



SIROW's Community Research News '08

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR...

As I hope you'll see from the content of this issue of the *Community Research News*, over the past year SIROW has been actively engaged in a number of meaningful efforts that continue to address our mission and meet our goals. I would like to recognize SIROW's excellent and inspiring teams of researchers, service providers, administrators, students, scholars, and volunteers who are dedicated to projects of importance to diverse individuals and groups living in the Southwest United States and Northwest Mexico. I would also like to recognize the often overlooked contribution of the women, youth and families who have participated in SIROW programs, as well as those private individuals and groups outside of SIROW who have contributed and worked behind the scenes to support the advancement of others.

This summer's 2008 volume of SIROW's *Community Research News* features a select number of SIROW projects. Many of these projects employ a participatory action research framework, involve collaboration with other agencies, and are delivered at community-based locations that allow for easy access for community members. For those projects nearing completion, we have included selected outcome data that highlight the effectiveness of these programs.

For more information about SIROW projects, publications, events, awards, and news, please visit us at <http://sirow.arizona.edu>

— Sally Stevens, Ph.D.



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LOOK OUT FOR OUR NEXT ISSUE OF
COMMUNITY RESEARCH NEWS
IN SUMMER 2009!

SIROW SCHOLARS

The past year has been a highly productive year for the eight SIROW Scholars. They produced a steady stream of books, articles, and grant proposals, while being actively engaged in presentations, readings, and workshops. A few highlights include, geologist-author Susan Cummins Miller receipt of several prestigious awards for her work, and author Nancy Mairs naming as an Arizona Literary Treasure by the Arizona Humanities Council.

Members met monthly throughout the academic year to review and critique each other's work. For example, multi-media artist Elena Díaz Björkquist shared a fast-paced, tragic story that addressed issues of race, class and gender in the mining town of Morenci, Arizona. Afghan scholar Senzil Nawid sought assistance in focusing a grant proposal for a book she plans to write, based on her fieldwork interviews with displaced Afghan women in Peshawar and Islamabad. Sociologist Mary Driscoll shared a chapter from a novel she is writing about women's food and body issues. Oral historian Fran Buss shared a proposal for a project that explores the storytelling strategies and spiritual beliefs of activists on the U.S.-Mexico border.

Discussions at meetings were animated and broad in scope, ranging from conversations about effective writing, to the theoretical and political aspects of the projects at hand, to suggestions about where to publish final products. The diversity of the women's projects and their commitment to improving each other's work speaks to the heart of SIROW's interdisciplinary, collaborative, and feminist mission.

For more information about the SIROW Scholars, please contact Corey Knox at SIROW's main office on the University of Arizona campus. Information about individual SIROW Scholars may be found on the SIROW website/SIROW Scholars link, <http://sirow.arizona.edu/people>

— Mary Driscoll, Ph.D.



Top Row (Left to Right): Fran Buss, Mary Driscoll, Corey Knox, Susan Cummins Miller. Bottom Row (Left to Right): Elena Díaz Björkquist, Senzil Nawid, Pat Manning, Nancy Mairs

“SIROW’s role on this project is to lay the groundwork for a country wide safety audit that addresses victim safety...”

SOWING THE SEEDS

SIROW's Rosi Andrade and Elena Díaz Björkquist, co-founders of Sowing the Seeds (a Latina writers' collective active in Tucson since 2000), will be holding their annual Mujeres Writing Conference on October 11, 2008 at the YWCA at 525 N. Bonita Ave.

The theme for this year's conference is "Passing the torch, narrating cultural legacies."

For more information contact Elena at 760-3279 or send an e-mail to sowing@comcast.net.

— Rosi Andrade, Ph.D.

SIROW Collaborates with the Pima County Attorney's Office to help improve Domestic Violence Victim Safety

Through the Office on Violence against Women, the Pima County Attorney's Office has secured a grant to implement a centralized, well-trained, vertical prosecution unit for domestic violence to manage both misdemeanors and felonies. The unit will consist of five attorneys, five legal support staff, two detectives, and two victim witness advocates. They will work in teams to collaboratively handle all domestic violence cases from arrest through post-sentencing supervision. SIROW's role on this project is to lay the groundwork [which included facilitating multi-disciplinary team meetings and incorporating several community agencies] for a county-wide safety audit that addresses victim safety from the "911 call" to parole hearings. This will include facilitating multi-disciplinary team meetings and

integrating several community agencies into the project. Monthly meetings include law enforcement, attorneys, Child Protective Services, probation, and both court appointed- and community advocates who are willing to introspectively evaluate whether their practices, policies, and procedures reflect best practices with regard to domestic violence victims' safety. In addition, through this project, a Lethality Board will be formed to review domestic violence cases that have resulted in the death of the victim.

— Claudia Powell, M.Ed.



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PROJECT CHAT: SUCCESSFUL IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE

Project CHAT is an intervention focused on decreasing University of Arizona (UA) students' alcohol consumption, particularly their binge drinking. For Project CHAT, the UA's Health Promotion and Preventive Services (HPPS) provides a Brief Alcohol Screening and Intervention of College Students (BASICS) to college students who report risky drinking behavior and who are interested in getting treatment. Many of these students are identified by UA Campus Health medical providers who, as part of Project CHAT, talk to students about their drinking behaviors and make referrals during students' regular medical visits. Members of the SIROW team are working with HPPS to evaluate Project CHAT, which is currently in its final year of funding from the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment.

With help from medical providers, other UA groups, and outreach efforts, HPPS has identified and provided the BASICS intervention for students in need. To date, 337 students have been enrolled in Project CHAT, which is 86% of the expected total enrollment. Of these, 82% completed the full BASICS intervention and 11% completed half of it. The enrollees include males (66%), females (34%), Freshmen (33%), Sophomores (17%), Juniors (19%), Seniors (21%), and graduate students (10%).

Project CHAT has already proven to be an effective intervention. It has increased the accuracy of students' beliefs regarding how much their peers are drinking and partying. It has also increased students' motivation to reduce their drinking. It has resulted in a reduction of the alcohol-related stress and emotional problems students experience. Finally, it has reduced the number of days of the last 30 that students drank any alcohol and/or engaged in binge drinking (i.e., 5 or more alcoholic drinks in one sitting). All of these positive changes were present at 3 months post-intervention and maintained to 6 months post-intervention.

Project CHAT is also successful in that it created a strong collaborative relationship between HPPS and the medical providers at UA Campus Health Services. Without this collaborative relationship, many students would not have been identified and provided the Project CHAT intervention.

HPPS, Campus Health, and SIROW are currently working on plans to sustain Project CHAT in order to continue offering this effective intervention to college students in need.

— Josephine D. Korchmaros, Ph.D.

WOMEN IN SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING PROGRAM

SUMMER UPDATE 2008



Student Award winner
Melissa Nicole Martinez with
keynote Dr. Maria Teresa
Velez

The Women in Science and Engineering Leadership Council hosted the 2nd Annual Science and Engineering Excellence (SEE) Awards on Thursday, April 10, 2008, at the University of Arizona Student Union Memorial Center. Over 70 University faculty members, students, and staff involved in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics attended this awards banquet to honor their peers.

The evening was planned by the WISE Leadership Council made up of members from Women in Science and Engineering (WISE), Women in Biological Sciences (WIBS), and the Society of Women Engineers (SWE). The keynote for the 2008 SEE Awards Banquet was Dr. Maria Teresa Velez, Associate Dean of the Graduate College.

The 2008 SEE Award Recipients were:

Faculty Award: Dr. Jennifer McIntosh

Staff Award: Nura Dualeh

Organization Award: the Engineering Student Council

Student Award: Melissa Nicole Martinez

Student Award: Abbas Tuli

Outstanding Leader Award: Rachel Zenuk

The mission of WISE is to develop a pipeline of support from middle school through graduate studies to recruit and retain women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields to increase the pool of diverse, highly motivated and qualified scientists and engineers.

For more information on WISE, visit ws.web.arizona.edu/wise

— Hilary Beggs

CORNERSTONE PROJECT

Cornerstone is a collaboration between the Arizona Children's Association (AZCA) and SIROW. Cornerstone is an outpatient substance abuse treatment program for youth between 12 and 17 years of age. Participants attend group sessions Wednesday and Thursday evenings for 18 weeks. Wednesday groups are facilitated by AZCA staff who provide substance abuse therapy. Thursday groups are facilitated by SIROW staff, focusing on sex and gender in relationship to drug use, sexuality, crime and relationships.

This year SIROW personnel have incorporated community involvement into the curriculum activities. More specifically, we have invited individuals from Wingspan's Southern Arizona's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center to host a workshop with Cornerstone youth. Wingspan's mission is "to promote the freedom, equality, safety and well-being of LGBT people." Staff and volunteers shared their personal stories about "coming out" and the immediate and current difficulties they face as well as their strategies for maintaining wellness.

In addition, Danza Mexica Cuauhtémoc has offered dance and drumming ceremonies in celebration of youth who graduate from the Cornerstone program. Danza Mexica Cuauhtémoc is a group dedicated to the preservation and promotion of the Mexica/Azteca culture, including ceremonies, warrior dance and traditions. Danza Mexica Cuauhtémoc works to build unity, understanding, mutual respect, and harmony among all nations. The collaboration between these two groups and Cornerstone treatment has helped to cultivate a greater sense of community connectedness among youth.

—Isaac Durgin



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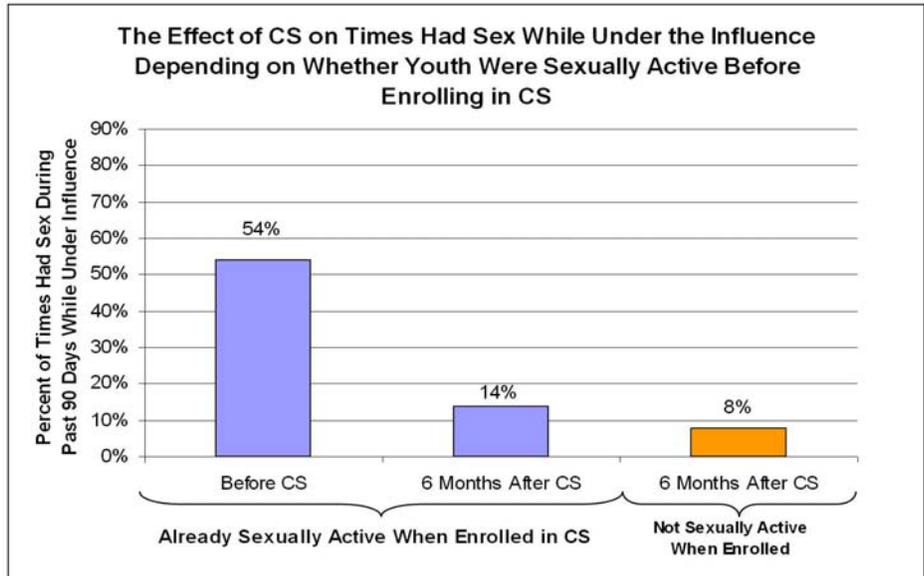
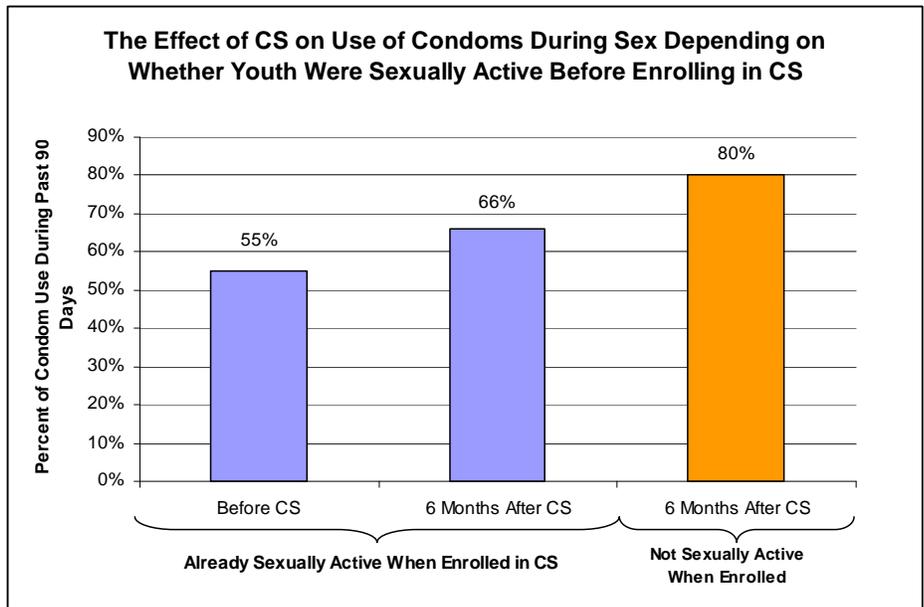
CONEXIONES SANAS: A SUCCESSFUL CULTURALLY-SENSITIVE YOUTH HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAM

Conexiones Sanas (CS) is a culturally-sensitive health education program aimed at reducing and preventing risky sexual behaviors that increase the chance of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections (STI). Youth ages 13 to 17 who are enrolled in substance abuse facilities in Arizona are invited to participate. CS is currently in its final year of funding from the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment.

CS health educators have served 523 youth, which is 140% more than the target enrollment of 375. These youth (71% male, 29% female, 45% White, 41% Hispanic) showed a significant increase in

HIV/AIDS and STI-related knowledge immediately after participating in CS, and they retained much of this newly-gained knowledge 6 months after participating. On average, CS youth answered 63% of the knowledge-test questions correctly before participating in CS, 84% correctly immediately after participating, and 79% correctly 6 months after participating in CS.

The CS youth used this newly-gained knowledge to engage in safer sexual behaviors. As the tables on the previous page show, the CS youth who were already sexually active when they enrolled in CS



(Continued on page 5)

CONEXIONES SANAS: Continued From page 4

increased the percent of times that they used a condom during sex during the past 90 days from 55% before CS to 66% at 6 months after CS. These youth also significantly decreased the percent of times they had sex while under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol during the past 90 days, from 54% to 14%. The CS youth who were not sexually active when they enrolled in CS tended to engage in safer sexual behavior at 6 months after CS. Not only did they use a condom 80% of the times they had sex during the past 90 days, but they were under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol only 8% of the times that they had sex during the past 90 days.

Furthermore, CS youth were satisfied with the curriculum and the health educators. Ninety-six percent of CS youth thought that CS increased their knowledge of HIV/AIDS, STI, TB, and Hepatitis B & C. 92% thought that CS increased their knowledge of getting help. 91% thought that CS helped them understand the effects of drugs and alcohol and 91% thought that CS helped them reduce risky behaviors. Ninety seven percent of CS youth thought that the health educators did a good job, 96% thought they were fair, 96% indicated that the educators respected the youth, and 91% thought that they were sensitive to the youth's cultural background.

— Josephine Korchmaros, Ph.D.



“96% of CS youth thought that CS increased their knowledge of HIV/AIDS, STI, TB, and Hepatitis B & C”

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE: WOMEN’S HEALTH EDUCATION AND PREVENTION SERVICES

SIROW’s legacy of providing educational services to high risk populations has its roots in Sally Stevens’ Community Outreach Project on AIDS in Southern Arizona (COPASA) a project funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) in 1988. In 2002, SIROW continued this legacy with *Mujer Sana—Healthy Woman*, a project focused on HIV/AIDS prevention and funded by the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. SIROW expanded its services to include collaborations with community-based agencies, including the Pima County Health Department, The Haven, CODAC, and Amity. Over the past 6 years, *Mujer Sana* has served 851 women living in Tucson. SIROW’s *Mujer Sana* site located on south Sixth Avenue between 18th and 19th Streets, is now also the home of *HerStory to Health*, an HIV/STD, Hepatitis prevention and PTSD mental health project also funded by the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. SIROW collaborates on *Her-*

Story to Health with the Pima County Health Department, Primavera Foundation, and The Haven. *HerStory to Health* will serve 600 women living in Tucson. This succession of projects has provided needed services to women involved in drug and alcohol abuse, both in and out of treatment. SIROW’s Health Education curriculum (SHE) is the foundation for all of these educational prevention services which are culturally sensitive, gender-appropriate, and grounded in the theory and practice of teaching and learning.

For the Tucson community, the services provided by these projects not only benefit the women who participate in our programs, but also improve the lives of families and communities at large. Women’s paths to health and wellness are complex (often based on a lifetime of relationships) and, at times, unpredictable (burdened by addiction and its consequences, histories of grief and loss). Yet the consistency in ser-

vices is something women can depend on in our SIROW projects. Currently, *HerStory to Health* will provide women opportunities to learn about female anatomy, female-specific risks, HIV/STD prevention and health screening, social relationships, and PTSD coping strategies and resources. Women who enroll in *HerStory* will also have the opportunity to make use of a computer lab, learn software applications, and develop resumes and other documents in pursuit of opportunities to become whole. For me, a line from Mexican writer Rosario Castellanos’ poem “*Otra manera de ser*”, (Another way of being), reflects SIROWs beliefs and practices: “There has to be another way of being human and free.”

— Rosi Andrade, Ph.D.

PROTECTING WOMEN'S RIGHTS AT THE BORDER

SIROW's new project "Protecting Women's Rights at the Border" has had a highly successful pilot year. The project consists of two initiatives, the Tucson Women Workers' Project and the Campaign for Women in Immigration Detention Facilities, as well as a course at the James E. Rogers College of Law. All the project's components address the dire situation women immigrants in the U.S./Mexico border region currently face with a unique combination of legal services, research, education, and advocacy. The Women Workers' Project has already recovered thousands of dollars for violations of women workers' rights and held numerous outreach and educational activities for immigrant women workers. This fall the Campaign for Women in Immigration Detention Facilities will issue a report on the conditions of women detainees in Arizona, and will then launch responsive programming that will bring the University's resources to the assistance of women immigrant detainees. With strong collaborators and several new sources of funding, SIROW believes the project is well positioned to become a stable, long-term program devoted to the improvement of the lives of immigrant women in the U.S./Mexico border region.

Questions? Contact Nina Rabin, rabin@email.arizona.edu, 621-7331

— Nina Rabin, J.D.



THE PRISM PROJECT: SUPPORTING LGBTQ YOUTH

The Prism Project, a collaboration between SIROW, Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation, CODAC Behavioral Health Services, Wingspan, and the Pima County Health Department provides services to LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning) youth age 13-23 and their allies in the Tucson area.

The Prism Project includes delivering workshops to youth and supporting the Eon Youth Lounge, a drop-in center downtown that provides leadership opportunities to participants. SIROW's role in this large project is to evaluate the effectiveness of the workshop series that participants attend as part of the study. Youth participate in a baseline interview, attend 7 workshops on a variety of topics (including LGBTQ history and identity, safe sex and healthy relationships), and then complete 3, 6, and 12 month follow-up interviews. The Prism Project assessment asks questions pertaining to substance use, mental health, family support, school environment, safe sex and sexuality, and interaction with the legal system.

In April, TC Tolbert, Carly Thomsen, Wendy Sampson, and Courtney Jones presented "We Belong: Eon, The Prism Project, and LGBTQ Youth" at the International Foundation for Gender Education conference, specifically focusing on the experiences of transgender adolescents. The following data reflects some of the information presented in that setting.

- Transgender youth report having an average of 4.58 sexual partners in the past 90 days, while lesbian, gay and bisexual youth report having 2.85 partners, and heterosexual participants report having 1.46 sexual partners over the same time period.
- In response to the question, "In the past year, have you traded sex for drugs, gifts or money?" 17% of transgender youth responded "Yes," in comparison to 4% of lesbian, gay and bisexual youth and 5% of heterosexual youth.
- Transgender youth report using alco-

hol or drugs for the first time at a younger age (11.67 years) than any other study participants (just over 14 years).

- Transgender youth had unprotected sex an average of 26 times in the past 90 days in comparison to 18 times for lesbian, gay and bisexual youth, and 16 times for heterosexual youth.

While this quantitative data illustrates that transgender youth engage more frequently in higher risk behaviors, there are some positive findings. For example, 75% of transgender youth reported "Yes" to the statement "I am open with my family about my life," in comparison to 69% of lesbian, gay and transgender youth, and 54% of heterosexual youth. Furthermore, while this data does provide a portrait of patterns in the experiences of LGBTQ youth, it cannot possibly capture the resilience, strength and determination that these youth possess. Many of these youth claim that Eon and Prism dramatically improved their lives.

While the Prism Project, a five-year Center for Substance Abuse Treatment funded program, will come to a close this September, the support it has offered to LGBTQ youth in Tucson and the breadth of quantitative data collected will continue to impact both academic and public understandings of the issues LGBTQ youth face—both in this community and beyond.

— Carly Thomsen, MA

"...75% of transgender youth reported "Yes" to the statement, "I am open with my family about my life"..."



A SECOND GLANCE: YEAR TWO UPDATE FOR LAS MARIPOSAS

Proyecto de las Mariposas (Las Mariposas) is a collaboration between SIROW and Compass Behavioral Health Care. Las Mariposas is a six month outpatient substance abuse treatment program for youth between the ages of 12-17 who reside in Pima County. The program uses two evidence-based models for substance abuse treatment: Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach (A-CRA) and Assertive Continuing Care (ACC). The treatment services are individualized family based and delivered through individual and combined sessions that allow clinical staff to meet the family's treatment goals.

A-CRA and ACC both place a strong emphasis on enhancing communication and relationship skills within the family. Qualitative testimonies from program participants highlight how these skills have been improved for the family.

- “My son learned how to communicate. He got a band scholarship because he did so well in the interview; this was because of the skills he learned from Ina, the therapist.” *Parent of 17 year old male*
- “I am closer to my family now and that is what matters most.” *17 year old female*
- “ We learned how to communicate, kids are different these days, we were parenting the way that our parents did, you just tell them to something and they do it. We learned how our whole family can talk.” *Parent of 17 year old male*

Preliminary quantitative outcomes mirror the qualitative feedback we have received from families. The table below highlights some of the alcohol/drug use and family outcomes. Paired sample T-test were conducted to measure changes from Baseline to 6-month.

	(n)	Baseline	6-Month	Sig 2 tail
P90: How many days used Marijuana	28	26.3	11.8	.022
P90: How many days gone without using any AOD	28	52.8	72.9	.005
P90: How many days in trouble with family	28	34.1	10.1	.003

Note: Decreases in the number of days used marijuana and number of days in trouble with family were expected. Increases in the number of days with no use of any AOD were expected.

In summary, families report positive changes, particularly in the areas of communication and relationships. Moreover, quantitative data demonstrate significant reductions in substance use and family problems. These findings suggest that the Las Mariposas program is offering well-implemented, evidence-based services that are positively affecting families.

— Kristin Hedges, MA



DETERMINING ANOTHER PATH

Project DAP (Determining Another Path) is a project that promotes healthy behaviors among youth, particularly with regard to the prevention of HIV, STI's, and unintended pregnancies. One of the main components of the project is an eight week, interactive, comprehensive sexuality education curriculum. The topics in the curriculum are puberty, self-esteem, sexual/reproductive anatomy and physiology, HIV, STI's, safer sex protection methods, relationships, and communication skills. Classes are 90 minutes long and are held twice a week.

We have found one particularly valuable part of the curriculum is an anonymous question box for youth to ask questions they have relating to

human sexuality. At the end of each class, we give each youth a sheet of paper to write down any question he/she may have on the particular topic we are covering (or any health related question) and have them turn it in to the anonymous question box. During the beginning of each class we answer all of the questions that were asked in the previous class, by providing factual responses that promote respect, informed decision-making and healthy choices. The youth are very open about asking questions and often write down positive feedback about class. For example, following one of the safer sex protection methods classes, a youth asked, “When having Sex with Pregnant girl will it Hurt the Baby if She's Far along?”

Following one of the anatomy and physiology classes a youth asked, “Why does a males penis shrink or shrivel up when in cool or cold water? P.S. DAP RULES!!”

This seems to be one of the activities that the youth enjoy most during our class. It gives them the opportunity to ask questions that perhaps they would not be comfortable asking in a group setting. It also builds trust and respect between the youth and the health educators while providing information and having fun.

— Carlos Moll, MPH



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ABOUT US

The University of Arizona's Southwest Institute for Research on Women (SIROW), Department of Women's Studies, is a regional research and resource center serving Arizona, New Mexico, West Texas, Colorado, Wyoming, Nevada, Utah, and Northwestern Mexico.

Founded in 1979, SIROW has researchers who work collaboratively with several University of Arizona colleges and departments, other educational institutions, governmental agencies, and numerous community-based organizations on issues pertinent to the lives of women and girls.

SIROW'S MISSION

To develop, conduct, and disseminate inter-disciplinary and inter-institutional collaborative research and education/outreach projects of importance to the diverse groups of women and girls in the southwest U.S. and northwest Mexico.

SIROW's Goals:

- *To develop collaborative, feminist research focusing on problems or populations of interest to scholars in the Southwest*
- *To identify, coordinate, and disseminate research on women, girls, and on gender differences*
- *To provide advocacy for women and girls by linking researchers with community organizations and with policy makers*
- *To support equality for women in the workforce and conduct research on women and gender in the work environment*
- *To provide gender-specific research and services on health related issues*
- *To support graduate, undergraduate, and K-12 education about and for women and girls*
- *To examine women's contributions to literature, the arts, and southwest heritage*