

# PREVENTING AIDS THROUGH LIVE MOVEMENT AND SOUND (PALMS)

Good Evidence – Risk Reduction

## INTERVENTION DESCRIPTION

### Target Population

- Male adolescents awaiting adjudication in juvenile justice facilities

### Goals of Intervention

- Increase condom use
- Reduce number of sex partners
- Increase HIV and condom use knowledge
- Improve attitudes toward HIV testing and persons living with HIV/AIDS

### Brief Description

*PALMS* is a group-level intervention delivered in three sessions to groups of 8 to 20 adolescents. It uses theatrical performance and role-play to deliver an innovative, theory-based HIV risk reduction intervention. Session 1 provides basic information about HIV transmission, epidemiology, and testing. A dramatic performance that explores relationship issues such as refusing sexual coercion, condom negotiation, and delaying sexual initiation and ends with an unresolved conflict. Session 2 involves HIV 101 Jeopardy, interactive discussion, and role-plays to practice communication, decision making, and negotiation skills. Session 3 includes interviews with the actors who stay in character to answer questions and take advice from participants, based on what participants have learned; performance of the resolution for the skit, based on participant advice; and condom demonstration, practice, and games.

### Theoretical Basis

- Health Belief Model
- Social Cognitive Theory

### Intervention Duration

- Three sessions delivered on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings during a single week

### Intervention Setting

- Juvenile justice facility

### Deliverer

- Health educator
- Co-facilitator
- Young, trained actors who reflect the racial/ethnic composition of the participants

### Delivery Methods

- Demonstration
- Discussion
- Dramatic performance
- Game
- Lecture/teach
- Modeling
- Practice
- Role play

### INTERVENTION PACKAGE INFORMATION

**An intervention package is not available at this time.** Please contact **Jennifer Lauby**, Public Health Management Corporation, 260 S. Broad Street, Suite 1800, Philadelphia, PA 19102.

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### EVALUATION STUDY AND RESULTS

The original evaluation was conducted in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania between March 2005 and May 2006.

#### Key Intervention Effects

- Increased condom use at last sex

#### Study Sample

The baseline study sample of 289 male adolescents awaiting adjudication in juvenile justice facilities is characterized by the following:

- 79% black or African American, 8% Hispanic/Latino, 6% white, 7% mixed/other
- 100% male
- 35% 12 – 14 years; 65% 15 – 18 years\*
- Mean years of completed education: 8.4

#### Recruitment Settings

Facilities for male adolescents awaiting adjudication and final placement in the juvenile justice system

#### Eligibility Criteria

Male adolescents were eligible if they were between 12 and 18 years of age, current residents in the recruitment facility, could read and speak English, and had not previously received the PALMS intervention.

#### Assignment Method

A nonrandomized allocation method was used to assign facility to study arm. A facility in West Philadelphia was selected as intervention site and a facility in North Philadelphia was chosen as a matched comparison site based on similarity of population served. The last two groups of adolescents who received the intervention were recruited from the comparison site to increase the sample size.

### **Comparison Group**

The comparison group received information on health, substance use, and sexual behavior provided to all adolescents in Philadelphia's juvenile justice facilities while awaiting adjudication. This information was delivered by community-based organizations.

### **Relevant Outcomes Measured and Follow-up Time**

- Sex behaviors (including number of sex partners during past 6 months with main and non-main female partners, and condom use at last sex with main and non-main female partners) were measured at baseline and 6 months post-intervention follow-up.

### **Participant Retention**

- PALMS
  - 82% retained at 6 months
- Comparison
  - 79% retained at 6 months

### **Significant Findings**

- Among those who reported a non-main female sex partner at 6 month follow-up, intervention participants were significantly more likely to report using a condom at last vaginal or anal sex with a non-main female partner than comparison participants at 6 months post-intervention (97% vs. 87%, Adj OR = 5.50, 95% CI = 1.05, 28.85,  $p = 0.047$ ). Results were similar when analyses adjusted for both age and education levels.
- Among adolescents 14 – 18 years of age at baseline, intervention participants were significantly more likely to report using a condom at last sex with a non-main female sex partner than comparison participants at 6 months post-intervention (98% vs. 85.5%,  $p = .021$ ).\*

### **Considerations**

- The sub-group analyses of adolescents 15 – 18 years of age at baseline as reported in the original paper did not meet criteria for sample size. Results were re-analyzed to include participants 14 – 18 years of age as reported above.
- Intervention and comparison sites were two sites within the Philadelphia corrections system that served similar populations of adjudicated youth. The two sites slightly differed in age and education; both adjusted for in analyses.
- Intervention participants were significantly more likely to report improvement in HIV knowledge, condom use knowledge, attitudes towards persons living with HIV, and attitudes towards HIV testing than comparison participants at 6 months post-intervention.
- There were no significant intervention effects at 6 months post-intervention on the number of total female sex partners or condom use at last sex with a main female sex partner.

### **\*Information obtained from author**

## REFERENCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Lauby, J. L., LaPollo, A. B., Herbst, J. H., Painter, T. M., Batson, H., Pierre, A., & Milnamow, M. (2010). [Preventing AIDS through live movement and sound: Efficacy of a theater-based HIV prevention intervention delivered to high-risk male adolescents in juvenile justice settings](#). *AIDS Education and Prevention*, 22, 402-416.

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