



The SISTA Project

A Peer-Led Program to Prevent HIV Infection Among African-American Young Women

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FOCUS

- Injection Drug Users & Their Non-injecting Partners
- Gay/Bisexual Men
- STD Clinic Clients
- Women
- Minority Specific
- Other

ORIGINAL SITE

- Community-Based
- Clinic-Based

APPROACH

- Behavioral Skills Development
- Community Outreach
- Condom Education/Access
- HIV/STD Education
- Needle Cleaning/Exchange
- Self Efficacy/Self-Esteem

COMPONENTS

- Behavioral Skills Practice
- Group Discussion
- HIV Antibody Testing/Counseling
- Lectures

SUMMARY

THE SISTA PROJECT is a gender relevant and culturally appropriate social skills training intervention for African-American women. Designed for implementation in a community-based setting, the five-session group program emphasizes ethnic and gender pride, HIV risk-reduction information, sexual negotiation skills, proper condom use, and the development of partner norms supportive of consistent condom use. Group discussion, lecture, role play and written homework are used to enhance retention. Social cognitive theory and the theory of gender and power provide the intervention's theoretical foundation. The curriculum focuses on gender roles, commitment to a relationship and how a woman's perceived lack of power in a relationship may affect her willingness to implement consistent HIV risk reduction behaviors

The intervention was originally implemented in 1993. There were 128 women in the study who were approached and screened for participation in public laundry facilities, beauty parlors, grocery stores, the local Social Security and unemployment offices, health clinics, and the Aid to Families with Dependent Children office in a San Francisco neighborhood. Overall, the researchers determined that a culturally sensitive, gender relevant HIV risk-reduction program that incorporates social skills training and is offered in a community-based setting can increase consistent condom use.

SUITABLE FOR USE IN

This program is suitable for use in community organizations that provide education and/or services to sexually active, African-American women.

ORIGINAL INTERVENTION SAMPLE

Age, Gender

- Peer Counseling/Instruction
- Role Play
- Safer Sex Communication/Negotiation
- Video
- Other: Homework

ages ranged from 18-29, 100% female

Race/Ethnicity

100% African-American

PROGRAM LENGTH

The five weekly program sessions are designed to last two hours each. The original intervention also included two unstructured "booster" sessions (scheduled at two and four months after completion of the intervention) which provided an opportunity for program participants to ask further questions and provide peer support.

STAFFING REQUIREMENTS/TRAINING

THE SISTA PROJECT is facilitated by a team of two peer health educators.

HAPPA PROGRAM PACKAGE

The HAPPA Program Package for this program includes:

- ▶ *The SISTA Project* User's Guide
- ▶ Facilitator's Manual
- ▶ *...It's Like This* videotape
- ▶ Activity Masters packets (5)
- ▶ HAPPA Evaluation Assistance Kit (includes the Evaluation Questionnaire)
- ▶ Original Evaluation Instrument
- ▶ Process Evaluation Instrument
- ▶ HAPPA Adaptation Workbook

- ▶ Telephone technical support on implementation and evaluation for 1 year