

INTENSIVE AIDS EDUCATION

Good Evidence – Risk Reduction

INTERVENTION DESCRIPTION

Target Population

- Incarcerated, male adolescent drug users

Goals of Intervention

- Eliminate or reduce HIV risk behaviors

Brief Description

Intensive AIDS Education is a four-session, small-group, interactive, AIDS education program based on problem solving therapy delivered to youth in jail. The intervention is delivered to small groups of 8 male inmates and focuses on relevant health education issues, emphasizing HIV/AIDS-related issues. The Problem-Solving Therapy approach is used to guide group discussions and includes the following steps: problem orientation, defining and formulating the problem, generating alternative solutions, decision-making, and implementing a solution. As part of the first step in the discussion – problem orientation – participants share and discuss facts and beliefs about HIV. Then, participants define and formulate the problem by identifying specific attitudes or behaviors that need to be modified in order to prevent against HIV. For generating alternative solutions, participants suggest and compile possible courses of action. During the decision-making step, participants critique and evaluate the alternative solutions. Finally, participants engage in role-play and rehearsal exercises to practice implementing the solution. Topics covered during the group discussions are general HIV education information, factors related to drug initiation or drug use, the meaning and consequences of sexual activity, and the relationship between drug use and sexual activity and HIV risk, and how to seek health care services, social services, and drug treatment.

Theoretical Basis

- Not reported

Intervention Duration

- Four 1-hour sessions delivered twice a week over a 2-week period

Intervention Setting

- New York City Department of Correction's Adolescent Reception and Detention Center, Rikers Island

Deliverer

- Male counselor

Delivery Methods

- Exercises
- Group discussion
- Problem solving therapy
- Role play

INTERVENTION PACKAGE INFORMATION

An intervention package is not available at this time. Please contact **Stephen Magura**, Western Michigan University, The Evaluation Center, 1903 W. Michigan Avenue, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008-5237.

Email: stephen.magura@wmich.edu for details on intervention materials.

EVALUATION STUDY AND RESULTS

The original evaluation was conducted at the New York City Department of Correction's Adolescent Reception and Detention Center on Rikers Island between 1991 and 1992.

Key Intervention Effects

- Increased condom use

Study Sample

The analytic study sample of 157 incarcerated adolescents is characterized by the following:

- 66% black or African American, 33% Hispanic/Latino, 2% white
- 100% male
- 95% heterosexual, 5% homosexual or bisexual
- Median age of 18 years, range: 16-19 years
- 41% attending school at time of arrest

Recruitment Settings

New York City Department of Correction's Adolescent Reception and Detention Center on Riker's Island

Eligibility Criteria

Male adolescent inmates were eligible if they were incarcerated in 11 dormitories at the New York City Department of Correction's Adolescent Reception and Detention Center.

Assignment Method

Participants (N = 411) were assigned to 1 of 2 groups: Intensive AIDS Education intervention (n = 110) or wait-list control (n = 301). The assignment was based on a convenience or logistical factor, that is, youth who could not be offered the intervention immediately after baseline were assigned to the wait-list control.

Comparison Group

The comparison was a wait-list control group, where those who could not attend the intervention immediately were placed on a waiting list, but were later released from jail or transferred before receiving the intervention.

Relevant Outcomes Measured and Follow-up Time

- Sex behaviors measured during time in the community since release from jail were: having multiple sex partners, having any high-risk sex partners, having any anal sex, and frequency of condom use during vaginal, oral, and anal sex.
- Outcomes were measured at a median of 10 months after baseline, which was a median of 5 months after release from jail, indicating a follow-up of at least 5 months (but less than 10 months).

Participant Retention

- Overall study sample
 - 66% retained at the 5-month or greater follow-up
- Intensive AIDS Education (retention not reported)
 - $\geq 60\%$ retained at the 5-month or greater follow-up (based on calculation; see Considerations)
- Waitlist control (retention not reported)
 - $\geq 65\%$ retained at the 5-month or greater follow-up (based on calculation; see Considerations)

Significant Findings

- Intervention participants reported a significantly greater frequency of condom use during vaginal sex than the control participants ($p = .02$, one-tailed test) at the 5-month or greater follow-up.

Considerations

- This intervention fails to meet the best-evidence criteria due to a potential small to moderate bias resulting from the assignment method, low retention rates, and using a one-tailed test.
- Intervention participants reported significantly greater frequencies of condom use during anal and oral sex ($p = .04$, one-sided test) and during general (vaginal, anal, and oral) sex ($p = .002$, one-sided test) compared to the control participants at the 5-month or greater follow-up.
- Intervention participants had significantly more favorable attitudes towards condoms than control participants ($p = .05$, one-tailed test) at the 5-month or greater follow-up.
- The separate retention rates for the intervention and control groups were not reported and the original data are no longer available. The author conducted back-calculations to try to establish these follow-up rates. Follow-up rates as low as 59% in either group would be inconsistent with the published statistics; thus, the rate must have been greater than 59% for both study groups. The author does not recall a follow-up rate of less than 60% for either group.
- The intervention and original research targeted male teens, including mostly youth aged 16 to 18, but the study sample also included a few 19 year olds who were in the detention center.

REFERENCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Magura, S., Kang, S. Y., & Shapiro, J. L. (1994). [Outcomes of intensive AIDS education for male adolescent drug users in jail](#). *Journal of Adolescent Health, 15*, 457-463.

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