POPULAR OPINION LEADER

A Community AIDS/HIV Risk Reduction Program
FACT SHEET

Program Overview
POL is a community-level HIV prevention intervention designed to identify, enlist, and train opinion leaders to encourage safer sexual norms and behaviors within their social networks of friends and acquaintances through risk reduction conversations.

Core Elements
The core elements of POL include:

- Intervention is directed to an identifiable target population in well-defined community venues and where the population's size can be estimated.
- Ethnographic techniques are systematically used to identify segments of the target population and to identify those persons who are most popular, well-liked, and trusted by others in the each population segment.
- Over the life of the program, 15% of the target population size found in intervention venues is trained as POLs.
- The program teaches POLs skills for initiating HIV risk reduction messages to friends and acquaintances during everyday conversations.
- The training program teaches POLs characteristics of effective behavior change communication messages targeting risk reduction attitudes, norms, intentions and self efficacy. In conversations, POLs personally endorse the benefits of safer behavior and recommend practical steps needed to implement change.
- Groups of POLs meeting together weekly in sessions that use instruction, facilitator modeling, and extensive role play exercises to help POLs refine their skills and gain confidence in delivering effective HIV prevention messages to others. Groups are small enough to provide extensive practice opportunities for all POLs to shape their communication skills and create comfort in delivering conversational messages.
- POLs set goals to engage in risk reduction conversations with friends and acquaintances in the targeted population between weekly sessions.
- POLs conversational outcomes are reviewed, discussed, and reinforced at subsequent training sessions.
- Logos, symbols, or other devices are used as "conversation starters" between the POLs and others.

Target Population
POL can be used with various at-risk populations in a variety of venues. POL has been tested with gay men in bars, African American women in low-income housing settings, and male commercial sex workers.

Program Materials

- Intervention implementation manual
- Instructional video
- Materials to conduct POL trainings
- Materials to manage and evaluate the program

For More Information on Popular Opinion Leader
To place your name on a list for a future training, please visit our website www.effectiveinterventions.org. If you do not have access to the web, you may also call (866) 532-9565 or email interventions@danya.com.

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