



MISTA

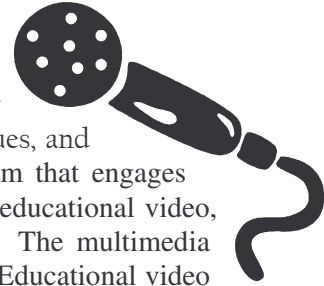
Males Increasing Skills Throughout Adolescence



**Madison County
Urban League**
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What is MISTA?

Males Increasing Skills Throughout Adolescence (MISTA) is a culturally innovative male responsibility program that utilizes music, video and multimedia training to educate youth on HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, setting goals for the future, assessing personal values, and using life experience in a positive way. MISTA is a multimedia program that engages youth in health education projects by allowing them to create their own educational video, write and produce songs, and participate in health promotion projects. The multimedia projects they create are used as peer education tools for the community. Educational video productions are shown in schools, universities, hospitals and social service agencies. Musical CDs are distributed throughout the community and to organizations upon request. The educational video production attracts many young people that are interested in acting, directing, producing, writing and other related activities. Music production draws many adolescent males that otherwise may not participate in any other school activities. Depending on the needs of the site MISTA serves, female participants are invited to join as well.



How long has MISTA been in existence?

Founded in the winter of 1999 by William Goldsmith, former Community Health Educator and Program Director for the Urban League of Madison County, the program began with a vision to educate and empower young men with one of the most powerful media forces: music. Reaching over a thousand youth every year through various workshop and community health efforts, the program is still going strong. Now in its sixth year it boasts many noteworthy accomplishments including making front page headlines in the Madison County Post in 2000 and sponsoring a community wide Hip-Hop health rally in conjunction with 100.3 FM The BEAT in 2004 and being featured as a dynamic community program in the Telegraph (Alton, IL) in 2006.

How does MISTA work?

Mista uses a multidimensional learning approach in a workshop format utilizing games, panel discussions, role play, small group activities and creative writing to communicate the program concepts. Primarily functioning as an after school program, MISTA couples a four week once a week workshop component with a four week once a week music and video production component. The objective is to increase the participants' knowledge of the program concepts by 15% at the conclusion of the workshop component using a brief test module as a measuring tool.



What does MISTA hope to accomplish?

MISTA in partnership with educators and social service organization leaders is working to address the epidemic of AIDS, other STDs and teen pregnancy among the area's youth. MISTA addresses many of the social concerns of young people offering positive alternatives and constructive activities to encourage young people to examine their life consider their options and prepare for a hopeful future. In addition, MISTA provides opportunities for leadership development and community outreach. Now a local program, MISTA aspires to be replicated nationwide by 2008 to affectively address the nation's youth across the United States.