



Descriptive Evaluation of the Guam Healthy Relationship Education  
Program (SPARK) in the Pacific Island of Guam Final Descriptive  
Evaluation Report for WestCare Pacific Islands, Inc.

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**Structured Abstract:** “A Descriptive Evaluation of the Guam Healthy Relationships Education Program (SPARK) in the Pacific Island of Guam”

From July 2016 to March 2020, the SPARK program served 318 couples (637 individuals) on Guam; 71% of individuals on Guam are Chamoru and 85% are Catholic. The SPARK program used the PREP 8.0, Money Smart for Young Adults (MSYA), and Triple P Discussion Groups evidence-based curriculums. The focus of the current study is to determine if the program delivered the number of required PREP 8.0 curriculum hours, to document cultural adaptations used, and how well the curriculum with cultural adaptations was received by couples on Guam. The study also wanted to identify the cultural practices that appear to promote or deter healthy relationships.

Based upon rigorous continuous quality improvement processes, considerations for the appropriate dosage, frequency and duration of the PREP 8.0 curriculum implementation emerged as there were various cultural barriers identified during this process. Also from rigorous continuous quality improvement processes and reports, the SPARK program learned that branding the program built on cultural values, providing a solid orientation to the program, and incorporating signature program events seemed to increase participant recruitment and engagement as there was less perceived stigma associated with the program.

Most notable, the SPARK program learned that the PREP 8.0 curriculum is culturally competent for couples on Guam as there were only a few lessons that needed cultural adaptations. However, most of the PREP 8.0 curriculums' lessons that included a cultural adaptation, posttest survey respondents found to be helpful. According to posttest survey respondents, the most helpful curriculum lessons involved communication and conflict resolution skills, anger management and money management. Also, posttest survey respondents appear to be satisfied with the PREP 8.0 curriculum as 100% rated the workshops at “Satisfactory.” Moreover, even though budgeting and money management was not included in the PREP 8.0 curriculum workshops, it was included in the Money Smart for Young Adults (MSYA) curriculum for which posttest survey respondents mentioned was also helpful.

Focus groups conducted with program staff and program participants whom completed the SPARK program, showed that extended family appears to influence couples' relationships on Guam, especially about decision-making, with faith also contributing to couples' decisions. Overall, suggestions included adding training modules specifically on how to communicate and connect with extended family, and how to best integrate faith with family – as an effort to strengthen healthy, happy relationships on Guam – would be useful to a great extent.

Overall, there is limited research available that explores what curriculum works with couples on Guam to establish better and longer lasting healthy intimate partner relationships. This study documented implementation of the program. Future research should investigate outcomes among program participants.

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# Descriptive Evaluation of the Guam Healthy Relationships Education Program (SPARK) in the Pacific Island of Guam

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Introduction and study overview

The SPARK program, formerly known as the Guam Healthy Relationship Education Program, is a culturally responsive program on the island of Guam designed to, encourage healthy relationships and marriage, promote responsible parenting and help families move toward self-sufficiency and economic stability. To meet the needs of the Guam community, WestCare Pacific Islands, Inc. strived to provide activities that address and support healthy marriage promotion, strengthen families, and improve outcomes for young adults (and their children) who have significant social and/or economic challenges with impact their overall quality of life. The SPARK program delivered services that help couples develop skills in communication, conflict resolution, relationship safety and commitment with the goal of improving relationship quality and increasing the likelihood that children grow up with both parents in a low-conflict home. The SPARK program is designed to meet the needs of couples and build upon each couples' strengths.

From July 2016 to March 2020, the SPARK program served 318 couples (637 individuals) on Guam using the PREP 8.0 curriculum with cultural adaptations. Demographic findings indicate that 71% of individuals on Guam are CHamoru, the 4,000-year-old indigenous people of the island, and 85% of the population are Catholic. This descriptive evaluation studied the implementation of the SPARK program to build understanding of the best practices around program delivery and adaptation.

Key implementation findings emerged, such as, considerations for the appropriate dosage, frequency and duration of the PREP 8.0 curriculum and the cultural adaptations. Also, to inform our findings and lessons learned, we used rigorous Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) processes; curriculum lessons and activities that survey respondents found to be most helpful; and baseline data of traditional and nontraditional relationship and parenting cultural practices.

Overall, the SPARK program's descriptive evaluation study explored the PREP 8.0 evidence-based curriculum programming with specified cultural enhancements for couples living in the Pacific Island of Guam.

## B. Description of the intended intervention

This section describes the intended experiences of those receiving the intervention.

Education sessions primarily take place at WestCare Pacific Islands Reflection Center with other optional locations being Guam Department of Corrections (DOC), one of the two (2) village community centers, or one of the twenty-two (22) Head Start locations, in a classroom setting. For all locations, each education session lasts 2 hours. In addition, one time every three months, a group activity such as a retreat, focus group, or forum is held for participants in the program.

All participants were to receive the following curricula:

1. **PREP 8.0:** A group-based marriage and relationship education intervention for premarital and marital couples that demonstrates the benefits of commitment and marriage and provides skill development such as effective relationship communication skills; conflict management/resolution, affection and intimacy; teamwork and problem-solving skills; stress and anger management.
2. **Money Smart for Young Adults (MSYA):** A Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) program designed to teach young adults about basic personal financial management. MSYA includes in-person and computer-based learning (CBI) modules.

**For those participants who are parents, the following additional curriculum will also be used:**

3. **Triple-P Discussion Groups:** Triple P is a multi-level family intervention designed to promote positive parenting practices in the community and prevent a range of social and behavioral problems in children. All five levels of intervention in the Triple P model aim to enhance parents' self-sufficiency in interacting with their children through the use of positive parenting practices. Triple P ultimately aims to support parents to promote their child's social, emotional and behavioral development.

**Planned dosage and implementation schedule:** All participants will receive the following curriculum:

1. **PREP 8.0:** Led by a trained facilitator, each PREP 8.0 course is 6 sessions at 2 hours per week across 6 weeks (total of 12 hours). The program offered PREP 8.0 on an open enrollment basis, throughout the year. In addition to in-class time, staff encouraged couples to practice these skills between sessions.
2. **Money Smart for Young Adults (MSYA):** The CBI complements formal classes by providing learning assignments that users can complete at their own pace. The in-person, instructor-led curriculum includes one 2-hour module addressing topics such as banking, credit, money management, the importance of saving, and how to recover from financial setbacks. This program is available four times annually.

**For those participants whom are parents the following additional curriculum will also be used:**

- 3. Triple-P Discussion Groups:** One two-hour small group session, targeting a specific problem behavior or issue. Each discussion group is either stand-alone session or part of a series. There are four topics for parents of children 0 –12 (Dealing with disobedience; Managing fighting and aggression; Developing good bedtime routines; and Hassle-free shopping with children).

Education sessions are offered at several locations. Program interventions are intended for couples whom are between the ages of 18 and 35, married or unmarried, with or without children. *Table 1 describes the intended intervention components and target populations.*

There are two facilitators called Family Service Specialist (Educator) leading the curriculum interventions (**see Appendix A: Family Service Specialist Job Description**). There are a variety of education and training needed of staff. See *Table 2 for description of staff training and development to support intervention components.*

**Table 1. Description of intended intervention components and target populations**

Component	Curriculum and content	Dosage and schedule	Delivery	Target Population
Relationship skills workshops	PREP 8.0 curriculum: Effective relationship communication skills; conflict management/ resolution, affection and intimacy; teamwork and problem-solving skills; stress and anger management	12 hours, with 2-hour sessions occurring once a week across 6 weeks	Workshops provided at one of the locations in a classroom setting by two trained facilitators	Couples whom are between the ages of 18 and 35, married or unmarried, with or without children
Financial stability workshops	Money Smart for Young Adults (MSYA) curriculum: banking, credit, money management, the importance of saving, and how to recover from financial setbacks	2-hour self-paced workshops that occur 4 times annually	Workshops provided at one of the locations in a classroom setting by two trained facilitators	Couples whom are between the ages of 18 and 35, married or unmarried, with or without children
Parenting workshops	Triple P Discussion Groups: Four topics for parents of children 0 –12 (Dealing with disobedience; Managing fighting and aggression; Developing good bedtime routines; and Hassle-free shopping with children)	2-hour standalone workshops, one workshop for each of the 4 topics – 8 hours total	Workshops provided at one of the locations in a classroom setting by two trained facilitators	Couples whom are between the ages of 18 and 35, married or unmarried, with or without children
Community events	Date Night; Couples Retreat; Holly Trolley; Cook and Dine; Bae Day; Mentorship Workshop	Each event occurs once every 3 months with some reoccurring annually	Events are conducted at various local Guam restaurants, hotels and event centers	Couples whom are between the ages of 18 and 35, married or unmarried, with or without children



**Table 2. Staff training and development to support intervention components**

Component	Education and initial training of staff	Ongoing training of staff
1. Relationship skills workshops	Lead Family Service Specialist (Educator): Master's Degree in Education, Trained and Certified as a Facilitator for PREP 8.0 curriculum, and 30+ years of experience working in human services and education with 46 hours of initial training before curriculum implementation  Second Family Service Specialist (Educator): Bachelor's Degree Candidate, Trained and Completed Accreditation in Triple P Parenting curriculum; Bachelor's Degree in Human Services, 10 years human services experience with 46 hours of initial training before curriculum implementation	Annual thorough in-service training (topics from suicide prevention, effects of domestic violence on children, early childhood development, effects of substance abuse on families, etc.), conferences, online training, and other professional development opportunities
2. Financial stability workshops		
3. Parenting workshops		
4. Community events		

## II. PROCESS/IMPLEMENTATION STUDY (See *Appendix B: Program Logic Model*)

The SPARK program was specifically interested in studying the implementation of the PREP 8.0 evidence-based curriculum programming and if cultural enhancements were well received by program participants whom completed both pre and posttest surveys and participated in additional focus groups examining the influences of extended family and faith.

### A. Research questions

The research questions articulate the main hypotheses of our process/implementation study. The two (2) research questions include several elements such as fidelity, dosage, quality, and context, and are as follows:

**Research Question (RQ) 1:** Using a data-driven approach, what lessons can we learn about implementing the PREP 8.0 evidence-based curriculum with cultural enhancements for adults who are living on the Pacific Island of Guam in terms of:

- RQ1a: Did the program offer the required 12 hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum instruction as recommended by the developers?
- RQ1b: What were the cultural enhancements added to the PREP 8.0 curriculum for each lesson?
- RQ1c: How many hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum did participants receive?
- RQ1d: How well was the PREP 8.0 curriculum received by participants (based on participant responses to the Relationship Education Workshop Questionnaire – Post Assessment)?
- RQ1e: Were the cultural enhancements to each PREP 8.0 curriculum lesson helpful to participants?

**Research Question (RQ) 2:** What cultural practices appear to promote or deter the implementation of the SPARK program for adults who are living on the Pacific Island of Guam?

*See Table 3 for the research questions as per each implementation element, such as, fidelity, dosage, quality, and context.*

**Table 3. Research questions for each implementation element**

Implementation element	Research question
Fidelity	<p>RQ1: Using a data-driven approach, what lessons can we learn about implementing the PREP 8.0 evidence-based curriculum with cultural enhancements for adults who are living on the Pacific Island of Guam in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– RQ1a: Did the program offer the required 12 hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum instruction as recommended by the developers?</li> <li>– RQ1b: What were the cultural enhancements added to the PREP 8.0 curriculum for each lesson?</li> </ul>
Dosage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– RQ1c: How many hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum did participants receive?</li> </ul>

Implementation element	Research question
Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– RQ1d: How well was the PREP 8.0 curriculum received by participants (based on participant responses to the Relationship Education Workshop Questionnaire – Post Assessment)?</li> <li>– RQ1e: Were the cultural enhancements to each PREP 8.0 curriculum lesson helpful to participants?</li> </ul>
Context	RQ 2: What cultural practices appear to promote or deter the implementation of the SPARK program for adults who are living on the Pacific Island of Guam?

## B. Study design

### 1. Sample formation

Sterling IRB, Inc. is the Institutional Review Board used for the study. Sterling IRB, Inc. initially approved the study, data collection plans and recruitment materials on July 2016 and subsequently each year until March 31, 2020.

**Sample eligibility criteria:** For individuals to qualify for participation in the program, they needed to be in a relationship, be 18 years or older, married or unmarried, with or without children.

**Samples used:** For purposes of the study, there were two samples used. The first were program participants whom completed both pre and posttest surveys, regardless of whether participants completed the program or not. The Research Assistant attempted to collect posttest surveys from all program participants, however, there were challenges in connecting with those participants that were no longer receiving program services. The second sample was those that participated in the focus groups. Focus group participants were those who completed the program and were willing to participate in a group discussion. Family educators called each couple to invite them, and then, to confirm participation once commitment was made. See *Table 4 for characteristics of participants*.

**Consent process for study enrollment (see Appendix C: Program Flow Chart).** Sample enrollment for the study started in July 2016 and continued until March 2020. All participants received the PREP 8.0 and Money Smart for Young Adults (MSYA) curriculums with only the parents receiving an additional parenting curriculum (Triple P Discussion Groups). All participants completed an admissions interview to determine eligibility, which lasted about 1 hour. Once eligible, participants then completed the Sterling IRB, Inc. approved Informed Consent. From there, participants completed all pretest surveys, which lasted about 1 hour. Then, participants were scheduled to start the PREP 8.0 curriculum in the following week. Throughout the course of the program, participants had the ability to receive several types of incentives, from snacks, to gift cards, to giveaways, etc. for participating in the program outside of data collection. Then, once every three months, participants had the ability to participate in a community event focused on enhancing their relationships, which is free of cost and is typically an all-day weekend event. The community events range from a couple's dinner, workshops, a holiday trolley ride, etc. After completing the curriculums, participants then completed all

posttest surveys, which lasted about 1 hour. Participants were then tracked for an additional 3 months via phone calls to determine follow up success from participating in the program. Additionally, participants were periodically asked to participate in qualitative focus groups that lasted no longer than 90 minutes each.

**Table 4. Characteristics of participants in implementation/process study**

Characteristic	PREP 8.0 Curriculum Participants (unduplicated individuals) *	Focus Group Participants (unduplicated individuals)
Age		
18-24 Years (%)	32%	34%
25-25 Years (%)	55%	57%
35+ Years (%)	13%	9%
Average (Years)	30 Years	31 years
Gender (%)		
Male	48%	46%
Female	52%	54%
Race/ethnicity (%)		
Hispanic	0%	0%
CHamoru	69%	85%
Filipino	9%	4%
Other Pacific Islander	9%	0%
Multiracial	6%	7%
Other (White, Black, Chinese, Japanese)	7%	4%
Relationship status (#)		
Married or partnered	636	26
Single	1	0
Sample size	637	26

Note: The PREP 8.0 curriculum participants' characteristic information captures all program participants, not just those whom completed pre and posttest surveys. Participant characteristics were not available for those that just completed pre and posttest surveys.

Source: SPARK Program Quarterly Evaluation Report (April 2020)

## 2. Data collection

The following are the data sources we used to answer the two (2) research questions, including the timing and frequency of each data collection effort, and the party responsible for collecting the data. *Table 5 provides additional information about the data used to address each of the research questions.*

For Research Question (RQ) 1a, which focused on fidelity, we used an ongoing attendance tracker in nFORM, the management information system used for the program, after each lesson which was inputted by both Family Service Specialists (Educators).

For Research Question (RQ) 1b, which also focused on fidelity, the Local Evaluator conducted two (2) qualitative focus groups with both Family Service Specialists (Educators) in January

2020 to determine an itemized inventory or list of which cultural enhancements were used and for which lessons. The Local Evaluator also reviewed each lessons' PowerPoints that were created by the Lead Family Service Specialist (Educator).

For Research Question (RQ) 1c, which focused on dosage, we used the ongoing attendance tracker in nFORM after each lesson which was inputted by both Family Service Specialists (Educators).

For Research Question (RQ) 1d, which focused on quality, we used the PREP 8.0 Posttest workshop questions 62 ("Overall, I am satisfied with my experiences in this workshop") and 63 ("Overall, I found the relationship workshop helpful"), administered by the Research Assistant immediately following the last session of the completed PREP 8.0 curriculum (**see Appendix D: PREP 8.0 Posttest**).

For Research Question (RQ) 1e, which also focused on quality, we used the PREP 8.0 Posttest workshop questions 66a ("Aspect of the workshop you found most helpful") and 66b ("Aspect of the workshop you found least helpful") which is open-ended, administered by the Research Assistant immediately following the last session of the completed PREP 8.0 curriculum (**see Appendix D: PREP 8.0 Posttest**). Then, if participants mention a specific PREP 8.0 lesson that was particularly helpful on questions 66a and 66b, the Local Evaluator referred back to the PowerPoints to see what the cultural enhancements were included in that specific lesson.

For Research Question (RQ) 2, which focused on context, there were several data sources used. The first was the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Plan and Progress Report. The Quality Improvement Coordinator and program staff started tracking program implementation using the CQI NIATx Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) process in July 2016 with the Quality Improvement Coordinator completing a Progress Report at the conclusion of each year of program operation. The NIATx change model relies on the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) Cycle to turn a change idea into action. The PDSA Cycle uses a series of short rapid cycles, with each cycle from planning through implementation taking only a couple of weeks. The second was facilitation by the Local Evaluator of internal staff development sessions of 22 hours with SPARK staff from January to July 2018 focused on discussion on additional variables that impact healthy, happy relationships on Guam. PowerPoint presentations facilitated in-depth discussion on what, in addition to skills in conflict resolution, communication, child rearing, financial management, influenced relationships. As discussion evolved in cultural competency issues, two themes emerged – extended family and faith. These themes then became focus group discussion points for program participants who completed the program. The third were two (2) qualitative focus groups conducted by the Local Evaluator with program participants in January 2020 that focused on specific cultural practices that promote or deter implementation of the program. Participants were program completers willing to return for discussion on relationships. Two-hour focus group sessions focused discussion on their perceptions of extended family and faith on decision making, child rearing, partner selection, and living arrangements. Notes were made, A Likert scale feedback sheet asked participants to rate the extent to which extended family and faith

influenced their relationships in decision making, child rearing, partner selection, and living arrangements.

**Table 5. Data for addressing the research questions**

Implementation element	Research question	Data source	Timing/ frequency of data collection	Party responsible for data collection
Fidelity	Research Question (RQ) 1: Using a data-driven approach, what lessons can we learn about implementing the PREP 8.0 evidence-based curriculum with cultural enhancements for adults who are living on the Pacific Island of Guam in terms of:  RQ1a: Did the program offer the required 12 hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum instruction as recommended by the developers?	nFORM Attendance Tracker	After each PREP 8.0 curriculum lesson	Family Service Specialists (Educators)
Fidelity	RQ1b: What were the cultural enhancements added to the PREP 8.0 curriculum for each lesson?	1. 2 Qualitative Focus Groups with Family Service Specialists (Educators)  2. PREP 8.0 Curriculum Lesson PowerPoints	1. Completed by January 2020  2. Developed by the Lead Family Service Specialist (Educator) and utilized for at least 2 years	1. Local Evaluator 2. Local Evaluator
Dosage	RQ1c: How many hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum did participants receive?	nFORM Attendance Tracker	After each PREP 8.0 curriculum lesson	Family Service Specialists (Educators)
Quality	RQ1d: How well was the PREP 8.0 curriculum received by participants (based on participant responses to the Relationship Education Workshop Questionnaire – Post Assessment)?	PREP 8.0 Posttest Questions 62 (Likert question asking if they were satisfied with the workshops) & 63 (Likert scale asking if they found the workshop helpful)	Immediately following the last session of the PREP 8.0 curriculum	Research Assistant

Implementation element	Research question	Data source	Timing/ frequency of data collection	Party responsible for data collection
Quality	RQ1e: Were the cultural enhancements to each PREP 8.0 curriculum lesson helpful to participants?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. PREP 8.0 Posttest Question 66a (open-ended question asking what they liked the most) and 66b (open-ended question asking what they liked the least)</li> <li>2. PREP 8.0 Curriculum Lesson PowerPoints</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Immediately following the last session of the PREP 8.0 curriculum</li> <li>2. Developed by the Lead Family Service Specialist (Educator) and utilized for at least 2 years</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Research Assistant</li> <li>2. Local Evaluator</li> </ol>
Context	Research Question (RQ) 2: What cultural practices appear to promote or deter the implementation of the SPARK program for adults who are living on the Pacific Island of Guam?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CQI Plan and Progress Report</li> <li>2. 2 Qualitative Focus Groups with program staff and participants</li> <li>3. 4 Qualitative Focus Groups with program participants</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. July 2016 to September 2018</li> <li>2. September 2018 and March 2019</li> <li>3. January 2020</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Quality Improvement Coordinator</li> <li>2. Local Evaluator</li> <li>3. Local Evaluator</li> </ol>

### 3. Data preparation and measures

The following outlines the specific measures constructed and the approaches to using these measures to answer the two (2) research questions. *Table 6 provides additional information about the measures for addressing each of the research questions.*

For Research Question (RQ) 1a, which is focused on fidelity, we examined the total number of hours the PREP 8.0 curriculum instruction was delivered to all program participants.

For Research Question (RQ) 1b, which is also focused on fidelity, an itemized inventory or list of cultural enhancements used for each 8.0 curriculum lesson was developed and each lessons' PowerPoints were reviewed by the Local Evaluator with the Family Service Specialists (Educators). Family educators were asked if there were any aspects of the curriculum that needed to be interpreted for understanding by the program participants about familiarity or experiential understanding resulting from living on Guam. There were no inconsistencies between the two family educators. There were two reviewers (Local Evaluator and Research Assistant) who coded the information and compared the coded data. If there was inconsistency in the coding, the reviewers discussed and attempted to come to a consensus. If a consensus could not be reached, the data in question was removed from the analysis.

For Research Question (RQ) 1c, which is focused on dosage, we examined the total number and percentage of participants who completed the program and 12 hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum



instruction, the total number of participants and percentage who did not complete the program and 12 hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum instruction. The average dose received was also included.

For Research Question (RQ) 1d, which is focused on quality, we examined the total number and percentage of participants who rated the PREP 8.0 curriculum as satisfactory or unsatisfactory based upon program participants whom completed the pre and posttest PREP 8.0 curriculum survey. The specific items examined were question 62 about participants' overall satisfaction of relationship workshops, and question 63 about if participants felt the relationship workshop was helpful. Both questions were on a Likert scale with "Unsatisfactory" (1-3), "Neutral" (4), and "Satisfactory" (5-7). Only participants whom completed both questions (62 and 63) were included in the analysis. Participants who did not answer both questions (62 and 63) were removed from the analysis.

For Research Question (RQ) 1e, which also focused on quality, we examined the total number and percentage of participants who mentioned a specific lesson of the PREP 8.0 curriculum they found or did not find helpful based upon program participants whom completed the pre and posttest PREP 8.0 curriculum survey. The specific items examined were two open-ended questions 66a which asked what they liked the most and 66b which asked what they liked the least. From the specific lessons identified in questions 66a and 66b, an itemized inventory or list of cultural enhancements created based upon the review of the lesson PowerPoints.

For Research Question (RQ) 2, which focused on context, there were a few data sources used. The first was rigorous continuous quality improvement processes from 2016 to 2018 which included interviews with staff, program participants and several meeting discussions by the Quality Improvement team, led by the Quality Improvement Coordinator. As such, a report was produced with detailed information about performance improvement initiatives and outcomes. The second was perceived thoughts that promote or deter implementation of the program as described in qualitative interviews with program staff and program participants. Program staff discussed through a period of internal staff development meetings from January 2018 to July 2018, for a period of 22 hours, described what they thought influenced relationships on Guam. While program staff appreciated the positive survey results of PREP 8.0, they discussed what other aspects could influence happy, healthy relationships on Guam. Their discussions resulted with two cultural competency aspects that they felt impacted relationships on Guam - extended family and faith. These two cultural practices identified were then developed into discussion points for program completers who were willing to be focus group participants during two focus groups, one held on January 15, 2020 and the other on January 21, 2020. Throughout the two-hour focus group sessions, notes were taken on extended family and faith discussion points, as well as feedback sheets, which were completed by focus group participants who were program completers. The feedback sheets had a Likert scale asking participants to rate extended family and faith influence on family living arrangements, partner selection, financial decisions, and children rearing. Each participant was asked to rate each item of influence with a 3 if the variable impacted the item to a great extent, a 2 if it impacted the item to some extent, or 1 if not at all. Through simple analysis, these feedback sheets provided perceptions of extended family and faith on living arrangements, partner selection, financial decisions, and child rearing – aspects



which influence relationships. Also, each feedback sheet asked if they thought training relative to extended family and faith would be helpful. **See Appendix E for Focus Group Feedback Sheets.**

**Table 6. Measures for addressing the research questions**

Implementation element	Research question	Measures
Fidelity	RQ1a: Did the program offer the required 12 hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum instruction as recommended by the developers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total number of hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum instruction delivered to program participants</li> <li>• Analytic Sample: All program participants.</li> </ul>
Fidelity	RQ1b: What were the cultural enhancements added to the PREP 8.0 curriculum for each lesson?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Itemized inventory or list of cultural enhancements used for each 8.0 curriculum lesson was developed and each lessons' PowerPoints were reviewed by the Local Evaluator with the Family Service Specialists (Educators).</li> <li>• Family educators were asked if there were any aspects of the curriculum that needed to be interpreted for understanding by the program participants in regard to familiarity or experiential understanding resulting from living on Guam. There were no inconsistencies between the two family educators.</li> <li>• There were two reviewers (Local Evaluator and Research Assistant) who coded the information and compared the coded data. If there was inconsistency in the coding, the reviewers discussed and attempted to come to a consensus. If a consensus could not be reached, the data in question was removed from the analysis.</li> <li>• Analytic Sample: Program Staff</li> </ul>
Dosage	RQ1c: How many hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum did participants receive?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total number of participants who completed the program and 12 hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum instruction</li> <li>• Total number of participants who did not complete the program and 12 hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum instruction</li> <li>• Percentage of participants who completed the program and 12 hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum instruction</li> <li>• Percentage of participants who did not complete the program and 12 hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum instruction</li> <li>• Average dosage received</li> <li>• Analytic Sample: Program Participants who completed the pre and posttest survey</li> </ul>

Implementation element	Research question	Measures
Quality	RQ1d: How well was the PREP 8.0 curriculum received by participants (based on participant responses to the Relationship Education Workshop Questionnaire – Post Assessment)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For items 62 and 63 the scale will be collapsed to “Unsatisfactory” (1-3); “Neutral” (4); and “Satisfactory” (5-7), Responses will be analyzed to determine:</li> <li>Total number of participants who rated the PREP 8.0 curriculum as satisfactory</li> <li>Total number of participants who rated the PREP 8.0 curriculum as unsatisfactory</li> <li>Percentage of participants who rated the PREP 8.0 curriculum as satisfactory</li> <li>Percentage of participants who rated the PREP 8.0 curriculum as unsatisfactory</li> <li>Responses for items 62 and 63 will be reported utilizing a Frequency Count for each potential response</li> <li>Analytic Sample: Program Participants who completed the pre and posttest survey and answered both questions (62 and 63)</li> </ul>
Quality	RQ1e: Were the cultural enhancements to each PREP 8.0 curriculum lesson helpful to participants?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Total number of participants who mentioned a specific lesson of the PREP 8.0 curriculum they found helpful across questions 66a and 66b</li> <li>Total number of participants who did not mention a specific lesson of the PREP 8.0 curriculum they found helpful</li> <li>Percentage of participants who mentioned a specific lesson of the PREP 8.0 curriculum they found helpful</li> <li>Percentage of participants who did not mention a specific lesson of the PREP 8.0 curriculum they found helpful</li> <li>From the specific lessons identified by being helpful to participants, an itemized inventory or list of cultural enhancements created based upon the review of the lesson PowerPoints</li> <li>Analytic Sample: Program Participants who completed the pre and posttest survey</li> </ul>
Context	Research Question (RQ) 2: What cultural practices appear to promote or deter the implementation of the SPARK program for adults who are living on the Pacific Island of Guam?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rigorous and documented quality improvement processes and report</li> <li>Perceived thoughts that promote or deter implementation of the program was developed as described in qualitative interviews with program staff and program participants.</li> <li>Data notated during discussions that described the perceived impact of extended family and faith. The two cultural practices identified through SPARK program staff discussions were summarized in feedback sheets by the focus group participants.</li> <li>The feedback sheets had a Likert scale asking participants to rate extended family and faith influence on family living arrangements, partner selection, financial decisions, and children rearing.</li> </ul>

### C. Findings and analysis approach

The SPARK program learned valuable insights from the two (2) research questions posed. From the first research question, we found that tracking how many sessions each participant participated in using the nFORM system was challenging, that participants reported lessons with cultural enhancements were helpful, the PREP 8.0 evidence-based curriculum programming was well received, and there were several lesson topics and activities that participants who completed the pre and posttest surveys found helpful. From the second research question relative to whether the two cultural competency themes that emerged influenced healthy, happy relationships, we found that the participants' perceptions were that extended family impacted their decision-making, living arrangements, budget, and child-rearing and their perceptions were that faith had less of an impact in these areas. Additionally, the program identified several cultural barriers for couples on Guam in relation to participation in the SPARK program

The following outlines our approaches to using these measures and how we answered the two (2) research questions (our findings):

**1. Research Question (RQ) 1:** Using a data-driven approach, what lessons can we learn about implementing the PREP 8.0 evidence-based curriculum with cultural enhancements for adults who are living on the Pacific Island of Guam in terms of:

- **RQ 1a (Fidelity):** Did the program offer the required 12 hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum instruction as recommended by the developers?

**FINDING:** We could not easily confirm whether the SPARK program offered the required 12 hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum instruction as recommended by the developers since nFORM is designed to track attendance using a workshop series cohort or a closed cohort model. At the beginning, the program attempted to use a closed cohort model, but through Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) processes, we found that an open cohort model seemed to work best with the couples' work, family/children, and personal commitments and scheduling.

Therefore, recording attendance on nFORM was challenging. Couples were not always pre-registered for session series because they would then be registered for all six sessions in the series. For example, if a session series is set to occur once a week on a Thursday, pre-registering a couple will then register them for each of the six sessions in a session series. For those who say they will consistently attend a particular day, this works fine. But, for most of the couples, however, their schedules change weekly – whether it be for work or anticipated or unanticipated family obligations. So, if their availability permits, they may come twice in one week for a workshop or may come before their next scheduled Thursday workshop. If the couples know they have some family obligation to attend to the next Thursday, they may attend the Monday workshop preceding their Thursday workshop. When the couples deviate from their regularly scheduled workshop and do not show up for the Thursday that they missed, nFORM will note their absence at that particular session, even though they did attend another workshop earlier in the week to “make-up” for the Thursday they anticipate to miss. So nFORM will mark them as “did not attend” signaling a make-up, but this is not accurate

because their attendance was recorded elsewhere as a "drop-in" in a session of the session series for Mondays.

- **RQ 1b (Fidelity):** What were the cultural enhancements added to the PREP 8.0 curriculum for each lesson?

**FINDINGS:** From February to July 2018, the SPARK program team met bi-monthly to define and discuss relationships, including the construct of culturally competency, basically as an agenda item of the SPARK in-service on evaluation. As stated above, the discussions with the Spark team pinpointed that being culturally competent promotes effective collaboration, responsive program efforts, and meaningful evaluation (Reich & Reich, 2006).

As a result, it was agreed that data would be gathered to see if PREP 8.0 was a good fit for our couples on Guam. Was verbiage familiar? Were activities meaningful? Was discussion relevant?

On December 2, 2019 and December 12, 2019, the Local Evaluator, the Lead Family Educator and another Family Educator spent a few hours reviewing the different units and the PowerPoint files used. They shared where they adapted and how. On January 14, 2020 and January 21, 2020, follow-up discussions were held.

Specifically, the following objectives were:

- To review each unit for verbiage/examples amended for cultural competency
- To review each unit for videos modified for cultural competency
- To review each unit for activities modified for cultural competency
- To describe the amended verbiage used for cultural competency
- To describe how videos were modified for cultural competency
- To describe how activities were modified for cultural competency
- To describe how units were modified for Class, Date Night, Retreat
- To describe any other aspect, facilitate for PREP 8.0 that was used to strengthen cultural competency

The following table describes the resulting discussion:

**Table 7. PREP 8.0 Cultural Enhancements by Lesson Unit**

Unit	Verbiage amended	Videos modified	How modified for class, date night, retreat
<b>The Three Keys to Success</b> Lesson 1: Welcome Lesson 2: The Three Keys to Successful Relationships Lesson 3: Why Trust PREP?	Localized business – used AK dealership Discussed term “commute” – as Guam is 32 miles long – commute is not identified with, so long drive was used	Produced video with SPARK team members as characters in mimicking video in PREP 8.0 simply to provide a sense of familiarity with the characters with the objective of strengthening connectivity – an objectivity of cultural competency	Produced skit with SPARK team characters
<b>Personality</b> Lesson 1: Personality Differences Lesson 2: Exploring My Type Lesson 3: Understanding Our Differences	No adaptations	No adaptations	No adaptations
<b>Danger Signs &amp; Time Out</b> Lesson 1: The First Three Danger Signs Lesson 2: The Fourth Danger Sign Lesson 3: The Power of the Danger Signs Lesson 4: Time Out	In the skit, the term “snippy” was replaced with “matapang”, a local term meaning silly and/or irritating The term dishwasher was discussed – as most homes on Guam do not have a dishwasher with the objective of connectivity. Dishwasher was still used once meaning was clarified The discussion on “not making dinner” was replaced with “bringing home from your mom’s”. It is common for individuals to stop by their mom’s and get food	No adaptations	No adaptations
<b>Anger &amp; Stress</b> Lesson 1: The Physiology of Stress and Anger Lesson 2: Two Reasons to Manage Anger Lesson 3: Assessing My Stress & Anger Lesson 4: Strategies to Manage Anger	No adaptations	No adaptations	No adaptations

Unit	Verbiage amended	Videos modified	How modified for class, date night, retreat
<b>The Speaker Listener Technique</b> Lesson 1: What is Good Communication? Lesson 2: The Speaker Listener Technique Lesson 3: Skillful Speaking & Listening Lesson 4: Speaker Listener Technique Practice	Localized verbiage - "red rice or white rice", "barbecue chicken or fried chicken" used as choices with "Share a Playful Disagreement" – simply to make options more familiar and meaningful to strengthen connectivity	No adaptations	No adaptations
<b>Events, Issues &amp; Hidden Issues</b> Lesson 1: We've Got Issues Lesson 2: The Surface Layer – Events Lesson 3: The Middle Layer – Issues Lesson 4: The Core – Hidden Issues	No Adaptations	No Adaptations	No Adaptations
<b>Fun &amp; Friendship</b> Lesson 1: Fun Matters Lesson 2: Four Reasons Fun Slips Away & How to Keep Fun Alive Lesson 3: Let's Have Fun Lesson 4: Fun & Friendship	Localized verbiage by using terms mule' and pare' whenever friend situations were referred to describe close family friends  Billboard was explained as similar to the signs we see during elections	No Adaptations	No Adaptations
<b>Commitment</b> Lesson 1: Images of Commitment Lesson 2: Elements of Commitment	No Adaptations	No Adaptations	No Adaptations
<b>Expectations</b> Lesson 1: Why Understanding Expectations Matters Lesson 2: Unmet Expectations Lesson 3: Four Ways We Can Make Expectations More Clear	No Adaptations	No Adaptations	No Adaptations
<b>Problem Solving</b> Lesson 1: XYZ Statements (For the Smaller Problems) Lesson 2: The 4 step Problem Solving Model (for the bigger problems) Lesson 3: Managing Expectations (For the unsolvable problems)	No Adaptations	No Adaptations	No Adaptations

Unit	Verbiage amended	Videos modified	How modified for class, date night, retreat
<b>Love Styles</b> Lesson 1: Love Styles Lesson 2: How I show and Receive Love Lesson 3: When Touch is Tough Lesson 4: Appreciating Everyday Love	No Adaptations	No Adaptations	No Adaptations
<b>Road Mapping</b> Lesson 1: Creating a Road Map Lesson 2: Examining the Past Lesson 3: Our Future Journey	No Adaptations	No Adaptations	No Adaptations

**Summary.** Table 7 which outlines the PREP 8.0 cultural enhancements by lesson unit above provides specific details of units and enhancements. The actual cultural enhancements were verbiage, localized sites, and a video that mirrored the PREP 8.0 video. Out of the 12 modules, efforts to localize 4 of the lessons were completed, but were minor.

Of the 12 units in the PREP 8.0 curriculum, the modifications for cultural competency were few – local language used for familiarity and a video modification for connectivity. These modifications were minor. The PREP 8.0 Curriculum is a good fit for our Guam couples.

There were three terms that were unfamiliar – commute, billboard, and dishwasher. They are unfamiliar because people in Guam do not drive long hours to work, it is very rare to see huge signs on the roadways, and most homes do not have machine operated dishwashers. Once explanations were made, the terms were still used as prescribed in the scripts.

The produced video was the staff's effort to help the couples relate to the actresses. The actresses were two SPARK program staff and they re-enacted exactly what was on the provided video, which presented scenarios where couples were introduced to three keys to successful relationships as presented in the PREP 8.0 curriculum. The enactment focused on the curricular strands of "Do Your Part," "Decide, Don't Slide," and "Make it Safe to Connect" – relationship principles reinforced in the first unit of PREP 8.0 curriculum.

Verbiage, such as popular food items, popular sites, language was substituted to localize the PREP 8.0 Curriculum scripts. What families typically call each other, familiar practices, familiar business places, familiar food items were inserted. The localization was sporadic and family educators shared their perspectives that it helped the couples to connect and relate. It added the spirit of fun while thinking and sharing. The curriculum remained intact as prescribed.

Overall, PREP 8.0 curriculum is culturally competent for couples on Guam as there were only a few lessons that needed cultural adaptations.

**RQ 1c (Dosage):** How many hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum did participants receive?

**FINDING:** Of the 637 individuals whom participated in the program, 52% (n=357) completed the program. Which means that all 357 individuals (178 couples and 1 individual) completed the required 12 hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum instruction as recommended by the developers.

**FINDING:** Of the 637 individuals whom participated in the program, 44% (n=280) did not complete the program. Which means that all 280 individuals (140 couples) did not complete the required 12 hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum instruction as recommended by the developers.

**FINDING:** On average, program participants completed 10 hours of PREP 8.0 curriculum instruction with a range of 0-22 hours.

**RQ 1d (Quality):** How well was the PREP 8.0 curriculum received by participants (based on participant responses to the Relationship Education Workshop Questionnaire – Post Assessment)?

**FINDING:** Of the 304 individuals whom completed the PREP 8.0 curriculum pre and posttest surveys, 100% of survey respondents rated the relationship workshops as “Satisfactory” (5-7), therefore, they were satisfied with their experiences and found the relationship workshop to be helpful. Thus, there were no survey respondents (0%) whom rated the workshops as unsatisfactory. Zero percent (0%) rated the workshop a 4, neutral.

Please note, this data may or may not generalize the full enrolled population due to a low 46% posttest survey response rate.

**RQ 1e (Quality):** Were the cultural enhancements to each PREP 8.0 curriculum lesson helpful to participants?

**FINDINGS:** Overall, it appears as though there were 7 PREP 8.0 curriculum lessons that program participants whom completed open-ended questions 66a and 66b on the PREP 8.0 posttest survey found to be helpful. Of these 7 lessons, 75% (3 out of 4) of the lessons that included cultural adaptations were perceived as being helpful. Table 8. highlights the PREP 8.0 lesson unit, if cultural adaptations were made (yes or no), and if a specific lesson(s) or lesson activities were identified by program participants as being helpful and at what percentage it was helpful.

Also, even though budgeting and money management was not part of the PREP 8.0 curriculum, it was part of program service delivery. As such, of the 151 survey respondents, 25% thought budgeting and money management was helpful.

Please note, this data may or may not generalize the full enrolled population due to a low 46% posttest survey response rate.

Of the 304 individuals whom completed the PREP 8.0 curriculum pre and posttest surveys, 96% (n=290) of the survey respondents answered open-ended text-only response questions 66a and 66b of the posttest. Of the 290 individuals whom answered questions 66a and 66b asking about which aspects of the relationship workshop was most helpful and least helpful, 52% (n=151) identified a specific lesson or lesson activity of the PREP 8.0 curriculum or the SPARK program they found helpful. The remaining survey respondents (48%; n=139)



reported variations of “everything” or “all of the program” was helpful. Some survey respondents identified more than one lesson or aspect of the SPARK program they found to be helpful.

**Table 8. PREP 8.0 Cultural Enhancements by Lesson Unit Identified as Helpful/ Not Helpful**

Unit	Cultural adaptations made (yes or no)	Lessons helpful (yes) or not mentioned as helpful (no)	Lesson(s) or lesson activities that were identified as helpful and percentage of respondents
<b>The Three Keys to Success</b> Lesson 1: Welcome Lesson 2: The Three Keys to Successful Relationships Lesson 3: Why Trust PREP?	Yes	Yes	FINDING: 7% thought 3 Keys was helpful
<b>Personality</b> Lesson 1: Personality Differences Lesson 2: Exploring My Type Lesson 3: Understanding Our Differences	No	No	0
<b>Danger Signs &amp; Time Out</b> Lesson 1: The First Three Danger Signs Lesson 2: The Fourth Danger Sign Lesson 3: The Power of the Danger Signs Lesson 4: Time Out	Yes	Yes	FINDING: 10% thought Timeout was helpful
<b>Anger &amp; Stress</b> Lesson 1: The Physiology of Stress and Anger Lesson 2: Two Reasons to Manage Anger Lesson 3: Assessing My Stress & Anger Lesson 4: Strategies to Manage Anger	No	Yes	FINDING: 20% thought Anger Management/ Anger Warning Signs was helpful
<b>The Speaker Listener Technique</b> Lesson 1: What is Good Communication? Lesson 2: The Speaker Listener Technique Lesson 3: Skillful Speaking & Listening Lesson 4: Speaker Listener Technique Practice	Yes	Yes	FINDING 1: 80% thought Communication Skills/ Conflict Resolution was helpful  FINDING 2: 30% thought Speaker/ Listener Technique was helpful
<b>Events, Issues &amp; Hidden Issues</b> Lesson 1: We've Got Issues Lesson 2: The Surface Layer – Events Lesson 3: The Middle Layer – Issues Lesson 4 – The Core – Hidden Issues	No	No	0

Unit	Cultural adaptations made (yes or no)	Lessons helpful (yes) or not mentioned as helpful (no)	Lesson(s) or lesson activities that were identified as helpful and percentage of respondents
<b>Fun &amp; Friendship</b> Lesson 1: Fun Matters Lesson 2: Four Reasons Fun Slips Away & How to Keep Fun Alive Lesson 3: Let's Have Fun Lesson 4: Fun... & Friendship	Yes	No	0
<b>Commitment</b> Lesson 1: Images of Commitment Lesson 2: Elements of Commitment	No	No	0
<b>Expectations</b> Lesson 1: Why Understanding Expectations Matters Lesson 2: Unmet Expectations Lesson 3: Four Ways We Can Make Expectations More Clear	No	Yes	FINDING: 8% thought Heart to Heart was helpful
<b>Problem Solving</b> Lesson 1: XYZ Statements (For the Smaller Problems) Lesson 2: The 4 step Problem Solving Model (for the bigger problems) Lesson 3: Managing Expectations (For the unsolvable problems)	No	Yes	FINDING: 5% thought XYZ Statements was helpful
<b>Love Styles</b> Lesson 1: Love Styles Lesson 2: How I show and Receive Love Lesson 3: When Touch is Tough Lesson 4: Appreciating Everyday Love	No	Yes	FINDING: 10% thought Love Styles was helpful
<b>Road Mapping</b> Lesson 1: Creating a Road Map Lesson 2: Examining the Past Lesson 3: Our Future Journey	No	No	0

Overall, it appears as though the most helpful PREP 8.0 curriculum lessons (not identified in a ranked order) according to the results directly from participants whom completed the PREP 8.0 pre and posttest survey questions 66a and 66b were: The Three Keys to Success; Danger Signs & Time Out; Anger and Stress; The Speaker Listener Technique; Expectations; Problem Solving; and Love Styles. Of these, The Three Keys to Success, Danger Signs & Time Out, and The Speaker Listener Technique included cultural adaptations.

- **Research Question (RQ) 2 (Context):** What cultural practices appear to promote or deter the implementation of the SPARK program for adults who are living on the Pacific Island of Guam?

**FINDING:** From July 2016 to 2018, the Quality Improvement Coordinator and program staff tracked program implementation using the Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) NIATx Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) process. Priorities were determined after an in-depth review of each program component, soliciting feedback from program participants, and presenting the findings to the Implementation Team. Of the four efficiency items that were decided by the Implementation Team to address, three of the items – improving the completion rate, reducing the average length of time in the program, and improving conversion rate from intake to first workshop – uncovered some cultural practices that appeared to be barriers for program participants.

In relation to improving the completion rate, program participants identified scheduling conflicts as being their biggest challenge to attendance and completion as couples needed to work around the entire family's schedules. Therefore, the program decided that a closed cohort model did not work the best and thus started employing an open cohort model. The open cohort model was more flexible and allowed for program participants to come each week at different days and times to complete the PREP 8.0 curriculum, rather than coming each week on the same day and time. Following this change, the completion rates increased from 44% in fiscal year 2016-2017 to 57% in fiscal year 2017-2018. Ultimately, using this CQI process to combat the cultural barrier faced in relation to scheduling conflicts, the program started offering couples on Guam an option of breaking up the lessons into 6 units, and offering one session per week at 2 hours per session on differing days and times of the week for each week depending upon the couples' availability.

In relation to reducing the average length of time in the program, changing work schedules and family commitments were impediments to timely completion of the program. Many of the couples were parents and did not have childcare for which the program started offering childcare services during workshop sessions to combat this barrier.

In relation to improving conversion rate from intake to first workshop, in June 2018, the SPARK program began hosting monthly Orientations for interested couples to learn more about the program, which also allowed the program to set accurate expectations before the couples made a commitment to participate in the program. As a result, cultural stigma surrounding couples and relationships arose as program participants discussed how they were "uncomfortable" sharing details about their relationships with others outside of their family. As a result, the program found that branding the program built on cultural values, providing a solid orientation to the program, and incorporating signature program events seemed to support successful participant recruitment and engagement.

Overall, using rigorous continuous quality improvement, the program identified several cultural barriers for couples on Guam in relation to participation in the SPARK program. See *Appendix F for the full 2017-2018 CQI Plan and Progress Report results.*

**FINDING:** From January to July 2018, program staff had extensive discussion during internal staff development sessions about their perceptions of what specifically impacts relationships on Guam. As they were pleased with survey results of the PREP 8.0 curriculum relative to relationship communication skills; conflict management/ resolution, affection and intimacy; teamwork and problem-solving skills; stress and anger management, they shared insight about what cultural aspects may impact relationships, as well. Seventy percent (70%) of the staff have earned college degrees in human services, whether in education or social work. Their work experience as social workers, teachers and related fields, provided reliable feedback, as well as living in Guam and having extended family members on Guam substantiated their perspectives. From these discussions, two themes emerged: 1) extended family, and 2) faith. Guam is a small island that is only 31 miles wide with 160,000 residents. Proximity seems to magnify the role of extended families and the historic role of the church. These themes were developed as discussion points for program completers to garner their perceptions of extended family and faith on healthy, happy relationships. The results from this focus group is what prompted the questions for the January 2020 focus groups with program completers. See Appendix G for the full results of the qualitative Focus Group.

**FINDING:** During two Focus Group sessions facilitated on January 15 and January 21, 2020, the two themes of extended family and faith which were formulated by staff discussions, were focused upon during PowerPoint presentations. Sixteen (16) program completers engaged in evening sessions at two hours each. Program staff, specifically the Family Educators, called program completers and asked if they would participate. Childcare was provided to program participants whom were parents. Notes were taken throughout the evening by the Local Evaluator. At the end of the sessions, Likert scale feedback sheets were completed by program participants asking them to rate their perceptions of the influence of extended family and faith on the various aspects of relationships.

Program completers who participated in the focus groups believe that extended family influences their living arrangements at 87% to a great extent, partner selection at 31% to a great extent, financial decisions at 43% to a great extent, and child rearing at 50% to a great extent. They believed faith had no influence on financial decisions at 68%, partner selection at 57% and child rearing at 70%. When asked if they thought it would be helpful to have a training module on how to communicate and connect with extended family – as an effort to strengthen healthy, happy relationships, 100% responded “yes.” When asked if they thought it would be helpful to have a training module on how to best integrate faith with family – as an effort to strengthen healthy, happy relationships, 56% said maybe, 37% yes, and 12% no. See Appendix H for the full results of the two qualitative Focus Groups.

### III. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

From implementation start in July 2016 to sunset in March 2020, the SPARK program remained consistent in their overall delivery of the program. As the SPARK team reflected on their work, a desire to identify cultural competency aspects and its impact on healthy relationships surfaced. This desire was to ensure that SPARK was being mindful, respectful, and insightful of how relationships on the island develop and evolve. With this information, lessons learned for implementing a healthy relationship program in Guam that could potentially lead to improved satisfaction for couples.

Based upon rigorous continuous quality improvement processes, considerations for the appropriate dosage, frequency and duration of the PREP 8.0 curriculum implementation emerged as there were various cultural barriers identified during the course of this process. The SPARK program team learned that couples on Guam needed an open cohort model instead of a closed cohort model due to the couples' work, family/children, and personal commitments and scheduling. Couples completed at a higher rate after changing this model. Additionally, from rigorous continuous quality improvement processes, the SPARK program learned that branding the program built on cultural values, providing a solid orientation to the program, and incorporating signature program events were associated with an increase in participant recruitment and engagement and less perceived stigma associated with the program.

Most notable, the SPARK program learned that the PREP 8.0 curriculum is culturally competent for couples on Guam as there were only a few lessons that needed cultural adaptations. However, most of the PREP 8.0 curriculums' lessons that included a cultural adaptation, posttest survey respondents found to be helpful. Also, posttest survey respondents appear to be satisfied with the PREP 8.0 curriculum as 100% rated the workshops at "Satisfactory." Moreover, even though budgeting and money management was not included in the PREP 8.0 curriculum workshops, it was included in the Money Smart for Young Adults (MSYA) curriculum for which posttest survey respondents mentioned was also helpful.

Focus group discussion conducted with program staff, and program participants whom completed the PREP 8.0 curriculum, shared how extended family and faith influence their relationships. Overall, suggestions included adding training modules specifically on how to communicate and connect with extended family, and how to best integrate faith with family— as an effort to strengthen healthy, happy relationships on Guam – would be useful to a great extent. The addition of such training modules to the current SPARK program curriculum could strengthen the program's goal of helping couples become and maintain healthy, happy relationships. Inclusion of extended family skill building in communication, decision-making, and problem solving in this millennium could help participants address real-life scenarios as it remains a strong norm for primary families and extended families to share much of life, ranging from taking care of children to living arrangements to financial decisions. The fact that Guam is 31 miles long magnifies the idea that people living on the island are on the journey of life together. How to make the best of that journey can only be strengthened by programs like

SPARK that help couples understand what it takes to maintain healthy, happy relationships. Ultimately, SPARK program completers were adamant that a training module in extended family and perhaps, one in faith, would greatly help the effort.

Overall, there is limited research available that explores what curriculum works with couples on Guam to establish better and longer lasting healthy intimate partner relationships. The current study was originally designed to be not only a process/implementation study as which resulted, but an outcome study as well. However, due to the low rate of return, roughly 46%, of the PREP 8.0 curriculum posttest surveys and other local posttest surveys, the current study had to eliminate the outcome portion of the study and only focus on process/implementation. Thus, limiting the results of the current study. Also note, that the respondents to the surveys and focus groups were a subset of all enrolled participants so results may not generalize to the entire enrolled sample.

If the SPARK program is to continue with additional support, some additional questions should be explored using both a process/implementation and outcomes approach, such as: will the inclusion of extended family and faith aspects in training modules for couples on Guam heighten healthy, happy relationships? Do aspects of culture, extended family, and faith motivate couples to complete the program? Would such inclusion of extended family and faith constructs improve participant retention and engagement, and ultimately higher completion rates?

#### **IV. REFERENCES**

Reich, S.M., Reich, J.A. (2006). Cultural Competency in Interdisciplinary Collaboration: A Method for Respecting Diversity in Research Partnerships, *AMJ Community Psychology*, 38, 1-62. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-006-9064-1>

SPARK Program Quarterly Evaluation Report (April 2020)

## **V. APPENDICES (see attached)**



## Appendix A. Family Service Specialist Job Description



### Position Description:

**Title:** Family Service Specialist (Educator)

**Reports To:** Program Coordinator

**Hours:** Full Time

**Supervises:** None

**FLSA Status:** Non-Exempt

**OSHA Exposure Category:** II

### Position Summary:

Person in this position will assist in day-to-day operations of the program. The person is responsible for marriage education, parenting and financial literacy classes, in addition to case management activities including linking consumers with services in the community; case record management, and facilitating groups.

### Essential Job Functions:

- Intake and assessments of incoming participants to determine eligibility and appropriate services;
- Facilitate relationship education classes in a group setting;
- Recruit and enroll eligible couples into the program;
- Provide daily, weekly, and monthly reports as requested;
- Assist and monitor data collection and statistical reporting and complete Quality Improvement reports as requested;
- Maintain relationships with referring and supporting agencies and respect the agency at various community meetings as requested;
- Coordination of various services throughout several agencies.

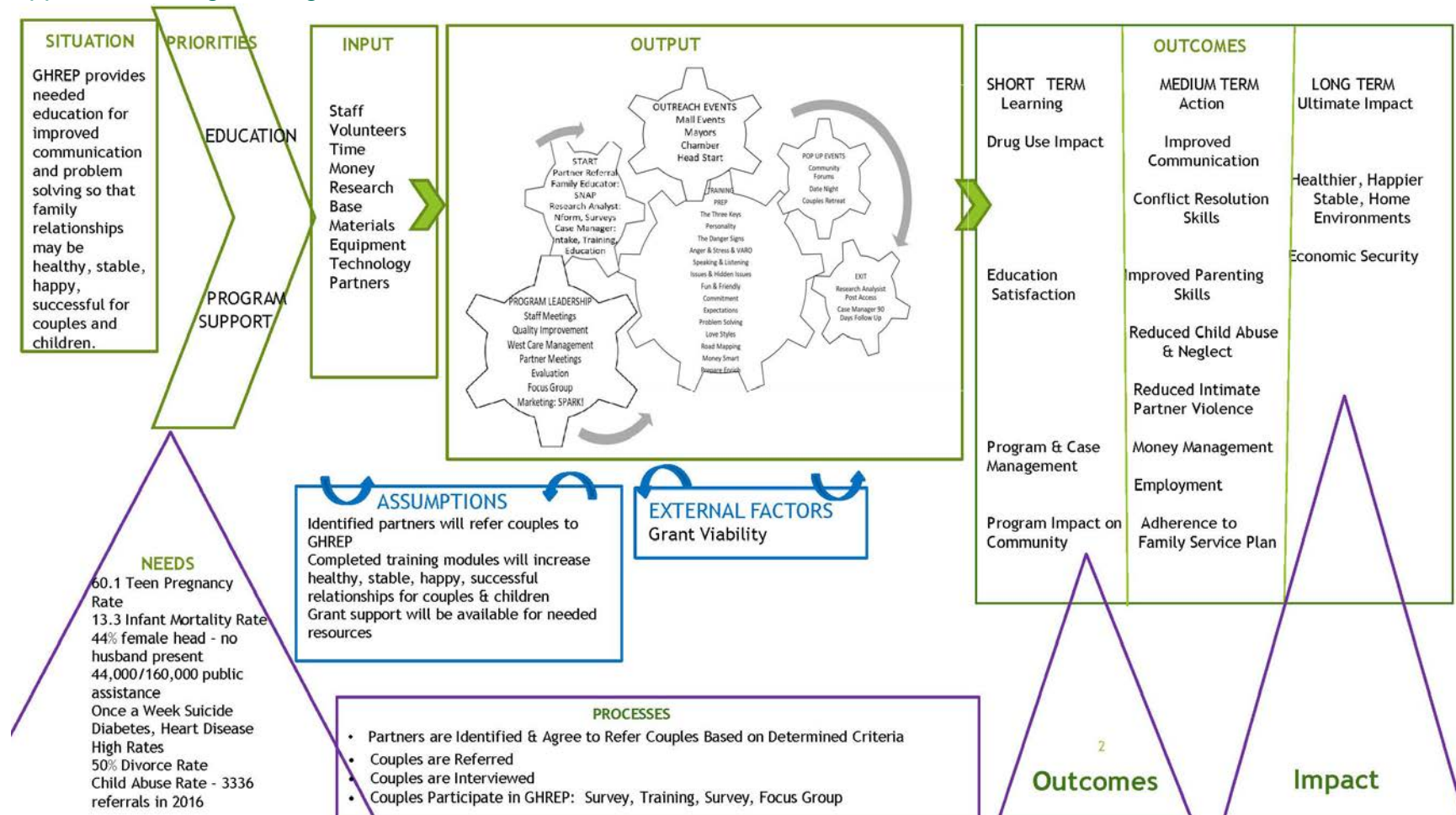
### Essential Qualifications:

- Excellent communication and public speaking skills;
- Two (2) years of facilitation in a group setting;
- Ability to work with underserved populations;
- Ability to conduct outreach, including presentations to stakeholders and potential clients;
- Good computer and documentation skills;
- Valid driver's license and ability to obtain and maintain WestCare's vehicle insurance;
- Be able to multi-task and make independent decisions;
- Must be able to work regularly on Saturdays.

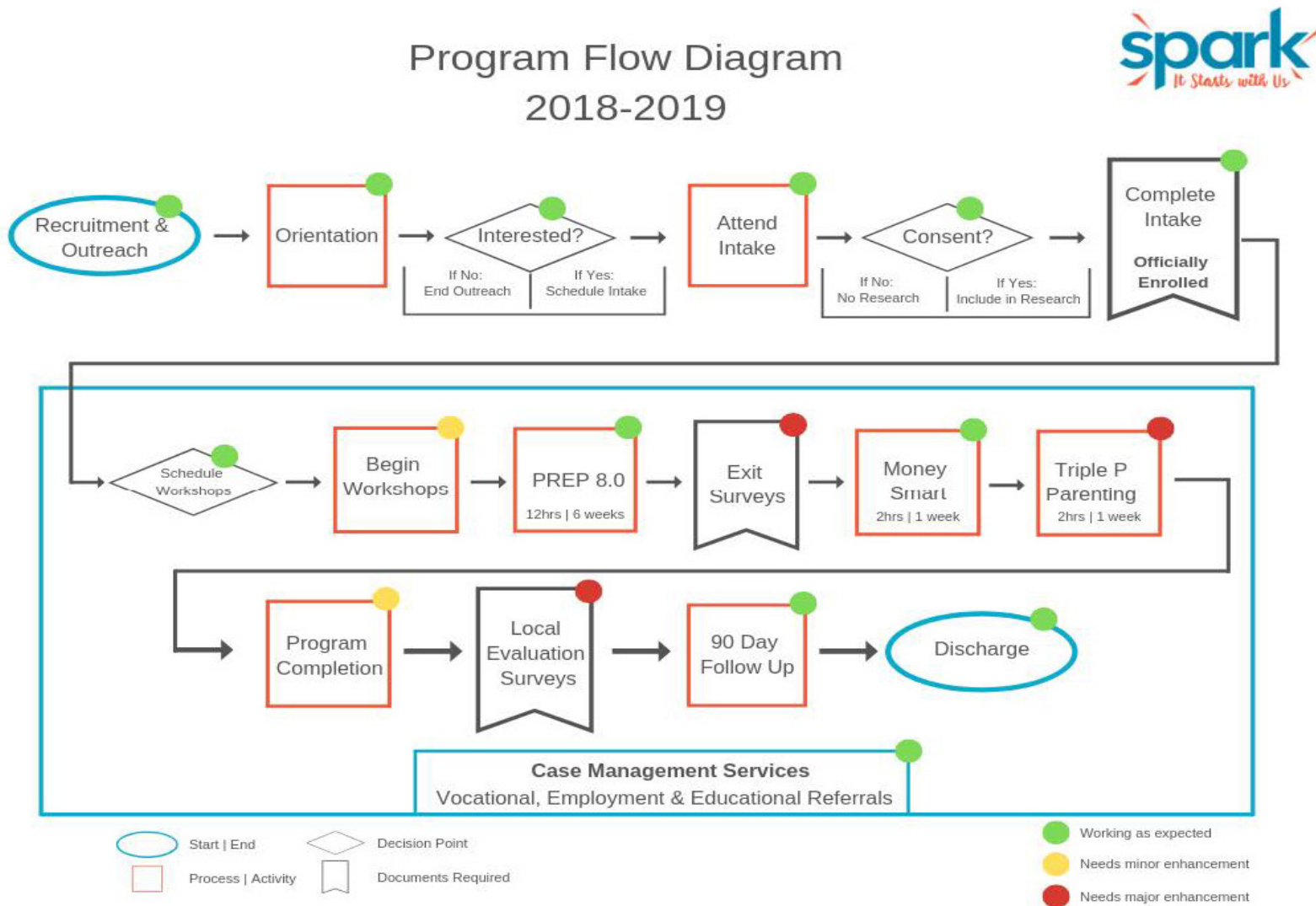
### Education:

- Bachelor's Degree in Psychology, Social Work, Community and Human Services or a related field is preferred.

## Appendix B. Program Logic Model



## Appendix C. Program Flow Chart



## Appendix D. PREP 8.0 Post-Test (see attached)

## Appendix E. CQI Plan and Progress Report (see attached)

## Appendix F. Focus Group Results

### THE GUAM HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION PROGRAM FOCUS GROUP TECHNICAL REPORT

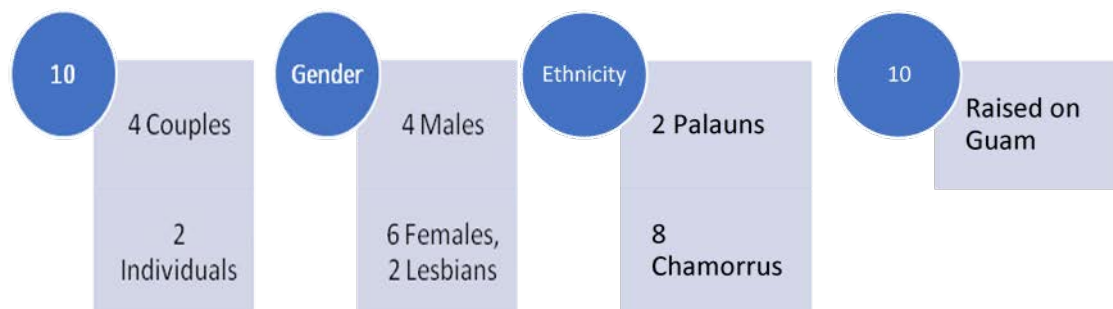
On September 25, 2017, from 6-7 pm, in a Conference Room of Guam Healthy Relationship Education Program (GHREP), ten individuals or 7% of the 153 completers from July 27, 2016 – June 30, 2017 participated in a Focus Group.

The purpose of the Focus Group was to provide an opportunity for GHREP completers to share their program experiences in a group setting. While quantitative data is assessed through extensive survey collections, it was thought that qualitative data would add in-depth thoughts to the program experience.

Family Educators identified the program completers and contacted them. About 4 weeks before the Focus Group, phone calls were made inviting them to share their thoughts. Reminder calls were made three days before the Focus Group. As expected there was turnover in initial confirmations.

The evening of the Focus Group was rainy dotted with thunderstorms. As continued calls were received expressing their apologies for not being able to make it to the Focus Group, Family Educators continued their efforts to encourage participants to join us. It was a joy to have 10 completers take their seats by 6 o'clock. As well, 3 children were in the Family Room supervised by a Child Care Giver.

### WHO



### GOALS

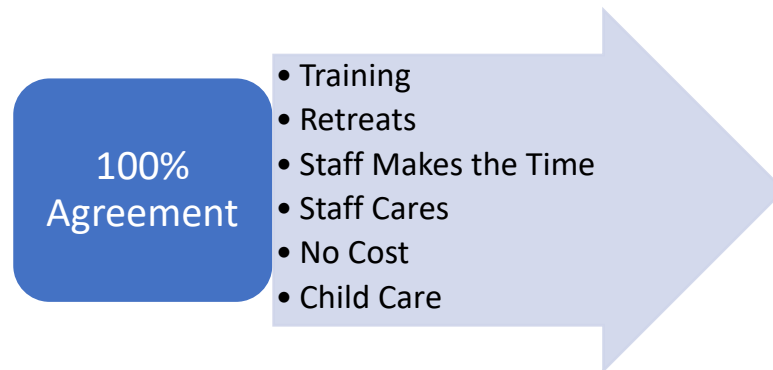
There were two goals for the evening. They were:

1. To listen to perceptions aligned with strengths, weaknesses, opportunities relative to the GHREP experience
2. To ask for cultural competency aspects that may influence the validity measures of the training modules

Conversation was guided by a power point presentation. Ground rules reinforced inclusivity and safety. An ice breaker that emphasized that we all belong with our similarities and differences and that only they know what it's like walking in their zoris<sup>1</sup>.

## STRENGTH OF GREP

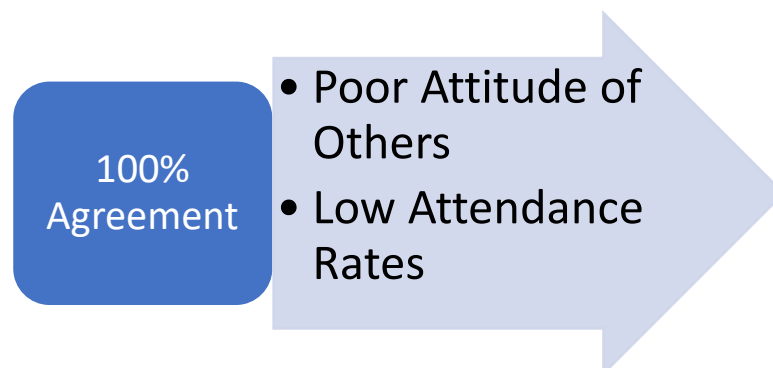
Participants were asked what made them smile when they think about Guam Healthy Relationship Education Program. While 90% of the participants verbally shared experiences, 100% nodded in agreement. The following graphic describes their comments.



Participants believe the training modules were helpful, specifically, conflict resolution and budgeting. A majority shared how the staff accommodated scheduling requests and demonstrated care for them. One woman shared how the Saturday option really helped her. A father stated the no cost was appreciated. As well, they expressed appreciation for child care for their children so that they can participate in the training. They all enjoyed the retreats – a getaway for awhile was a real treat.

## WEAKNESSES OF GREP

Participants were asked what brought a muzu<sup>2</sup> to their faces about GHREP.

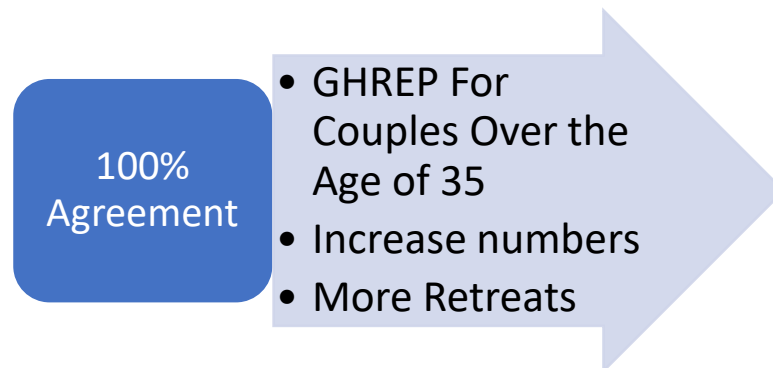


As the question was posed, you could see the participants think. When a man shared that when people join the group who complain and are unhappy, the overall environment is affected. Nods echoed around the table.

A few participants described the small numbers during the training. They believed effort should be made to increase the sizes. There was discussion about marketing strategies and provision of incentives.

## SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS

Participants were asked what would improve the program.



A woman expressed the need for relationship support over the age of 35. She shared that while she understands why GHREP focuses on younger couples – 18 – 35 – many nodded when she said those over 35 need help, too. A few described life changes that occur later in life that impact relationships. A few cited death, divorce, age.

There were statements repeated how GHREP had improved the program by addressing scheduling challenges and timing issues. There was continued conversation about marketing the program so that more people would know about it.

One woman reiterated how the retreat was really enjoyed. She suggested having more than one.

## CULTURAL COMPETENCY ASPECTS

The second goal of the evening was to ignite conversation relative to cultural competency aspects.

## LANGUAGE

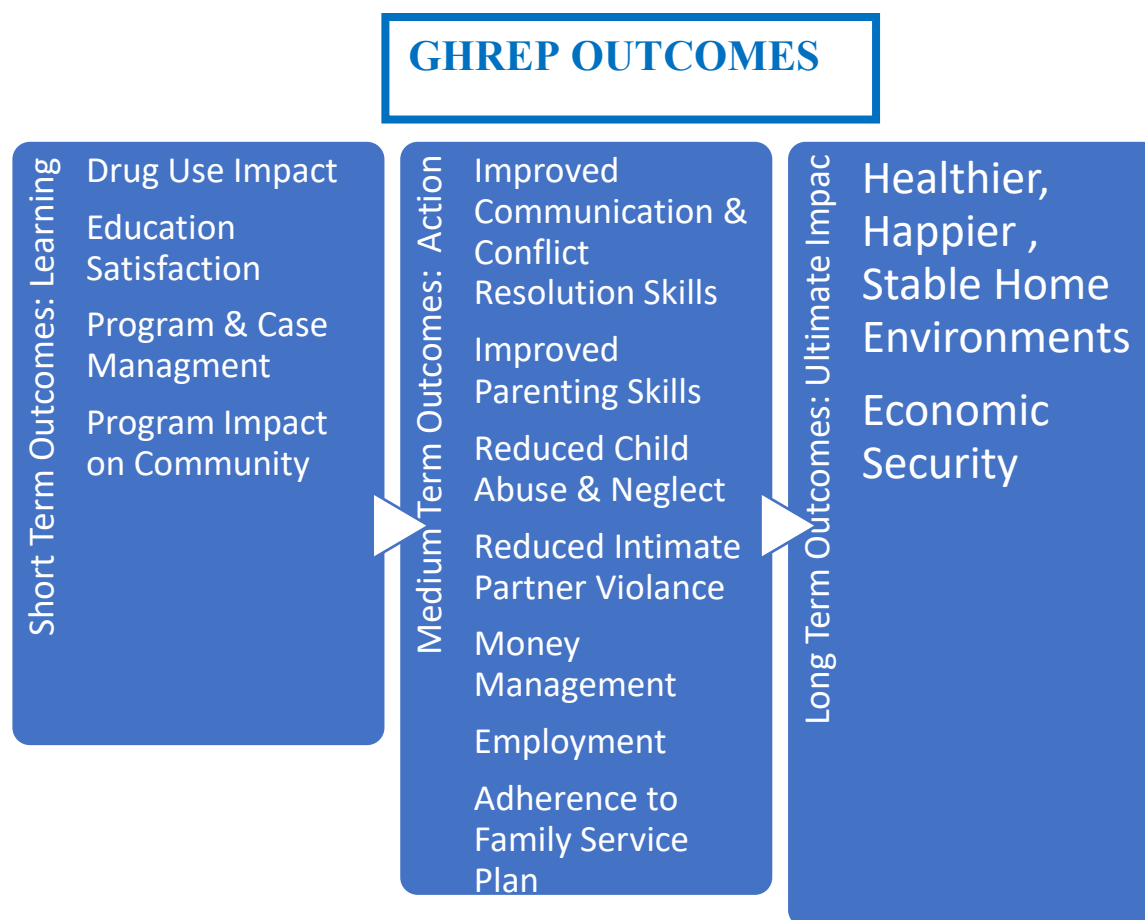
Participants were asked if there were any terms used throughout the training that didn't make sense to them. They thought about the question and one person came up with a term. Love Language. She offered that is not a familiar term with some groups.

We know that the Family Educators have been identifying terms that they know are unfamiliar and amending as needed. An example is billboard. On Guam, billboards are rare and essentially sprout during election seasons.

## THE IMPACT OF UPBRINGING

During the months of August and September, 2017, the GHREP team - Team Aja has been meeting weekly to refresh their Logic Model. The intended outcomes remain as follows:





During the Focus Group, discussion about upbringing on Guam was raised. The intent was to observe for any specific upbringing behaviors that could impact intended outcomes of the training. Specifically, questions on communication patterns, conflict resolution, parenting skills, money management, work, and education were posed.

## COMMUNICATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

While brief and limited, the facilitator asked if the norms of speaking and listening while growing up were the same they had as adults. They agreed that in years before, it was common to be spoken to and it was expected that there was no disagreement. For those of us who grew up on Guam, we know this. We also know that when there is conflict, it is swallowed and ignored.

The participants at the Focus Group shared how behavior has changed. For the most part, they speak and listen to their partner. Everyone around the table nodded when a few described how they speak and listen. A few shared how they've gotten better at communicating.

There was overall agreement, that if there's a disagreement, they try to talk it out. If the discussion becomes explosive, they take a time out. When a couple used the actual term time out, many smiled. They agreed that the training helped them here.

## RAISING OUR CHILDREN

A question asked how we teach our children right from wrong. Being raised on Guam, many acknowledge that while we love our children, understanding them as children with human growth and development principles continues to be an area with huge room for improvement. Our data on child abuse and neglect supports this notion.

During the Focus Group, there was agreement that they use incentives, behavioral management techniques. They try speaking and explaining right from wrong. Computers and phones are removed if behavior does not improve.

For many families, being whipped was the way to curb behavior. Focus Group participants nodded when the notion of corporal punishment was raised. They chuckled when a few described being spanked with a zori, a wooden spoon, a piece of wood. One chimed in and said and if the naughty child was not close by, the zori would be thrown towards the child.

This particular group said they do not spank their children and would not approve of anyone spanking them. There was one exception with one parent said she spanks if the talking doesn't work. Overall, the group agreed that they were raised with spanking but have changed that with their children.

## BUDGET, EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION

What do we do if we don't have enough money? Overall, they agreed that they budget. One father said the budget and list is put in writing and the list is referred to as needed. They shared that they find extra work, as needed – such as cleaning yards.

Guam's census shows that while we are blessed with 160,000 people, there are 44,000 on some type of public assistance. This facilitator expected that the option of food stamps or housing assistance would be raised. It was not.

The group was asked if working was important.

Overall, the group believed working is very important. When asked if any person was holding more than one job, nobody was. They are able to make ends meet with both partners working.

The participants were asked if going to school was important.

Overall, the group believed going to school is very important. High school, unanimously. Secondary, almost unanimously. A woman explained how she is doing well even without completing college. There was discussion about the need for high school, training, and college for jobs of today. Some described graduates they know who cannot find employment.

## DRUGS

Participants were asked their opinions on drugs.

They all shared how if their doctor prescribes medication, they try not to take it. One shared that there are healthy alternatives. This was reassuring as Guam is currently experiencing a grave substance abuse problem with methamphetamine.

One person shared that she suffers from anxiety and tries not to use her prescribed meds. There was discussion about when it works and it's prescribed, perhaps, the best decision is to follow the prescription.

### IN A SNAPSHOT

#### Communication & Problem Solving

- 100% try to speak and listen
- 100% try to work it out, take time outs as needed

#### Raising Children

- 100% use Behavioral Management
- 90% do not spank.

#### Budget

- Live within means
- Get extra job when needed

#### Education

- 100% believe high school is important
- 90% believe college is important
- 100% believe training needs to be for today's jobs

#### Drugs

- 100% don't even use prescription medication

#### Employment

- 100% believed working is very important

## FOCUS GROUP REFLECTION

Participants were asked to describe the Focus Group Discussion. Their input suggests that future Focus Groups would be welcomed.



Participants were asked what would make the Focus Group better. Their input suggests they enjoy interaction.



## DISCUSSION

A question was posed during a local evaluation meeting about the time duration of the Focus Group discussion and if it provided for enough information to offer recommendations about cultural competency and its influence on training modules. For this initial observation, the answer is yes.

Yes because the facilitator's background provides the grounds for legitimate perspectives. She is inherently knowledgeable of behavioral patterns on Guam because she grew up here. As well, with an earned doctorate in human development family studies, the observations offer legitimate perspectives. As well, the facilitator has worked for 4 decades as a teacher, program developer, program evaluator, and policy maker on issues relevant to human services across the island.

This initial Focus Group was to gauge if behavioral patterns of the past are rooted or if they have evolved. The thought was to see if validity measures of the curriculum would be impacted by cultural patterns of behavior.

Overall, from this sample – small but a good beginning, behavioral norms are evolving.

This group allows children to be heard as well as be seen.

This group believes in speaking and listening.

This group believes in working things out through talking and taking time out, as needed.

This group believes in school and higher education.

This group believes in working.

This group believes in budgeting.

This group believes in making good decisions about their health.

Overall, cultural patterns of behavior would not serve as an impediment to successful training outcomes as determined by the identified curriculum.

Language, too, is not a concern. While the Family Educators amend or edit as needed, the language of the curriculum is not a barrier for these completers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To drill down on individual training modules and cultural competency, it is recommended that the local evaluator and the Family Educators review the training modules and determine specific questions to pose when meaningful. There may be items that will surface when the actual training is on-going. This would be a structured continuation of work with the Fidelity Logs and Adaptation Trackers that have already commenced. This effort would also address the concern of needing more time to offer more detailed observations.

To increase the number of participants at the Focus Group, require the participation as a part of the GHREP process as suggested in the Research Design developed by Team Aja. Focus Group engagement should be on the check list for program activities. Focus Group engagement should occur before the Research Analyst facilitates the post assessment process. This program requirement would strengthen

validity as it will ensure that in addition to the satisfied completers, the not so satisfied completers will be provided a forum to share thoughts in depth.

Participants recommended that Spark 2! be developed for couples over the age of 35. While strengthening skills when couples are beginning is logical, it is just as needed when life sprouts middle age crisis.

Participants recommended that marketing and incentives be strengthened to motivate more GHREP participants. The facilitator shared that Team Aja has been making great strides in its marketing campaign and its pop up events. Awareness of the GHREP and recruitment is on the rise. The Focus Group was happy to hear it.

## SUMMARY

The first Focus Group of the Guam Healthy Relationships Education Program on September 25, 2017, was attended by 10 program completers from the period of July 27, 2016 – June 30, 2017. The 10 participants confirmed the quarterly survey results that showed program satisfaction. Discussion reiterated how the training strengthened their communication and conflict resolution behavior. Money management was also touted. There was unanimous agreement that they learned from the program groups and that they were satisfied with the services and program support.

There were no language barriers presented by the curriculum. As well, the thoughts shared by this initial group does not present any cultural biases that would invalidate the successful completion of the program modules.

Continued work on adaptation trackers for each training module may find cultural competency issues buried deeper. Requiring participation in a Focus Group for program completion would provide a wider lens of all completers.

It must also be stated that Program Director Aja Ramos, Research Analyst Leslie Gatan, Administrative Assistant Regina Shiroma, Family Educator Millie Lujan, Family Educator Josita Harris, Child Care Giver Clarissa Wilson, Child Care Giver Renate Alik, Case Manager Jennifer Vicente are a team not only woven with extensive education and experience but care for these families. The younger team members welcome the wisdom of the more seasoned team members and more seasoned team members appreciate the energy of their team mates. Collectively, they balance compliance with care. Team Aja is soaring and will reach exciting heights as they help more families strengthen communication and problem solving so that they may have happier, healthier, more stable relationships. It's a smart group whom enjoys their work. Guam families are most fortunate.

## Appendix G. Focus Group Results January

### Spark Focus Group Report: What Program Completers Think

Guam Healthy Relationships Education Program (GHREP), a federally-funded initiative, opened its doors in 2015. Like all communities, Guam is challenged with nurturing healthy, happy relationships as she evolves in a fast-paced, changing world. Divorce rates, abuse rates, health statistics provide a picture that needs to be resolved in order to increase the probability of a high quality of life for all who call Guam home.

Evaluation reports, from 2015-2020, consistently describe the overall success of the education and training program components delivered by GHREP, now referred to as Spark. As the team reflected on their work, a desire to identify cultural competency aspects and its impact on healthy relationships surfaced. This desire was to ensure that GHREP was being mindful, respectful, and insightful of how relationships on the island develop and evolve. With this information, the probability of best helping relationships is increased. The conversations focused on the Chamorro and Filipino cultures, as they dominate the family demographics at Chamorro – 67%, Chamorro & Filipino – 6%, and Filipino – 9%.

As a result of thought-provoking discussions during a variety of team sessions throughout February – July, 2018, the Spark Team determined to examine if, on Guam:

- The extended family structure significantly impacts relationships between couples, couples and children, couples and extended families, to include parenting;
- Faith has significant influence over relationships.

### The Specific Questions

With the guidance and approval of Dr. Melissa Rhea, Director of Research & Evaluation, Western & Pacific Island Region, West Care Foundation, two research questions were concentrated upon. The questions are driven by the Research Study Descriptive Evaluation Plan formulated throughout the grant development and implementation approval processes. The Research Study was approved by Sterling IRB.

### The research questions are:

**Research Question #2:** What island cultural practices on Guam promote or deter healthy relationships?

The intent is to better understand the impact the extended family and faith has on couple's relationships.

**Research Question #3:** How do island values and practices on family (e.g. fatherhood, kinship ties) contribute to parenting success or failure?

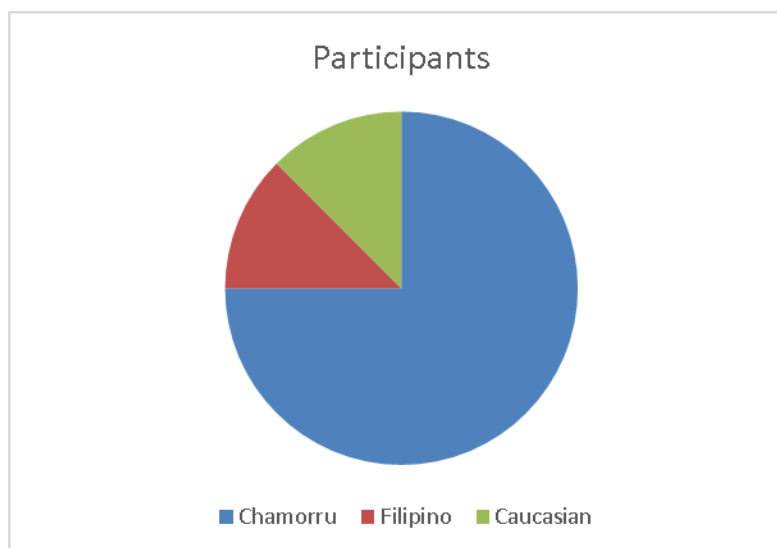
The intent is to better understand the impact extended family and faith has on a couple's parenting.

## Focus Groups

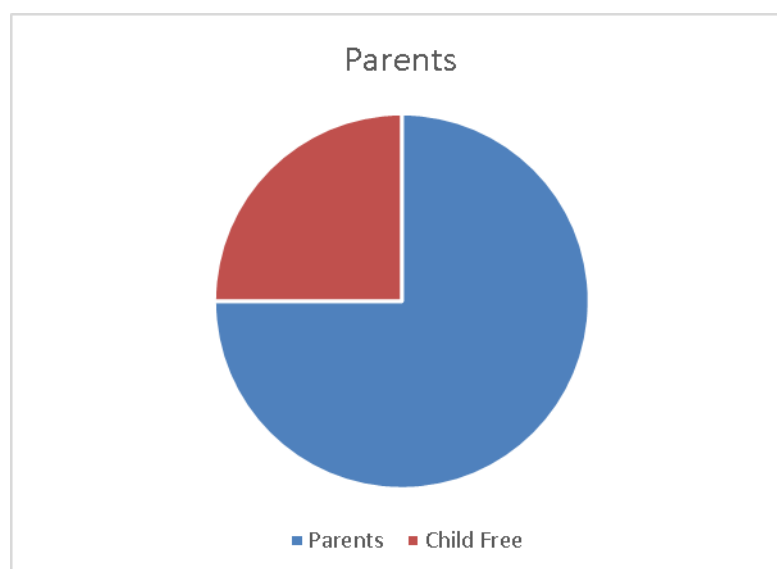
### The Couples

Focus group sessions were organized to hear directly from them about the research questions. The Spark family educators dedicated time and effort to calling couples who completed the program. They couples were asked to participate so we could further learn from them. It was explained that we simply wanted to talk about local practices and how they may or may not impact healthy, happy relationship.

As a result, two focus group sessions were facilitated. One was held on January 15, 2020 and another on January 21, 2020. Characteristics of both focus group participants are described below. Each focus group engaged 4 couples for a total of 8 couples altogether or 16 participants.



Out of the 16 participants, 14 were Chamorro, 1 was Filipino, and 1 was Caucasian.





Six couples have children; two couples do not.

As determined by the program, participants were between the ages of 18-35. All couples were male – female.

### **Focus Group Process**

At the West Care Conference Room in the central part of the island, participants were welcomed by 5:30 with a light dinner. Child care services were provided. As an incentive, at the end of the session, gift cards were issued. By 6, participants were seated. Introductions were made and discussion began. Both focus groups ended within 90 minutes. Sign in sheets may be found on file in the West Care office.

A Power Point presentation focused the dialogue. That file is found at the end of this report.

To ensure definitions were clear, it was explained that nuclear family is defined as the partners and children. Extended family is defined as members outside of the primary circle – parents, in-laws, grandparents, uncles, aunties, cousins.

The guiding questions and the responses are described below.

**Research Question #2:** What island cultural practices on Guam promote or deter healthy relationships?

Intended Outcome: To understand the impact the extended family and faith influences a couples' relationship

### ***Impact of Extended Family***

#### *Living Arrangements*

Family living arrangements were influenced by extended family to a great extent. Many couples readily shared that, when they first started out, they lived with their family as a way to make ends meet. Some couples continue to have close ties to their grandparents and where they live continues to be influenced by where their grandparents are. Some live with their parents or nearby their parents.

#### *Acceptance*

Particularly for those families who live with or nearby their parents, acceptance of partners by extended family was important. The older couples did not believe their partner selection was influenced greatly by extended family. "Maybe it's because we were not teenagers when we met. We were older and made that decision on our own," one participant shared. Clearly, though, it was important that family members get along and respect each other.

*Family Responsibility*

A couple of individuals were raised by their grandparents and the loyalty and love were echoed. “If that’s what my grandma wants, that’s what we do,” one woman stated. A few moms admitted to be overwhelmed. Whatever energy they had went to their children first. It was the men who made it clear that if their parent or grandparent wanted something, they would ensure it was done. It was a matter of fact to them. A couple of partners said their parents were able to understand and accept if something couldn’t be done as they asked when they asked. But, always, discussion about the issue occurred.

*Financial Decisions*

It was agreed that whatever finances were had, they were shared. This was clear particularly by those who lived with or next to their extended family. Financial support is sought as needed. Traveling included parents and grandparents. Sometimes, parent or grandparents did not want to travel but the invitation is extended. If huge ticket item like vehicles were being purchased, extended family was included in the decision if they all shared living space. For many financial decisions, the women have the final authority.

*Training Suggestions*

When asked if they thought it would be helpful to have a training module on how to communicate and connect with extended family – as an effort to strengthen healthy, happy relationships, 100% responded “yes.”

***Impact of Faith****Living Arrangements*

While respect was cited for family members in determining family arrangements, faith had little effect on how they lived or where they lived.

*Acceptance*

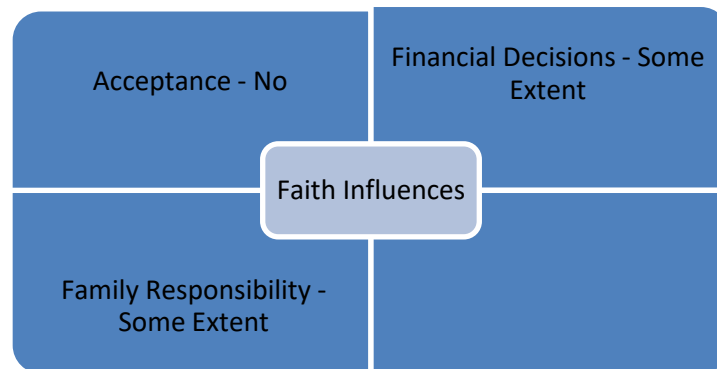
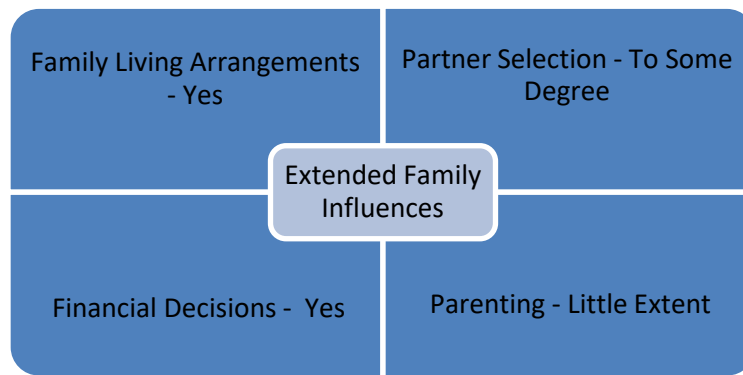
A few participants described how church may have played a role on who they dated. It was widely agreed that faith no longer plays a dominate role on partner determination on Guam. One participant stressed “Faith is no longer found in one type of church. It’s found in all different places today. Times have changed.”

*Family Responsibility*

Caring behavior modeled by family which may have been grounded in faith continues. Faith did not influence financial decisions to a great extent. One wife shared that she gives to the church regularly but, other than that, faith did not impact finances overall.

### *Training Suggestions*

When asked if they thought it would be helpful to have a training module on how to best integrate faith with family – as an effort to strengthen healthy, happy relationships, 56% said maybe, 37% yes, and 12% no.



**Research Question #3:** How do island values and practices on family (e.g. fatherhood, kinship ties) contribute to parenting success or failure?

### **Child Rearing, Discipline, and Children Belonging**

#### *Child Rearing*

Participants shared the challenges addressed when parenting styles differ between themselves and extended family. Like most families, effort is made to explain to children and extended family that their parenting styles are to be upheld. Fathers are clearly looked to for strict consequences. One mother shared, “Wait ‘till your father gets here!” The father responded, “I try explaining to my kids, just do it already!”

### *Discipline*

There was much chuckling when participants described how they were disciplined. “I was tied up. It was my fault because I did not listen. But, today, no way, can you do that, “a dad exclaimed. All participants agreed that discipline methods have changed. The belt or the slipper is rarely used.

### *Children Belonging*

For the most part, when families divorce or separate, children continue to be welcomed by extended family. To a great extent, so are the separating partners. While mothers have significant authority in Guam families, it was clear fathers do, too.

### *Faith*

#### *Child Rearing*

Many participants described that faith influences how they raise their children to some extent. There was some discussion on differing opinions with the church on particular issues and how, they may still participate in church but have their own thoughts and raise their children accordingly.

### **Overall Suggestions**

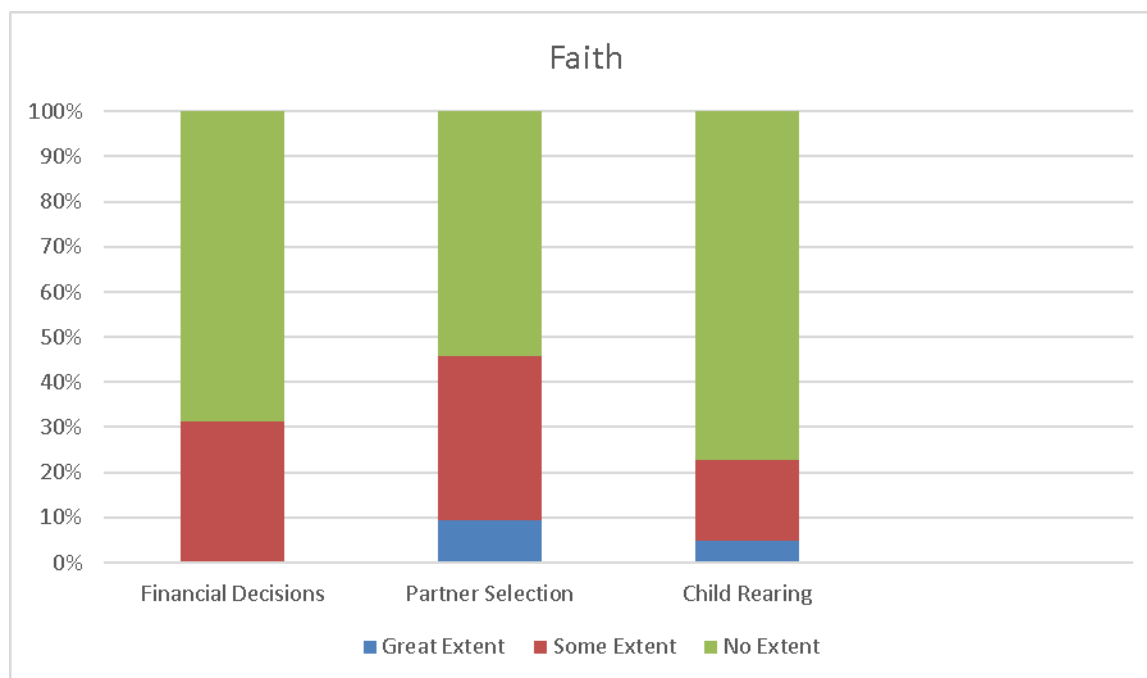
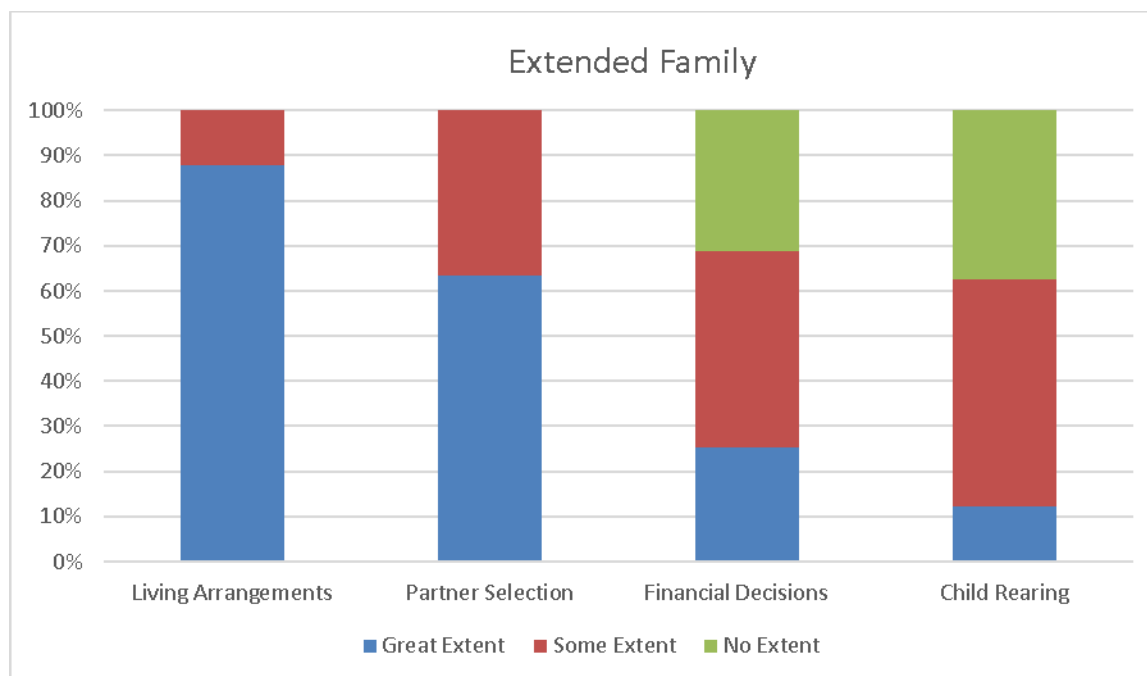
Including a training module on how to communicate and connect with extended family – as an effort to strengthen healthy, happy relationships here on Guam – would be useful to a great extent.

Including a training module on how to best integrate faith with family – as an effort to strengthen healthy, happy relationship here on Guan – may be useful to some extent.

The addition of such training modules to the current Spark curriculum would strengthen the program’s goal of helping couples become and maintain healthy and happy relationships. Inclusion of extended family skill building in communication, decision-making, and problem solving in this millennium will address real life scenarios as it remains a strong norm for primary families and extended families to share much of life. This ranges from taking care of children to living arrangements to financial decisions. The fact that we live on an island that is 31 miles long magnifies the idea that we are on the journey of life together. How to make the best of that journey can only be strengthened by programs like Spark that help couples understand relationships and what it takes to maintain healthy and happy relationships. Now, completers have shared that a training module in extended family and perhaps, one in faith would greatly help that effort.

### **Ending Thoughts by Participants**

A simple likert scale asking rating participants to rate their thoughts was disseminated. The following chart displays their thoughts.



### Comments

- Please have another Spark for returning couples!!
- Glad to be a part of the focus group and anything dealing with Spark
- Can't wait to have Spark 2.0
- It is so great to hear other points of view that are different or similar to ours. We all took time to better our relationships

- The focus group shows a lot of promise for potential to better the relationships on Guam. With the proper research and implementation, this will open the ways for the possibilities of strengthening the relationships of couples on Guam
- Extended family is very prominent and influential on this island – therefore, training on dealing with that aspect could only be beneficial to the growth of relationships.

One word that describes the Focus Group

- Awesome
- Accepting
- Refreshing!
- Awesome – Open
- Intellectual
- Great
- Exploratory
- Relatable
- Eye-Opening
- Progressive
- Insightful
- Respectful
- Thoughtful
- Influential
- Really Enjoyed the Class

# Spark Healthy, Happy Relationships

A Focus Group  
2020

## Agenda

- ▶ Welcome!
- ▶ Ground Rules
- ▶ Healthy, Happy Relationships & Extended Family
- ▶ Healthy, Happy Relationships & Faith
- ▶ SYMI TYI MSP!

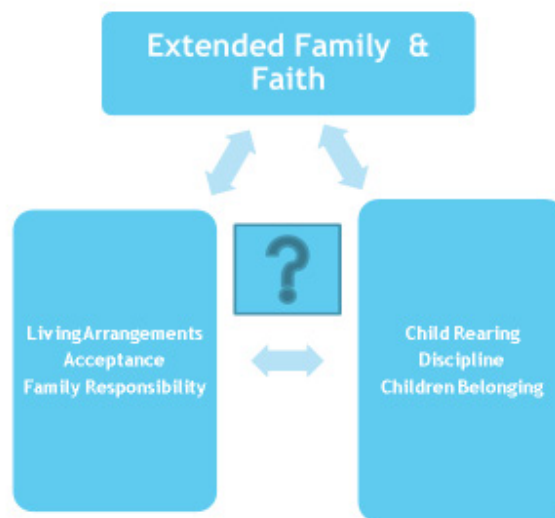
## WELCOME!!

- ▶ The couples here have completed the Spark program
- ▶ We are interested in listening to your thoughts about extended family and faith and their influence (or not) on relationships
- ▶ We want to determine if including training modules on extended family and faith components will help Guam couples
- ▶ We will be done by 7
- ▶ We thank you for being here and for helping Guam be a good place. Your family efforts make a difference.

## Ground Rules

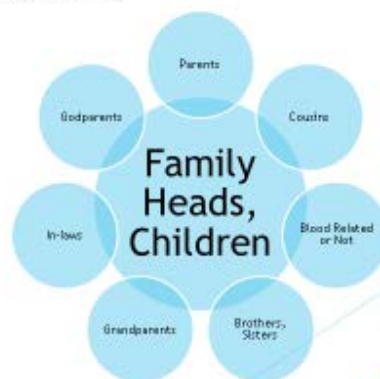
- ▶ Everyone participates - either verbally or in writing
- ▶ Everyone's thoughts matter
- ▶ Listen as an ally





## Extended Family: Definition

- ▶ Your primary family are the couples here and children
- ▶ Your extended family are your parents, in-laws, aunties, uncles, cousins, Godparents
- ▶ On Guam, extended family may be blood related or not



## Extended Family: Living Arrangements, Acceptance, Family Responsibility

- ▶ Did your extended family impact where your primary family lives? How many of you live with your extended family?
- ▶ When you were dating, how important was it for your extended family to approve of your partner?
- ▶ What was more important - for your partner to like your family or your family to like your partner?
- ▶ How responsible do you feel for your grandparents?

## Extended Family: Financial Decisions, Support

- ▶ Does your extended family impact your decisions on how you spend your money?
- ▶ If your parents need money for a funeral or christening, do you help them by providing as much as money as you can?
- ▶ Do your parents help you with finances? Do you discuss financial decisions with them?
- ▶ If you're planning a trip, are your parents included in the trip?
- ▶ Who has more influence over financial decisions - women or men in the family?
- ▶ Is it a reasonable expectation that family property will be deeded to you?

## Extended Family: Child Rearing, Discipline, Children Belonging

- ▶ Does your extended family impact how you raise your children?
- ▶ Are you using the same discipline practices your parents used on you?
- ▶ To what extent are your parents involved in raising your children?
- ▶ When a couple separates, how are children treated by extended family members?
- ▶ Who has more influence over the children - the women or men in the family?

## Faith: Definition

- ▶ Any religious organization you belong to

## Faith: Living Arrangements, Acceptance, Family Responsibility

- ▶ Did your faith impact your partner selection?
- ▶ If your faith disapproved of your partner, what would you do?
- ▶ Does your faith influence how you spend your money?

## Faith: Living Arrangements, Acceptance, Family Responsibility

- ▶ Did your faith impact your partner selection?
- ▶ If your faith disapproved of your partner, what would you do?
- ▶ Does your faith influence how you spend your money?

## Training Suggestions

- ▶ Do you think it would be helpful to have training on how to communicate and connect with extended family - as an effort to strengthen healthy, happy relationships on Guam?
- ▶ Do you think it would helpful to have training on how to best integrate faith with family - as an effort to strengthen healthy, happy relationships on Guam?

## Anything Else?

- ▶ Is there anything else you would like to share about extended family on Guam and their impact on healthy, happy relationships here?
- ▶ Is there anything else you would like to share about faith and its impact on healthy, happy relationships here on Guam?

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

- ▶ We wish you the best. Have a fantastic 2020!! May you continue to SPARK the love and laughter in your relationship.