

Our meeting with Dorothy was very productive. I was able to get the opportunity to ask Dorothy about a question that came up from my interview with Annett for our storytelling projects. I asked Dorothy about what she thinks may contribute to the decline of Alton to which she answered that basically there are a lot of factors that go into the declining population of Alton that would require lots of research to find a solid answer rather than assumptions. Dorothy also talked with us about how her current projects are going. She talked about Sister Circle and other programs at the YWCA that her and her peers are working on and how they are progressing.

This talk with Dorothy helped me to realize how I want to continue with our research. My hope is that our research team could help the YWCA create a new welfare program. Our research is currently centered around how mental health plays a part in violence, sexual education, and welfare programs within adolescents. I believe since we are partnered with the YWCA whose goal is to empower women and eliminate racism, I think it would be wise to focus on creating a program based on sexual education and teenage parenthood. This program would help educate teenagers about sex in a safe way and ways to prevent pregnancy and STDs. It can also be a program to help educate and support teenage parents who are deciding to keep and raise their child. It could teach them parental skills such as cooking for their children, how to do hairstyles, changing diapers, administering first aid and CPR, etc.

If we were to focus more on reducing violence, we as a research team could help the YWCA create a program for adolescents in which we are in charge of. The program could serve as a college preparation program for high schoolers, it could serve as a safe place for all adolescents, etc. An idea like this would give us the opportunity to work hands on with with YWCA to make this project happen rather than the sexual education program which the idea would just be given to the YWCA and they would be more responsible on making it since we are not professionally licenced to teach sexual education, and none of us are parents.