

# NO EXCUSES/SIN BUSCAR EXCUSAS

## Best Evidence – Risk Reduction

### INTERVENTION DESCRIPTION

#### Target Population

- High-risk<sup>‡</sup>, Latino men who have sex with men (MSM)

#### Goals of Intervention

- Increase condom use
- Increase HIV testing

#### Brief Description

*No Excuses/Sin Buscar Excusas* is a single-session, culturally congruent, video-based intervention. Small groups of Latino MSM (4 to 9 men) view a soap-opera style video in English or Spanish that models common risks, relationships, sexual safety, condom use, partner negotiation, HIV testing, and HIV-status disclosure. Interactive group discussion following the video reinforces HIV-prevention messages and encourages participants to talk about problems they have experienced and strategies to increase safer sex. Participants also receive information on varieties of condoms available and how features can be matched to personal needs. A selection of free condoms and an HIV test are offered to participants at the end of the intervention.

#### Theoretical Basis

- Social Cognitive Theory

#### Intervention Duration

- One 45-minute session

#### Intervention Setting

- AIDS service organization and a community health center

#### Deliverer

- Peer counselor

#### Delivery Methods

- Group discussion
- Printed materials
- Risk-reduction supplies
- Skills building
- Video

### INTERVENTION PACKAGE INFORMATION

For information on training and intervention-related materials, please visit [CDC's HIV Effective Interventions website](#).

## EVALUATION STUDY AND RESULTS

The original evaluation was conducted in New York City, New York between 2008 and 2009.

### Key Intervention Effects

- Reduced unprotected anal sex†
- Increased condom use

### Study Sample

The baseline study sample of 370 Latino MSM is characterized by the following:

- 100% Hispanic/Latino
- 100% male
- 64% gay, 30% bisexual, 6% other (e.g., questioning, straight)
- 98% HIV-negative/status unknown, 2% HIV-positive (based on self-report)
- Mean age of 37 years
- 22% did not complete high school, 35% graduated high school or obtained a GED, 26% completed some college, 16% completed college

### Recruitment Settings

Street outreach, listservs, and marketing through an AIDS service organization and a community health center.

### Eligibility Criteria

MSM were eligible if they self-identified as Latino, had sex with 2 or more partners in the last 3 months, had unprotected anal sex† with a male in the last 3 months, were HIV-negative or status unknown, and had no exposure to HIV prevention education (research or non-research) in the last 6 months.

### Assignment Method

Latino MSM (N = 370) were randomized to 1 of 2 study arms: No Excuses/*Sin Buscar Excusas* (n = 190) or a comparison (n = 180).

### Comparison Group

The comparison group was offered an HIV test after completion of baseline surveys.

### Relevant Outcomes Measured and Follow-up Time

- Sexual risk behaviors in the past 3 months (including total number of unprotected anal sex acts† with the last 2 male partners, and condom use at last sex with a male partner) were measured at baseline and 3 months post-intervention.

### Participant Retention

- No Excuses/*Sin Buscar Excusas* Intervention
  - 93% retained at 3 months
- Comparison
  - 94% retained at 3 months

### Significant Findings

- Across the two assessments (baseline and 3 months), intervention participants reported a significantly greater decrease in the total number of unprotected anal sex acts<sup>†</sup> with their last 2 male partners than comparison participants ( $F = 4.10$ ,  $p = 0.04$ ).
- Intervention participants were significantly more likely to report using condoms at last sex than comparison participants at 3 months post-intervention (Adj OR = 1.69, 95% CI = 1.02, 2.81,  $p = 0.04$ ).
- Among MSM who were 40 years or younger ( $n = 208$ ), intervention participants were significantly more likely to report condom use at last sex (42.4% vs. 31.7%,  $p < 0.05$ ) and significantly less likely to report condomless sex with their last 2 male partners (14.8% vs. 25.1%,  $p < 0.05$ ), relative to comparison participants at 3 months post-intervention.

### Considerations

- *No Excuses/Sin Buscar Excusas* is an adaptation of VOICES/VOCES, a single-session intervention to reduce risky sex behaviors among black or African American and Hispanic/Latino heterosexual adults.
- Among the subgroup of MSM who were 40 years or younger ( $n = 208$ ), intervention participants were significantly more likely to report getting an HIV test ( $p < 0.05$ ) and to report positive condom attitudes ( $p < 0.05$ ) relative to comparison participants at 3 months post-intervention.

‡High risk defined as being HIV-negative or HIV-status unknown, having condomless anal sex with a male partner, and having multiple sex partners

†Unprotected sex measured as sex without a condom

## REFERENCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

O'Donnell, L., Stueve, A., Joseph, H. A., & Flores, S. (2014). [Adapting the VOICES HIV behavioral intervention for Latino men who have sex with men](#). *AIDS and Behavior*, 18, 767-775.

**Researcher: Lydia O'Donnell**

Education Development Center, Inc.  
43 Foundry Avenue  
Waltham, MA 02453-8313

Email: [lodonnell@edc.org](mailto:lodonnell@edc.org)

