

# HOLA EN GRUPOS

## Best Evidence – Risk Reduction

### INTERVENTION DESCRIPTION

#### Target Population

- Hispanic/Latino men who have sex with men (MSM)

#### Goals of Intervention

- Increase consistent condom use
- Increase HIV testing

#### Brief Description

*HOLA en Grupos* is a group-level intervention delivered in four interactive modules. Module 1 provides information on HIV/STIs, the impact of these diseases on Hispanic/Latino MSM, HIV/STI transmission, HIV/STI prevention strategies, and health care access including HIV testing. Module 2 includes activities designed to teach participants how to protect themselves and their partners from HIV/STIs. Participants practice new skills such as condom use negotiation and correct condom use. Module 3 addresses how Hispanic/Latino cultural values such as machismo and fatalism can affect sexual health. Participants are also given information about locally available HIV/STI-related services and how to overcome challenges they may face when accessing these services. Module 4 reviews all previously covered concepts and includes a testimonial DVD to prompt discussion on what it is like to live with HIV.

#### Theoretical Basis

- Empowerment Education
- Social Cognitive Theory
- Traditional Hispanic/Latino cultural values

#### Intervention Duration

- Four 4-hour sessions delivered over four weeks

#### Intervention Setting(s)

- Community organizations
- Business meeting space

#### Deliverer

- A pair of trained interventionists who are Hispanic/Latino gay men

#### Delivery Methods

- Discussion
- DVD vignettes and testimonials
- Lecture
- Skills building

### 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 **Scott D. Rhodes**, Department of Social Sciences and Health Policy, Wake Forest School of Medicine, Division of Public Health Sciences, Medical Center Boulevard, Winston-Salem, NC 27157-1063.

Email: [srhodes@wakehealth.edu](mailto:srhodes@wakehealth.edu) for details on intervention materials.

## EVALUATION STUDY AND RESULTS

The original evaluation was conducted in Charlotte and Greenville, NC between 2012 and 2015.

### Key Intervention Effects

- Increased consistent condom use

### Study Sample

The baseline study sample of 304 participants is characterized by the following:

- *100% Hispanic/Latino*
- *100% assigned male at birth*
- *66% gay, 23% bisexual, 6% male-to-female transgender, 5% heterosexual*
- *Mean age of 30 years, standard deviation = 8.9 years; range of values: 18-55 years*
- *56% completed high school education or GED equivalent*

### Recruitment Settings

Word-of-mouth, posters at gay bars and clubs, community colleges, Hispanic/Latino-owned businesses, community events, mass media (i.e., newspaper and radio), social media

### Eligibility Criteria

Men were eligible if they identified as a Hispanic/Latino male or transgender person, were aged 18 years or older, spoke Spanish, and reported sexual contact with a male since turning 18. Self-reported HIV-positive serostatus was not an exclusion criteria.

### Assignment Method

MSM (N = 304) were randomized to 1 of 2 study arms: HOLA en Grupos Intervention (n = 152) or a general health education comparison (n = 152).

### **Comparison Group**

The general health education comparison consisted of four 4-hour sessions and focused on health topics of identified need and priority among Hispanic/Latino MSM. These topics included: prostate, lung, and colorectal cancer; diabetes; high cholesterol; cardiovascular disease; and alcohol misuse. The comparison was delivered by a trained gay Hispanic/Latino male interventionist. It was interactive and included didactic learning, videos, and facilitated group discussions.

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

Sex behaviors including consistent condom use during receptive and insertive anal sex with men and insertive vaginal and anal sex with women during the past 3 months were measured at the 6 month follow up.

### **Participant Retention**

- HOLA en Grupos intervention:
  - 100% retained at 6 months
  
- General health education comparison:
  - 100% retained at 6 months

### **Significant Findings**

- Intervention participants were significantly more likely than comparison participants to report consistent condom use during receptive and insertive anal sex with men and insertive vaginal and anal sex with women at 6 months post-intervention (aOR = 4.12; 95% CI 2.16 - 7.87,  $p < .001$ ).
- Among participants who reported sex with men only, intervention participants were significantly more likely than comparison participants to report consistent condom use during receptive and insertive anal sex at 6 months post-intervention (aOR = 3.94; 95% CI 1.94 - 8.00,  $p < .001$ ).

### **Considerations**

- Additional significant non-relevant behavioral outcomes were found:
  - Intervention participants were significantly more likely than comparison participants to report HIV testing at 6 months post-intervention.
  - Among participants who reported sex with men only, intervention participants were significantly more likely than comparison participants to report HIV testing at 6 months post-intervention.

### **Funding**

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## REFERENCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

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