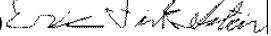


TO: Rita Noonan, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

FROM: Eric Finkelstein, Evaluation of the Safe Dates Project PD 

DATE: May 20, 2008

SUBJECT: Questions about the Evaluation of the Safe Dates Project
(PRA package ____ - ____)

This memorandum responds to OMB comments on PRA package ____ - ____ (Evaluation of the Safe Dates Project). For additional information, please feel free to contact me at (919) 541-8074 or finkelse@rti.org.

Incentives for school staff for implementation and cost data collection

1. Table 5 on page 13 shows our plans for incentives for prevention coordinators and teachers for implementation and cost data collection. We agree with OMB that principal incentives are not necessary because schools receive a \$2,500 incentive for school participation in the study. Therefore, we have revised the packet to remove those incentives from Table 5.
2. However, the literature shows that response rates for high school teachers who do not receive incentives are not satisfactory for the purposes of the proposed study. For example, in a study about implementing computer technology, teacher response rates were 50% or lower at 56% of the 116 participating high schools (Holahan, Aronson, Jurkat, & Schoorman, 2004). Therefore, we would like to offer incentives to prevention coordinators and teachers for implementation and cost data collection, since this is outside of their regular teaching/administrative responsibilities and we hope to obtain a much higher response rate. Furthermore, even with incentives, we experienced great difficulty obtaining cost data from teachers in our pilot test because these data must be recorded within 2 business days of delivering each of 11 program components (for a total of 11 Web submissions per teacher) in order for time and cost estimates about program delivery to be accurate. Feedback from teachers revealed that the \$50 incentive was important for ensuring accurate and timely responses. It is important to note that whether prevention coordinators and teachers will be allowed to accept these incentives will be up to the principal at each school. We have added text to document this point on page 14.

Incentives for students returning signed parent consent forms

3. Table 5 on page 13 also shows our plan for student incentives for returning signed parent consent forms. We propose providing students with a \$0.50 token the student can redeem in the school book store or cafeteria for returning their signed parental consent form,

whether or not they obtain permission to participate in the study. In another school-based study, Blinn-Pike and colleagues (2000) asked teachers to estimate how many students they could obtain parent consent from for baseline data collection. The study was to begin within one month after the start of school year. However, by mid-October, 6 of the 12 teachers had not secured enough signed parental permission forms needed to begin the project. A primary reason stated by teachers was that incentives were needed to motivate students to return the forms. To this point, on a recent school-based study that RTI conducted, we attempted to obtain signed parent consent forms without offering a student incentive. We were disappointed with the low consent return rates during the first two weeks, so we began offering a small \$0.50 token incentive to students. Consent return rates improved dramatically. Small student incentives are now routinely offered in our school-based grant efforts. We have added text discussing this point to the section about student incentives on page 14.

Confidentiality assurances to participants

4. We reviewed our parent consent and adolescent assent forms, as well as our adolescent assent scripts, and realized that we mistakenly assured respondents of confidentiality of their responses, even though we will not seek an NIH Certificate of Confidentiality. We have revised all forms in the appendices listed to instead state that information will be kept private.
 - a. Appendix B. Implementation Evaluation Data Collection Instruments
 - i. Baseline Principal Survey, cover page (page 1) and background information (page 2)
 - ii. Baseline Prevention Coordinator Survey, cover page (page 1) and background information (page 2)
 - iii. Baseline Teacher Survey, cover page (page 1) and background information (page 2)
 - iv. 1st Mid-Implementation Student Survey, pages 2 and 5
 - v. 2nd Mid-Implementation Student Survey, pages 2 and 5
 - vi. Mid-Implementation Principal Survey, cover page (page 1) and background information (page 2)
 - vii. Mid-Implementation Prevention Coordinator Survey, cover page (page 1) and background information (page 2)
 - viii. End-of-School-Year Principal Survey, cover page (page 1) and background information (page 2)
 - ix. End-of-School Year Prevention Coordinator Survey, cover page (page 1) and background information (page 2)
 - b. Appendix D. Cost Data Collection Instruments
 - i. Lesson 5 Questionnaire, page 6
 - ii. Lesson 9 Questionnaire, page 6
 - c. Appendix G. Summary of Pilot Test Results
 - i. Recommendations for main study, page 2

- d. Appendix I. Assurances of Privacy and Study Descriptions Provided to Respondents
 - i. Parent/Guardian Informed Consent, page 2
 - ii. Teen Assent, page 2
 - iii. Teen Assent Script, page 1

IRB approvals

We have attached documentation of approval by our IRB for this study.

References:

- Blinn-Pike, L., Berger, T., & Rea-Holloway, M. (2000). Conducting adolescent sexuality research in schools: Lessons learned. *Family Planning Perspectives*, 32, 246-51, 265.
- Holahan, P. J., Aronson, Z. H., Jurkat, H. P., & Schoorman, F. D. (2004). Implementing computer technology: A multi-organizational test of Klein and Sorra's model. *Journal of Engineering Technology Management*, 21, 31-50.