

¡CUÍDATE! (TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF)

Best Evidence – Risk Reduction

INTERVENTION DESCRIPTION

Target Population

- Latino youth

Goals of Intervention

- Increase skills and self-efficacy in negotiating abstinence and condom use
- Increase abstinence
- Increase condom use

Brief Description

¡Cuidate! (Take Care of Yourself) is a small-group, culturally based intervention to reduce HIV sexual risk among Latino youth. The intervention consists of six 60-minute modules delivered to small, mixed-gender groups. *¡Cuidate!* incorporates salient aspects of Latino culture, including familialism (i.e., the importance of family) and gender-role expectations (i.e., *machismo*, which is described as the man's responsibility in caring for and protecting one's partner and family). These cultural beliefs are used to frame abstinence and condom use as culturally accepted and effective ways to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. Through the use of role plays, videos, music, interactive games and hands-on practice, *¡Cuidate!* addresses the building of HIV knowledge, understanding vulnerability to HIV infection, identifying attitudes and beliefs about HIV and safe sex, and increasing self-efficacy and skills for correct condom use, negotiating abstinence, and negotiating safer sex practices. The intervention curriculum is available in English and Spanish.

Theoretical Basis

- Social Cognitive Theory
- Theory of Reasoned Action
- Theory of Planned Behavior

Intervention Duration

- Six 60-minute modules delivered over two consecutive Saturdays

Intervention Setting

- Northeast Philadelphia schools (on the weekends)

Deliverer

- Trained adult facilitators, bilingual in English and Spanish

Delivery Methods

- Demonstrations
- Group discussion
- Lecture
- Video/music
- Games
- Practice
- Role play

INTERVENTION PACKAGE INFORMATION

Information, tools, and materials on the *¡Cuidate!* Intervention are available online at <https://effectiveinterventions.cdc.gov/>. In August 2013, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention (DHAP) **announced** that in accordance with its High Impact Prevention approach, DHAP will focus its behavioral intervention portfolio on interventions that are cost-effective, scalable and prioritize prevention for persons living with HIV and those persons at highest risk for acquiring HIV. *¡Cuidate!* **will no longer be funded by DHAP** for diffusion, adoption, and implementation, but the online resources continue to be available.

Additionally this intervention is available through [Select Media, Inc.](#)

EVALUATION STUDY AND RESULTS

The original evaluation study was conducted in Philadelphia, PA between 2000 and 2003.

Key Intervention Effects

- Reduced sexual activity
- Reduced number of sex partners
- Reduced unprotected sex
- Increased condom use

Study Sample

The baseline study sample of 553 Latino youth is characterized by the following:

- *100% Hispanic/Latino (85% Puerto Rican)*
- *55% female, 45% male*
- *Mean age of 15 years, range: 13-18 years*
- *Median education of 9th grade*

Recruitment Settings

Three Philadelphia high schools and community-based organizations within the same neighborhoods

Eligibility Criteria

Youth were eligible if they were between 13 and 18 years old and provided assent and parental consent. Non-Latino youth (n = 103) were not excluded from participating in the intervention but were excluded from statistical analyses.

Assignment Method

Youth (N = 656) were randomly assigned to 1 of 2 groups: *iCuidate!* (n = 312) or the Health Promotion comparison (n = 344).

Comparison Group

The Health Promotion comparison intervention focused on behaviors related to health issues affecting Latino youth, including diet; exercise and physical activity; and cigarette, alcohol, and drug use. Latino cultural values were presented to support positive health behaviors.

Relevant Outcomes Measured and Follow-up Time

- Sex behaviors during past 3 months (including ever had sex, number of days had sex, frequency of sex, number of days of unprotected sex, number of sex partners, and frequency of condom use) were measured at 3-, 6-, and 12-month follow-ups.

Participant Retention

- *iCuidate!*
 - 82% retained at 3 months
 - 81% retained at 6 months
 - 79% retained at 12 month
- Health Promotion comparison
 - 86% retained at 3 months
 - 85% retained at 6 months
 - 84% retained at 12 months

Significant Findings

- Across the three follow-ups, intervention participants were significantly less likely to report sexual intercourse ($p < .05$) and multiple partners ($p < .05$) and reported fewer days of unprotected sexual intercourse ($p < .05$) compared to comparison participants.
- Among those sexually active at baseline, intervention participants were more likely to report using condoms consistently across the three follow-ups when compared to comparison participants ($p < .05$).
- Among sexually inexperienced adolescents at baseline, intervention participants reported significantly fewer days of unprotected sex across the three follow-ups than comparison participants ($p < .05$).
- Among Spanish speakers, intervention participants reported a greater proportion of protected sex ($p < .01$) and were more likely to have used a condom at last sex ($p < .05$), across the three follow-ups, than comparison participants.

Considerations

- In the article by Villarruel et al. (2006), errors occurred in the symbol keys of Figures 2, 3, and 4 on page 775. The keys should have indicated that the squares represent the health promotion group and the diamonds represent the *iCuidate!* HIV risk reduction intervention. The corrected figures can be found in the Erratum (Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 2006. 160(11): 1187).
- The development of this intervention was based on [Be Proud! Be Responsible!](#), an intervention targeting African American youth and tested originally with inner-city African American male youth.

REFERENCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Villarruel, A. M., Jemmott, J. B., & Jemmott, L. S. (2006). [A randomized controlled trial testing an HIV prevention intervention for Latino youth](#). *Archives of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine*, 160, 1-6.

Villarruel, A. M., Jemmott, L. S., & Jemmott, J. B. (2005). [Designing a culturally based intervention to reduce HIV sexual risk for Latino adolescents](#). *Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care*, 16, 23-31.

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