

PROJECT RISE

Best Evidence – Risk Reduction

INTERVENTION DESCRIPTION

Goals of Intervention

- Reduce sexual risk behaviors

Target Population

- Black men who have sex with men and women (MSMW)

Brief Description

Project RISE is a six-session, individual-level intervention that uses an ecosystems approach to reducing sexual risk behavior. In the initial session, eco-mapping is used to develop a graphic depiction of the relationship between the participant and their social environment. This map is used throughout the remaining sessions to address strengths and stressors in various relationships. Life coaching techniques are used to help men work through problem areas and develop an action plan. The discussion of sexual relationships and HIV risk behaviors is introduced in the third session, after the counselor is familiar with the participant's eco-map and has established a rapport. Participants are offered HIV/STI testing at the end of the fourth session. The intervention is designed to address issues of stress and coping, experiences of discrimination and stigma due to race and sexual orientation, and other life concerns as well as sexual risk behavior.

Theoretical Basis

- Social Cognitive Theory
- Stress and Coping Theory
- Ecosystems approach

Intervention Duration

- Six, 90- to 120-minute weekly sessions over six weeks

Intervention Settings

- Community partner agency offices

Deliverer

- Trained counselors with backgrounds in psychology or social work

Delivery Methods

- Action plans
- Discussions
- Eco-mapping
- Life coaching

Structural Components

There are no structural components reported for this study.

INTERVENTION PACKAGE INFORMATION

An intervention package is not available at this time. Please contact **Mary Milnamow**, Research & Evaluation Group, Public Health Management Corporation, 1500 Market Street, Suite 1500, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19102.

Email: marym@phmc.org for details on intervention materials.

EVALUATION STUDY AND RESULTS

Study Location

The original evaluation study was conducted in Philadelphia, PA between 2010 and 2012.

Key Intervention Effects

- Reduced number of sex partners
- Reduced number of condomless sexual episodes (anal and vaginal)

Recruitment Settings

Modified chain referral sampling, flyers, newspaper ads

Eligibility Criteria

Men living in either Philadelphia or within the Philadelphia metropolitan region were eligible if they were at least 18 years old; reported having anal, vaginal, or oral sex with both male and female partners in the past 12 months; had at least two sexual partners regardless of gender in the past three months; had an instance of anal or vaginal sex without condoms in the past three months; and self-identified as black or African American. Men who reported any injection drug use in the past 12 months were not eligible.

Study Sample

The analytic study sample of 143 men is characterized by the following:

- *100% black or African American*
- *72% bisexual, 11% heterosexual, 11% unsure/questioning/other, 6% gay*
- *Mean age of 44.9 years, ages ranged from 21 to 61 years*
- *49% completed high school/GED, 34% completed greater than high school/GED, 17% completed less than high school*

Assignment Method

Study participants (N = 165) were randomized to 1 of 2 study arms: Project RISE (n = 72) or a single-session standardized HIV risk-reduction intervention with a counselor (n = 93).

Comparison

The standardized, individual-level HIV risk-reduction intervention consisted of one 60-minute session delivered by the community partner staff. The content focused on an assessment of HIV risk and a discussion of ways to reduce or eliminate risk. Participants were offered HIV/STI testing. The content was not tailored to MSMW.

Relevant Outcomes Measured

- Sex behaviors (including number of male and female sex partners; the number of condomless anal sexual episodes with male partners; number of condomless vaginal or anal sexual episodes with female partners during the past 3 months) were measured at 8 weeks post-baseline and 5 months post-baseline follow-ups (which translates to 1 week after the intervention and 3 months after the intervention).

Participant Retention

- Project RISE:
 - 87% retained at 1 week after intervention
 - 86% retained at 3 months after intervention
- One session HIV risk-reduction session:
 - 93% retained at 1 week after intervention
 - 87% retained at 3 months after intervention

Significant Findings on Relevant Outcomes

- Intervention participants reported a significantly greater reduction in total number of female sex partners than control participants at 5 months post-baseline (3 months after intervention) ($b = -0.949$, $\beta = -0.114$, $p = 0.045$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.600$) [adjusted for: HIV status, baseline # of female partners, age].
- Intervention participants reported a significantly greater reduction in the total number of male and female sex partners combined than control participants at 5 months post-baseline (3 months after intervention) ($b = -1.840$, $\beta = -0.122$, $p = 0.041$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.558$) [adjusted for: HIV status, baseline # of sex partners, age].
- Intervention participants were significantly more likely to reduce condomless sex with male partners than control participants at 5 months post-baseline (3 months after intervention) (69.4% vs. 46.9%, $p = 0.022$) [unadjusted].
- Intervention participants were significantly more likely to reduce condomless sex with male and female partners combined than control participants at 5 months post-baseline (3 months after intervention) (80.6% vs. 61.7%, $p = 0.036$) [unadjusted].
- Intervention participants were significantly more likely to report a large decrease (using 'no change or increase' as the reference category) in condomless anal and vaginal sex episodes with female partners than control participants at 5 months post-baseline (3 months after intervention) (Relative Risk Ratio (RRR) = 3.60, 95% CI = 1.05 – 12.41, $p = 0.042$) [adjusted for: HIV status, # of episodes at baseline, age].
- Intervention participants were significantly more likely to report a large decrease (using 'no change or increase' as the reference category) in condomless anal and vaginal sex episodes with male and female partners than control participants at 5 months post-baseline (3 months after intervention) (RRR = 3.39, 95% CI = 1.24 – 9.26, $p = 0.017$) [adjusted for: HIV status, # of episodes at baseline, age].
- Intervention participants were significantly more likely to report a small/moderate decrease (using 'no change or increase' as the reference category) in condomless anal and vaginal sex episodes with male and female partners combined than control participants at 5 months post-baseline (3 months after intervention) (RRR = 3.32, 95% CI = 1.27 – 8.67, $p = 0.014$) [adjusted for: HIV status, # of episodes at baseline, age].

Considerations

- There were no significant intervention effects at 5 months post-baseline (3 months after intervention) on number of male sex partners.

Funding

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REFERENCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Lauby, J., Milnamow, M., Joseph, H. A., Hitchcock, S., Carson, L., Pan, Y., Mendoza, M., & Millett, G. (2018). [Evaluation of Project RISE, an HIV prevention intervention for black bisexual men using an ecosystems approach](#). *AIDS and Behavior*, 22(1) 164-177.

Researcher: **Mary Milnamow**

Research & Evaluation Group
Public Health Management Corporation
1500 Market Street, Suite 1500
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Email: marym@phmc.org

