MusicsEnergy and the Psychosocial Wellbeing of Black Youth in Baltimore

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### MusicsEnergy:
Trends in Digital Consumption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Watched music videos on computer</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downloaded a song from the internet without paying for it</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streamed music on my computer</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watched music videos on mobile phone</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streamed music on my mobile phone from a music mobile application</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downloaded or used music apps on my mobile phone</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid to download a music track to my computer</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid to download a whole digital album to my computer</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: The Nielsen Company*
Is there a link between culture, education, and “schooling”?

“Children are educated in the ways of their culture, to maintain their culture, to advance their culture’s interests, and, ultimately, to maintain their culture’s very survival.”

How might educators, policy makers, and researchers improve the teaching and learning experiences for all children, while also preserving compulsory “schooling” and achieving equity in public education and cultural preservation?

“Intelligence must be defined in terms of the degrees in which it is used to solve problems.”

Amos Wilson, African American Scholar
MusicsEnergy:
Adolescents and Psychosocial Wellbeing

- Struggling to maintain hope
- Emotionally disconnected
- Struggling to distinguish what’s “real” and true
- Increasingly disengaged in the status quo
- Increasingly preoccupied with popular (youth) culture
MusicsEnergy:
The Dilemma of Youth Engagement
1. **Affective** = attitudes about school and related factors.

2. **Behavioral** = participation in school-related activities.

3. **Cognitive** = efforts toward tasks requiring thought and mental mastery.
MusicsEnergy: Additional Dimensions of Student Engagement

**Social** Dimension/Student Needs:
- **School membership**
  - Attachments to peers and adults
  - Commitment to following school rules
  - Involvement in school activities
  - Belief in the value of school

**Academic** Dimension/Student Needs:
- Assessment that effort in school warrants the energy required to achieve school task.
- Assessment that there is value in the things being asked to do in school
Cultivating:

1. Belongingness
   Facilitates understanding the value of school.

2. Emotional and behavioral engagement
   Facilitates “attachment” to school and “healthy relationships” with peers and non-familial adults.

3. Applied Learning
   Facilitates understanding education’s purposes and the link to employment, housing, health, and “social capital”.

**MusicsEnergy:**
Cultivating School Engagement

**Autonomy:** a student’s sense of choice or influence regarding the activities in which he or she participates.

**Relatedness:** a student’s emotional connection within relationships to important others such as teachers, parents/guardians/caregivers, and peers.

**Competence:** a student’s belief in his or her ability to achieve goals and his or her knowledge of how to achieve those goals.
MusicsEnergy: Cultivating Engagement After School

Extracurricular Activities Facilitates:

- Self-awareness
- Identity development
- Positive relationships with non-familial adults
MusicsEnergy: Overview

Uses PYMM as the “hook”
- Multisensory Engagement
- Integrated Learning
- Interdisciplinary Approach

Is implemented via:
- 6th - 12th Grade Curriculum & Instruction
- Afterschool and summer enrichment programming

Outcomes (Knowledge/Skills/Abilities):
- Academic: Decision-making
- Behavioral: Self-management
- Emotional: Self-awareness
- Moral: Decision-making
- Social: Relationships
MusicsEnergy: Uniqueness

- Flexible implementation in school, afterschool, summer school

- Links health education with media literacy for culturally-relevant, engaging, teaching and learning

- Addresses state-adopted common core standards
  in five content areas:
  1. English Language Arts
  2. Computer/Information Technology
  3. Health Education
  4. History/Social Studies
  5. Visual/Performing Arts/Media Arts

- Improve health, education, and youth development outcomes by addressing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity</th>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Coping</th>
<th>Communication</th>
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MusicsEnergy: Session Implementation

12 – 18 sessions lasting 60 - 90 minutes structured as:

Recalibration™
Listening to new music in silence and volunteering to reflect/share

Plz Inform Me™
✓ Building community with shared expectations

My Favs™
✓ Conducting research and sharing with peers

Words Matter™
✓ Deconstructing song lyrics

The Game™
✓ Conducting content analysis of music videos

U-Turn™
✓ Discussing options, choices and implications

If I Were a Song™
✓ Creating original compositions

The Big Production™
Planning and staging a live event for an audience
MusicsEnergy:
Instructor/Facilitator’s Role

- **Instruction:**
  - MS Office, Logic and other software
  - Content Analysis
  - Songwriting
  - Music composition
  - Event planning

- **Facilitation:**
  - Discussion
  - Reflection and sharing via group presentations
  - Peer review/feedback
  - Team debates

- **Demonstration:**
  - Practice/Role Play/Rehearsal
  - Model desired behavior through coaching
MusicsEnergy: “As Is”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Literacy</th>
<th>Responsible Decision-Making</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Defining Media</td>
<td>✓ Decision Making for Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Target Marketing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Media Influence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Prevalence of Violence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Power of Media</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Music Multimedia as Role Models</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Music Multimedia</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Resisting Media Influence</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ The Media and Health</td>
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**MusicsEnergy: Case #1 Overview**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>[Setting]</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Goals/Aims/Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Challenging Horizons Program [Summer] 8th grade graduates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The CHP is an evidence-based, after-school and summer service-learning program for academically and behaviorally challenged middle school students in South Carolina.</td>
<td>▪ Assess the acceptability and feasibility MusicsEnergy implementation as an intervention.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MusicsEnergy
Case #1
Student Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent of students who think MusicsEnergy:</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is engaging</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should be offered during the day</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is culturally relevant and culturally engaging</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should be offered only afterschool or during the summer</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q: Would you be more engaged (in learning) if your teachers used the media you like to develop lesson plans?

A: “It depends [on] if they like that type of music....I don't want to [talk about the music I like with my teacher or staff] if it’s going to be negative...so that’s like [attempting to] change the audience’s mind about the music...It depends on how you talk about it....like how you approach it.”

Owens, Smith; Journal of Health Education Research & Development; 2016
“Many teachers think some of the PYMM that students like is simply inappropriate. Aside from that, it’s not to them what they think they should be teaching”.

“Yes, in lower income school districts and settings, to start off with then move toward middle income schools and settings to maybe move into upper income.... There's the thought, if it can work with [inner city schools that serve inner city youth], it can work with anybody.... So it’s kind of like it works in the hard core areas it can work in the areas that are changing like ours.”

“No, not to get them into college. I mean if you look at the lyrics of some of these songs, it’s grammatically incorrect; some of them if you go and print out the lyrics they use texting abbreviations. No”.

Owens, Smith; Journal of Health Education Research & Development; 2016
“Yes, because you are discussing it [the themes and messages in the music] with them. That’s going to show them that you’re listening to the music and helping them to interpret what it means with that song that they enjoy. Then they’ll have those skills too.”

“If you’re going to use their [students’] music, you have to have someone who respects their [students’] music.”

“I’m uncomfortable having someone implementing this program without training, because someone without training could be in front of the classroom and insert their own biases and give their judgment and I don’t need somebody to cause conflict with what I’m teaching my child.”

“The teacher or staff would have to have a diverse background.”

“If you’re going to use their [students’] music, you have to have someone who respects their [students’] music.”
# MusicsEnergy

## Case #2 and Case #3 Overview

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Goals/Aims/Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore City Public School Elementary Classroom Setting</td>
<td>A low-performing Baltimore City Public School located in Park Heights with 98% students qualifying for free and reduced lunch.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Assess skill uptake in six areas: 1) collaboration; 2) close reading for comprehension; 3) communication (oral, written, and listening); 4) critical analysis (critical viewing and critical listening); 5) note taking/reflection; and 6) information-seeking/research from pre-to-post.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Baltimore-Based Spoken Word Community-Based Organization [Summer Program]; Youth ages 14-19; Grades 9-12. | Dew More is dedicated to using art and community organizing as tools to increase community engagement. |  |  | • Assess how music multimedia could be used to reinforce critical thinking of the prevailing themes in PYMM.  
  • Define the prevailing themes and discuss the influence of these things on group identity and individual behavior. |
Observations: Strengths

- Sense of shared identity, plight, and pride [i.e., being from “the hood”]:
  - Place
  - Race
  - Class

- Highly-engaged discussions themes and messages in PYMM

- Concerns regarding benefits, outcomes and relevance of participation expectation:
  - “How does this count toward my grade?”
  - “Do I have to do this to get paid?”
Observations: Opportunities for Growth

- Limited understanding of:
  - Black diversity across the spectrum, especially positive black role models
  - Classroom behavioral standards in social learning environments
  - Self and group identity heavily influenced by the power of media and media images

- No evidence of:
  - Understanding the purpose for education
  - Having clarified individual or communal values regarding responsible decision making
  - Moral competence in relationship to responsible decision-making
  - A clear conception of “good health”

- Underdeveloped:
  - Social skills
  - Relationship skills
  - Conflict resolution
  - Vocabulary and communication skills
MusicsEnergy
Implications
Cases #2 & #3

Identity Development

Values Clarification

Coping Skills

Communication Norms
# MusicsEnergy Overview

**Case #4 and Case #5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Goals/Aims/Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore City Public School</td>
<td>[classroom setting]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Assess feasibility and acceptability of implementing a 5 sessions unit of instruction for an English Language Arts course.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Academy of Academic and Career Education (ACCE) | [summer youth program] | | | • Collect student's perceptions about the potential influence PYMM may have on self image/identity development, values, coping and communication.  
• Collect data about the potential influence PYMM may have on students’ developing attitudes, beliefs, behaviors and values about life with or without a “moral compass” when facing moral dilemmas. |
MusicsEnergy: 
- Prompted a defensive response about the context in which Rap/Hip Hop music is perceived.

Helped students: 
- Understand the link between their musical preferences and communication norms in their environment (i.e., home, school, neighborhood, and community).
- Understand the link between their musical preferences and:
  - Attitudes about self and community
    - Individual and group identity
    - Values
    - How they cope
    - How they view traditional gender roles and relationships

Did not help students: 
- Understand the link between media exposure to problem behavior and their perception of problem behavior or its consequences.
MusicsEnergy:
- Prompted a defensive response about the context in which Rap/Hip Hop music is perceived.

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- Understand the link between media exposure to problem behavior and their perception of problem behavior or its consequences.
Media Literacy and Advertising:
✓ Defining Media
✓ Defining Advertising; and Target Marketing
✓ Media Literacy and the Influence of Media
✓ Purpose of Advertising/Advertising Techniques
✓ Resisting Common Advertising Techniques
✓ Media as Role Models
✓ Power of Media
✓ Impact of Media Images
✓ Resisting False and Distorted Images
✓ The Commodification of Risky and Problem Behavior
✓ Media Stereotypes In Context

Responsible Decision Making:
✓ Defining Good Health
✓ Valuing What’s Important
✓ Risk Assessment
✓ The Value of Good Health and Self Care
✓ Setting Healthy Goals
✓ Avoiding Misunderstandings
✓ Resolving Conflicts
✓ Decision Making for Health

MusicsEnergy:
Modifications Based on Lessons Learned
**MusicsEnergy**

**Additional Components**

**Self-Awareness:**
- Racial Socialization
- The Origins of poor health and social dis-ease
- Coping with anger, anxiety, stress and other emotions
- Self-image, self-esteem and self-improvement

**Relationship Skills:**
- Relationship building
- Healthy vs. unhealthy relationships
- Responding to invitations
- Managing conflict to build consensus

**Social Awareness:**
- Commodification of risk & problem behavior in media
- Code-switching and reconciling communication norms
- Collaborating, negotiating and compromising
- Resolving conflict

**Self-Management:**
- Managing emotions
- Persuasive tactics
- Resisting peer pressure
- Strategies for overcoming challenges
- Criteria for setting goals
MusicsEnergy
Connecting the Dots

- Evidence-based approaches to teaching and learning
- PYC and PYMM used to cultivate competencies and developmental indicators
- Alignment with school engagement and achievement goals
- Expanded learning opportunities
- State-adopted standards in five subject areas
Health Behavior Related Themes:

1. Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs
2. Casual Sex and Sexuality
3. Deviant and Suspicious Behavior
4. Interpersonal Conflict
5. Violence, Aggressive Behavior, and Trauma

Psycho-Social Behavior Related Themes:

1. Excessive Consumerism/Materialism
2. Criminal Activity
3. Foul/Explicit Language
4. Narcissism
5. Social Gatherings
Seven Personal Attributes for Life [P.A.L.s]

P.A.L.s

1) Faith
2) Hope
3) Love
4) Romance
5) Personal Responsibility
6) Social Responsibility
7) Life Lessons

Owens, Reynolds, 2017 (in preparation)
Who is consuming PYMM most?
- Students of color
- Students with less-educated parents

Who is most at-risk for negative outcomes?
- Black and Latino youth
- Youth with less-educated parents
- Youth considered “at-risk” based on exposure to adverse childhood experiences
MusicsEnergy
Lessons Learned Across All Five Cases
MusicsEnergy
Lessons Learned Across All Five Cases

- Significant challenges selling the necessity and benefits of crossing cultural boundaries
- Expand populations served beyond “at-risk”
- Highlight the benefits of code-switching
- Introduce the origins and context of black inferiority myth
- Expand populations served beyond “at-risk”
Engagement is a matter of teaching and learning and not one directional, especially for today’s youth.

Teaching and learning and youth development are complementary and not mutually exclusive.

Young people are suspicious of adult hypocrisy and adults who show little to no transparency or vulnerability.
1. Significantly more emphasis on:
   a. Self-Awareness
   b. Personal Responsibility
   c. Social Awareness
   d. Social Responsibility

**Examples:**

*Cultivating behavioral and social competence*

1) Setting and reinforcing classroom/social learning expectations

2) Teaching the practice of “self-talk” requiring critical thinking about evaluating risk and probable outcomes

3) Highlighting the benefits of:
   a. Crossing-cultural boundaries and adding code-switching to toolbox
   b. Embracing healthy/life-affirming communication styles and practices
MusicsEnergy

- **P**: Pay Attention
- **A**: Ask Questions
- **R**: Respect Adult and Fellow Students
- **T**: Take Notes
- **I**: Indicate Source of Information
- **C**: Collaborate with Fellow Students
- **I**: Identify Options before acting or reacting
- **P**: Play Responsibly [after completing in-class assignments or homework]
- **A**: Avoid Repeating Poor Choices
- **T**: Take Initiative
- **E**: Express Your Creativity, Ideas, and Opinions Appropriately

Owens & Johnson, 2017
2. Add fidelity measures:
   Examples:
   ✓ Economics of oppression
   ✓ Politics of race and social classes
   ✓ Socialization of black people over time through media stereotypes
   ✓ Myth of black inferiority and white superiority
   ✓ Historical roots and contemporary manifestations of adaptive and mal-adaptive behaviors linked to racial socialization

3. Maintain emphasis on critical thinking and reflection regarding five contextual features in PYMM:
   ✓ Attractive characters
   ✓ Justified behaviors
   ✓ Extreme/graphic portrayals of violence, sex, interpersonal conflict
   ✓ Realistic portrayals
   ✓ Consequences (or lack thereof regarding rewards and punishments)
About the use of Popular Youth Music Multimedia (PYMM):

- Engages today’s youth in beneficial uses of recreational and social media.

- Offers new pathways to health, hope, and healing for increasing numbers of youth disengaged from traditional public “schooling”.

- Offers content, context and “text” for discussions, discourse and critical thinking about the influences of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and the environment on health behaviors.
MusicsEnergy
Major Take-Aways

About the conceptual framework and evaluation outcomes thus far:

- Is a promising evidence-based intervention (SAMHSA).
- Leverages the broad appeal and pervasive influence of music, media and technology for all youth, and particularly appealing to those most predisposed.
- Enables dialogue, discourse, and critical thinking about the potential risks and benefits of music’s role during adolescence.
- Focuses on four meta-topics: Identity Development; Values; Communication Norms and Coping Strategies.
- Is being evaluated for improvements in psychosocial wellbeing of vulnerable youth, as well as improved health, education, and youth development outcomes.
Is there a link between health, education, culture and “schooling”?

“Children are educated in the ways of their culture, to maintain their culture, to advance their culture’s interests, and, ultimately, to maintain their culture’s very survival.”

How might educators, policy makers, and researchers improve the teaching and learning experiences for all children, while also preserving compulsory “schooling”, achieving equity in public education and preserving cherished cultural traditions?

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