FAQ about Program Evaluation

*Why do we need evaluation?* Evaluation is the only way for us to know whether our program is having an impact. It not only provides our funders with evidence of effectiveness, but also provides us with valuable information on ways to improve the programs.

*How will we know that it works?* We will survey students before and after they receive the program and look to see if their answers (on attitudes, beliefs, behaviors) change from the pre-test to the post-test.

*I understand that the schools have been selected to be Intervention or Control schools. What does this mean?* As shown in the table below, we need two different groups to conduct a meaningful intervention – one that receives the program and one that does not. Both groups are pretested around the same time, and then only the Intervention school receives the curriculum (XXX). Once the curriculum is completed, both groups complete the post-test. Then, the Control school receives the curriculum.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTERVENTION</td>
<td>Pretest XXX</td>
<td>Post-Test XXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTROL</td>
<td>Pretest</td>
<td>Post-Test XXX</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

XXX=Life Skills or Word of Mouth Curriculum

*Why do we need a control group?* Student’s answers on the pre- and post-test can change simply because they have become familiar with the survey or because of developmental changes. In order to know whether the changes reported by the intervention group are due to the curriculum, we must take into account the change that would have happened naturally or by chance.

*Won’t the control group get the intervention?* Yes, but not until after the post-tests are completed. This is called a “delayed intervention” design.

*Do we post-test the control group again, after they finish the curriculum?* No. The evaluation is completed when both groups completed the post-test.

*When do I give the pretest to both groups?* Ideally no more than one week before the Intervention schools receives the first class of the curriculum, but definitely no more than two weeks.
**When do I give the post-test?**  No earlier than one week following the last class of the curriculum, and ideally between 2-4 weeks after the final class.

**Do I give the intervention and control students the same survey?**  Yes, and at approximately the same time.

**How do you link the pre and post-test information to the same student?**  On the front of each survey is a box that asks students to provide the teacher’s name, their birthdate, initials and last four digits of their home phone number.  Once we have both the pre-test and post-test packet for a classroom we hand match the student’s surveys based on this information.

**Can the surveys be administered to more than one class at one time?**  This is highly discouraged because it greatly reduces our ability to match information for individual students.  Matching within a classroom provides the best results.

**If I run out of surveys from one packet, can’t I just use some from another?**  No!  The surveys that are placed into the packets are carefully counted and checked to be sure you are receiving the right one (pre vs. post, type of survey).

**What if the information on the envelope label does not match the classroom I’m in (different teacher name, different period)?**  STOP!  If you don’t have the right teacher or class period, you are using the wrong set of surveys.  We track the data by classroom, so you must be sure that you are using the right envelope before proceeding.

**Can I read the surveys to the students?**  Yes and we would encourage it, particularly in the lower grades (4th and 5th grades).  However, if you find that the students prefer not to be read to, that’s fine.

**Other Questions?**  (record answers below)