

# Additional Acknowledgments

While this work incorporates elements of prior work from the PREP team, it is truly the largest single new effort to create a curriculum for a specific use that PREP has undertaken in over a decade.

Many people from many areas of expertise have worked to bring this new curriculum together. Some have provided ideas, input, and suggestions based on their research or teaching experience. Others, who work in or with program sites, have provided “insider” information and ideas regarding content as well as understanding regarding feasibility of service delivery. Still others have provided feedback and advice as the curriculum was piloted and refined.

Before listing those who have played a role in helping to develop these materials, we would note that PREP for Individuals, Inc. assumes all responsibility for the final content of the curriculum. We have taken the superb feedback of these folks, gladly, and acted on it, but the fact that any of these folks have given such feedback to us does not imply their endorsement or other allegiance on their part. What they have done was to willingly share their wisdom and insights. What we have done is, hopefully, be wise enough to fully benefit from those insights as we build Within My Reach.

These are people for whom our thanks cannot be expressed clearly or strongly enough.

## **Kathryn Edin**

A sociologist, Dr. Edin is among the preeminent scholars of our time who focuses on the relationship and family dynamics of those in poverty. The publication of her book—with Maria Kefalas, called *Promises I Can Keep*—is a watershed moment in helping others understand the unique (and at times, not so unique) forces shaping the family dynamics of many in America today. She is a sociologist whose passion for those in poverty extended to her own decision—with her family—to live within the poorest communities for several years as she conducted her ethnographic research to better understand the lives of those she so passionately cares about.

Dr. Edin’s influence throughout this curriculum was substantial. She was present at our initial meetings in Oklahoma where we determined the most important themes for the core curriculum to cover, and she was heavily involved in helping us shape the major themes and strategies of the curriculum from start to finish. She confirmed when we were on the right track, helped wave us off less useful paths, and helped make every major idea better and clearer.

## **George Young**

Rev. George Young, Sr., MA, M. Div, is Senior Pastor at Holy Temple Baptist Church in Oklahoma City and a Board Certified Chaplain by the Association of Professional Chaplains. In addition, he is a Clinical Member to the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education. He completed a Merrill Fellowship with Harvard Divinity School in 1966 and has worked extensively with the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative in promoting the institution of marriage and strengthening the bonds of communication between husband, wife and family. Rev. Young is also a trustee and an Adjunct Professor at Phillips Theological Seminary.

Rev. Young has extensive experience in community development, including work with a variety of economically disadvantaged groups. He has also worked for years to take the best practice materials in relationship and marriage education to those who seldom have exposure to such services, such as in housing communities, economic development settings, and TANF classes. Rev. Young provided key input at numerous times in the development of Within My Reach. He was able to lend his ideas and expertise to this project in ways that enhanced the relevance and impact on those for whom the material was designed to be most effective.

## **Women Who Have Been There**

For many years, Marline Pearson has been teaching classes of women and men who have similar backgrounds to one of the major audiences for this work, TANF recipients. Many of the individuals she has taught have remained in touch with her as they have progressed with their lives. As part of our process here, she gathered together a group of four women who provided regular, substantial feedback on the ideas as they were coming together in this curriculum. These women also helped write or refine many of the scenarios such as unrealistic expectations or the risks of sliding vs. deciding that are used in activities in the program. The themes for reaction and discussion in many of the activities are very real because they are, well, very real.

## **Anne Menard, Michael Johnson, and Other Experts on Domestic Violence**

Numerous domestic violence advocates not specifically named here have provided input to this work. In addition, national domestic violence advocacy leader Anne Menard and domestic violence researcher Michael Johnson of Pennsylvania State University have both provided a great deal of detailed, immensely valuable advice to us. We thank them, and all those giving us detailed feedback on this sensitive area (such as Kathy Edin), for their efforts on behalf of helping more people become safe.

As noted above, the publisher PREP for Individuals, Inc. takes full responsibility for the content of this curriculum, nevertheless, we have done the best job we know how to do to anticipate the safety needs of the clients for this curriculum.

### **Kristin Seefeldt**

Kristin Seefeldt of the University of Michigan has worked extensively with economically disadvantaged people for many years. Her role in evaluating a variety of programs has given her extensive experience and insight about the lives and experience of those who struggle with poverty. She is passionate about the importance of respecting the dignity and worth of all, and that these values be conveyed through and within programs designed to serve those in poverty. We asked her to read through many key units of this curriculum to both give us any general feedback she felt compelled to offer and specifically to highlight any places where we may have erred in inadvertently conveying less respect for the client than would be our desire. Her feedback was superb and very useful.

### **Tony Russell**

Tony Russell works for the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative, and among various duties, has been extensively involved in coordinating activities with program sites that work with TANF recipients. He has been immensely helpful to the development of this curriculum in that he helped coordinate many different types of meetings with providers and stakeholders in Oklahoma. This helped us refine our focus on the needs of the client in developing the curriculum. As such, he played a crucial role (and will likely continue to do so) in being a liaison between the prototypical client (Oklahoma Department of Human Services) and our team building the new curriculum. This is of immense value because our work needs to serve the needs of both the participants in the classes as well as the program administrators facilitating it.

Mr. Russell also took the lead in gathering data on TANF class participants about their relationships. This proved extremely useful in planning this curriculum as well as furthering OMI's understanding of the population they are serving in this regard. Further, he coordinated pilot classes for testing the new curriculum in May of 2005. These pilots were immensely valuable in the validation and refinement of the curriculum. Mr. Russell understands the needs of the sites well, and he made sure we were well-versed in those needs as we built the new curriculum for clients like the Oklahoma Department of Human Services.

## **Educators in Various Roles Working with Lower Income Clients in Oklahoma**

Various thoughtful persons have successfully adapted earlier, couple based versions of PREP for use with lower income couples/individuals (and fragile families), and we have benefited from their experiences over the years. We have interviewed frontline providers in the Health Department, Extension Services, and Department of Human Services (TANF class related) in Oklahoma with regard to their experiences using PREP materials with highly economically disadvantaged clients. This has provided us valuable information on what works well and what seems less useful. We received extensive feedback on the use of PREP from the following people who had been using these concepts in their work with low income clients in Oklahoma: Pam Varner (Extension Services, Stevens County), Ronda Archer (Department of Human Services, TANF services, Stevens County), Alesha Lilly, Ph.D. (Oklahoma State Department of Health, Child Guidance Service), and Teresa Baird, Ph.D. (Oklahoma State Department of Health, Child Guidance Service).

These individuals gave us considerable time and input based on their own extensive experiences, including in the use of PREP materials in their settings. Other practitioners participating in the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative have provided input on all manner of subjects relevant to serving low income populations. Most specifically, a group in the Guidance Division of the Oklahoma City County Health Department wrote a document about adapting the PREP curriculum to TANF class participants. Their insights were thoughtful and useful. The authors of that document are: Lois Pokorny, Ph.D., Sharon Wilson, M.Ed., LPC, LMFT, and Pam Collins, M.Ed., LPC, LMFT.

In the Fall of 2004, we met with two instructors in TANF orientation classes who had been noted by the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative to have been innovative in their relationship and marriage education efforts using elements of PREP. Those instructors were Carla Jenkins with Oklahoma State Dept of Health and Hazel Kesner, now retired. They provided very specific and valuable feedback related to the task we had set out to accomplish: building a curriculum that was highly tailored to the needs of lower income individuals related to their relationships.