

FLETCHER D-PRIZE COMPETITION

2024-25 Academic Year

Health Access Challenges

Scale Up “Sugar Daddy Awareness” Classes

We challenge you to design a new social enterprise that teaches “sugar daddy awareness,” a training class that helps girls avoid risky sexual behavior that leads to unwanted pregnancy and STDs, to Grade 8 girls in a developing country with high HIV rates. Fletcher D-Prize will award up to \$20,000 to teams with a plan to launch a pilot of this work with a vision to reach 100,000 girls within five years and scale country-wide.

The Poverty Problem

In sub-Saharan Africa, an unwanted pregnancy or HIV infection can quickly erase a young girl’s chance out of poverty. An unwanted pregnancy often results in girls dropping out of school.¹ This is the future for a shocking 10 percent of teenage women in sub-Saharan Africa.²

A root cause is cross-generational relationships. Teenage girls are commonly preyed upon by older men known as “sugar daddies,” who give money and gifts in exchange for sex. Older men have been sexually active longer and have had more sexual partners, and thus are a high risk group to transmit HIV. This is why HIV rates are up to 5x higher among 15-19 year-old girls compared to boys.³

Girls are also less able to insist on abstinence or safe sex practices when partnered with an older adult man, which increases the risk of unplanned pregnancy.⁴

The Proven Intervention

¹ https://www.gutmacher.org/sites/default/files/report_pdf/ib_unsafeabortionkenya.pdf

² Dupas, Pascaline. “Relative Risks and the Market for Sex: Teenagers, Sugar Daddies, and HIV in Kenya.” Munich Personal RePEc Archive. October 2005. <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/248/>

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

A proven solution exists in the form of “sugar daddy awareness” classes. This is a one-hour training program, given to Grade 8 girls, one time. With this intervention, a trained instructor visits a classroom of 8th grade girls and facilitates a discussion on the relative risks of dating older men. Classes are accompanied by a 20-minute educational DVD, in-class activities, and a short lecture.⁵ This one-hour class taught to 8th grade girls was shown in a randomized controlled trial to reduce the likelihood of pregnancy and HIV infection by 28 percent in the subsequent year.⁶

This is an educational program only—it simply provides teenagers with knowledge about the relative risk of partnering with older men. Results from recent training programs show that a majority of students often do not know that older men are a high-risk group.⁷ Knowledge on behavioral risk is a powerful way to change behavior. For example, one 2005 South African study on condom use found that “a woman's perceived risk of HIV infection from her partner was the most powerful predictor of condom use.”⁸

Your Distribution Challenge

Fletcher D-Prize will award up to \$20,000 to a social entrepreneur who can run a pilot program and teach “sugar daddy awareness” classes to girls living in high-risk situations, like countries with high HIV rates.

You must have a vision to reach at least 100,000 girls within 5 years. Our award is meant to enable the first step toward this vision by supporting a small test pilot of your idea, that helps anywhere from 100-250 students.

Designing Your Social Enterprise

There are several challenges we think a Sugar Daddy Awareness organization must eventually solve. We recommend you consider focusing your pilot on testing solutions to these challenges.

1. *Who are the members of your implementation team and how do you recruit, train, and manage them?* Existing evidence suggests that the specific facilitator who teaches the class influences effectiveness.

Original trials relied on a small handful of facilitators who were given top-quality training - which we recommend using. And in fact it is possible to teach tens of thousands of students with just a small number of facilitators. Training a large number of teachers without a top level of quality may not result in the same level of impact, and may not be necessary to reach large numbers of students.

⁵ Curriculum Guide. www.d-prize.org/sugar-daddy

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ <http://www.young1ove.org/#!results/c22xm>

⁸ <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/journals/3102405.html>

Additionally, evidence suggests that existing teachers are less effective than outside facilitators. Teachers, including peer educators, often deviate from the core curriculum and deliver a message that is closer to abstinence.⁹ Another concern is that male teachers are sometimes involved in cross-generational relationships themselves, and may not be in a position to discuss the issue freely.¹⁰

2. *What is the process your team will take to teach this proven curriculum?* This intervention is successful because it teaches just one core message: that sexually partnering with older men is risky behavior. To help get started a sample curriculum, video, and other helpful resources are available at www.d-prize.org/sugar-daddy.

Proposals that deviate from this one core message or include other messages are not likely to be funded.

You may have to solve logistical constraints. For example, it's possible the schools where you teach will not have technology needed to show the original short video.

3. *How do you gain support from schools and local and head governments?* Cooperation with existing public schools is almost certainly required. You may need a high-level government partner who is willing to collaborate with you, or who is at least willing to signal support with a Memorandum of Understanding.

You must also consider how you will work with local school officials.

4. *How will you measure the impact of your work?* The original trial of this intervention in Kenya found a 28 percent decrease in teenage pregnancy as measured by school dropout rate due to pregnancy. However, when D-Prize winner Youth Impact implemented the same curriculum in Botswana, they used a secondary measurement, visible stomachs, and found an increase in pregnancy in some treatment groups, leading the team to speculate that the Sugar Daddy message lost its salience over time.¹¹

We recommend you invest early into data collection. This will be helpful in answering critiques of this program, and gaining support for your next group of supporters and donors. It will also help you adjust operations fast if results are not encouraging.

5. *How does your model scale?* We believe it is possible to build a small team of top-quality facilitators who travel and teach this course to many girls, and who are supported by a small number of managers and support staff.

⁹ <https://www.globalinnovation.fund/does-sugar-daddies-replicate-the-preliminary-results-are-in-for-botswana/>

¹⁰ Dupas, Pascaline. "Relative Risks and the Market for Sex: Teenagers, Sugar Daddies, and HIV in Kenya." Munich Personal RePEc Archive. October 2005. Page 2.

¹¹ Ibid.

We are open to other models that are equally scalable. We discourage proposals that include other unproven and complicating features, such as school clubs, skills training programs, and other extraneous activities.

Market Conditions

- This intervention is appropriate in the African context and for Grade 8 girls. It has been tested most intensively in Kenya, Uganda, and South Africa - where sugar daddy relationships are widespread. In Kenya, the average age difference between non-married sexual partners is greater than five years, and 75 percent of the relationships studied involved some sort of material assistance.¹² Recently, sugar daddy awareness classes have been expanded into Botswana, by Young 1ove, and Rwanda, by J-PAL.¹³
- Past winners of this challenge include [Blesser Breakers](#) (Zambia), [Youth Impact](#) (Botswana), [Power2Girls](#) (Ghana), and [Jeunes Braves](#) (Togo).

Ready To Apply?

Download a First Round Application Packet and start creating your proposal at <https://sites.tufts.edu/dprize/>.

Questions? Email Kaushik Chaudhuri at Kaushik.Chaudhuri@tufts.edu.

¹² <http://www.gutmacher.org/media/nr/2005/04/21/index.html>

¹³ <http://www.povertyactionlab.org/doc/rwanda-health-evidence-paul-gertler-may-21-2013>