

Poster Session IV
Poster #21

School Type Differences in Knowledge of Breast Health Awareness Among Adolescent Girls in the State of Delaware

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Purpose and Objectives: Teen girls have fears and misunderstand factors that contribute to their risk of developing breast cancer. This study examined the role of school type on the knowledge gain from a breast health awareness and healthy lifestyle behaviors program provided during the school year. The program has a history of successfully empowering young women through awareness and education to assume responsibility for their overall well being with a strong emphasis on breast health and strives to effectively service girls from differing backgrounds.

Design: Pre/post test, qualitative data. A 15-item true/false questionnaire assessing breast health knowledge/awareness, incidence, myths, risk factors, attitude toward cancer, prevention/early detection, implementation of self-exam practices, cancer protective behaviors, and the intention to share knowledge with others.

Setting: High schools (public, private, alternative, parochial, special education, charter) throughout the state of Delaware. Sample: 2,439 female high school girls ages 14 to 19; 46% Caucasian, 30% African American, 8% Hispanic.

Methods: Data was screened using descriptive statistics and graphical methods. A repeated measure analysis of variance was used.

Findings: Pre-test demonstrated limited levels of knowledge within students on average scoring 44.9 %, with post-test knowledge improved to an average 82.9% out of 100. Significant increases in knowledge was noted in all schools $F=1957.31$ $P<0.001$. Private schools differed from the public and vocational schools, which did not differ from each other $p<0.05$. Interestingly the vocational schools had a higher point increase than their public peers. The private schools demonstrated the largest improvement on average (8 pt). The vocational/public schools demonstrated greater improvement post test (44%) increase compared to 39% increase private, public 38% increase.

Implications for Nursing: Targeted programs to reduce the differences in post program knowledge need to be developed.