



# Effect of Empathy Development on Service Learning - Andrews University School of Nursing/Community Partnership – Benton Harbor Program.

Shawna Henry, Khonnah Weithers,  
Carlisle Sutton, Jochebed Ade-Oshifogun



## Purpose of Program

- To determine the level of empathy among selected nursing students.
- To evaluate the effect of community engagement activities on nursing students' level of empathy.
- To evaluate the effect of Andrews University's nursing students' community engagement activities on the community's perception of empathy or readiness to engage.

## Background Information

- Andrews University's administration acknowledges the university's obligation to seek greater levels of community engagement.
- Educators are encouraged to understand and support community engagement efforts with the aim of molding students into World Changers.
- School of Nursing chose to support effort through community engagement at Benton Harbor High School.



## Concept Definition and Measurement

**Empathy:** the ability to walk in another's shoes.  
**Measure -** The Empathy Quotient (EQ)  
 (Lawrence et.al. 2004)

**Community Engagement:** students have the opportunity to walk in the shoes of others using empathy tool box –

- listening,
- cultural competency,
- Respect and
- mentoring

**Measure:** Pre and post survey following engagement activities.

## Process

### **Benton Harbor High School Students (BHHSS):**

- 23 BHHSS voluntarily signed up for project
- Parents of BHHSS gave written permission for students to participate in project.
- Participated in the intervention on 5 Fridays between October 26 and November 16, 2019.
- Completed pre and post knowledge questionnaire and focus interview
- Came to Andrews University School of Nursing for celebration of program completion.

### **Andrews University Nursing Students (NS):**

- 15 NS voluntarily signed up for the project.
- NS and faculty completed background checks and all paperwork as required by BHHS.
- NS completed cultural competency, first aid, hands only CPR training and mentoring education before the start of the project implementation.
- Were bused to Benton Harbor High School for 5 Fridays for the project implementation.
- Completed pre and post EQ questionnaire and focus interview.
- Participated in the celebration of completion.



## Project Intervention

- Ice breaker session – getting to know the students
  - Games and introductions
- Hands only CPR training
  - NS train BHHSS students in small groups about CPR with return demonstrations
- One to one bonding experience
  - NS paired with BHHSS for one to one sharing, discussions and bonding.
- First Aid Training
  - NS train BHHSS in managing bleeding emergencies
- BHHSS students complete pre and post knowledge tests related to training given.

## Summary of findings

- 15 NS completed the project
- 3 BHHSS completed the project
- Initial analysis revealed no significant difference between NS EQ scores pre and post intervention
- Post knowledge scores for the three BHHSS that completed the project was increased compared to the pre-knowledge score.

### **Project Comments by NS:**

*"The program was very humbling. It helped my realized the need and openness of the students willingness to learn."*

*"I think this program was a lot of fun and very beneficial not only for me as a nursing student, but also for the high schoolers who learned from us."*

### **Project Comments from BHHSS:**

One students after receiving the certificate of completion stated:

*"I am going to show this to the members of my family that thought I will not amount to anything. This is the evidence that I am on the right path, and I plan to go to college"*

## Limitations and Future Plans

- NS already have empathy as in the profession, so empathy may not increase.
- The number of BHHSS completing the project affected the expected results.
- Plan to measure more sensitive indicator in future projects
- Perform a needs assessment at BHHS to target the intervention to their needs.
- Increase the number of interactions during the project.