ABSTRACT

RESEARCH PAPER: The Impact of an Infant Simulation Intervention Program on the Perceptions of Pregnancy and Infant Care in Adolescents

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Adolescents often have difficulty in grasping the weight of responsibility in caring for an infant. Baby Think It Over is an infant simulator that gives adolescents an opportunity to experience the daily care of an infant, including the impact that caring for an infant has on his or her day-to-day life. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the impact of the Baby Think It Over (BTIO) intervention on adolescents’ academic and social lives, emotions, family members, and cultural values, as well as adolescents’ plans to delay pregnancy. This is a replication of deAnda’s (2006) study. The framework is the Baby Think It Over Intervention program. The population will consist of 7th and 8th grade students from one of the four main middle schools in Durham County, NC (N=275). The anticipated sample will consist of 100 students. BTIO-1 will measure the effect that caring for an infant has on: academic life, social life, family members, emotional risks, and cultural values. BTIO-2 will measure the effect of the intervention on the students’ plans to postpone pregnancy. The results of this study will be significant in evaluating the perceptions of pregnancy in adolescents regarding their family, social, and academic lives, and further support health care providers and school officials in preventing adolescent pregnancy.