanding of core components



Meet Our *Associates*

Our diverse team delivers fast, relevant results for our clients. Here are two individuals who contribute to those efforts.

Kiley and Michael Floren are a dynamic research and evaluation duo. We invite you to learn about them professionally, as well as about their interests as a couple.



KILEY FLOREN, MPH

EVALUATION CONSULTANT, APP AND FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROGRAMS

WITH AMTC SINCE JULY 2023

EDUCATION: Master of Public Health, Colorado School of Public Health, University of Northern Colorado Campus; B.A., Spanish; minors, English Literature & Cross-Cultural Missions, Bethel University

MICHAEL FLOREN, PH.D.

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION CONSULTANT, APP AND FAMILY STRENGTHENING PROGRAMS

WITH AMTC SINCE JULY 2023

EDUCATION: Ph.D. and M.S. in Applied Statistics and Research Methods, University of Northern Colorado; B.A., Mathematics, and B.A., Math Education, Bethel University

What are your primary duties at AMTC?

We provide program evaluation services, including overall study design, survey development, data collection procedures, and analysis and reporting.

Overall, what has the experience been like at AMTC?

It's been fun to have high-level conversations around program evaluation with our colleagues at AMTC, and it's refreshing to know the programs are receiving such thorough wraparound support, given the deep and multifaceted expertise across the organization.

What do you find meaningful about your work at AMTC?

We love being able to empower our clients to understand and use their own data for program improvement, marketing, and sharing their program successes. We want to give them data to be able to communicate their successes effectively.

Moving forward, what do you hope to accomplish at AMTC?

We appreciate having long-term relationships with program partners because it allows us to dive deeper into their program evaluations and strongly aligns stakeholders to things they truly benefit from, such as learning about the effectiveness of their work. We hope to develop deeper relationships with those we've worked with and learn about new programs.

Outside of your professional position, what do you enjoy personally?

We spend time with our two young daughters. We love taking them outside to play in the forest or the creek. As a couple, we enjoy cooking and dancing together.