

PROJECT START

An Individual-level Intervention for People being Released from a Correctional Facility and Returning to the Community FACT SHEET

Program Overview

Project START is an individual-level, multi-session intervention for people being released from a correctional facility and returning to the community. It is based on the conceptual framework of Incremental Risk Reduction, and focuses on increasing clients' awareness of their HIV, STI, and Hepatitis risk behaviors after release and providing them with tools and resources to reduce their risk.

Core Elements

The Core Elements of Project START are:

- Hold program sessions with clients transitioning back to the community from a correctional setting prior to release and continue sessions with the client after they are released into the community.
- Use a client-focused, personalized, incremental risk reduction approach.
- Use assessment and documentation tools to provide a structured program.
- Staff program with people who are familiar with HIV, STI, and hepatitis prevention activities and who are familiar with the specific needs of people being released from correctional settings.
- Staff-client relationships developed during pre release sessions must be maintained during post release sessions to promote client trust. Thus, the same staff member should conduct both pre-release and post-release sessions with his or her clients.

- Conduct enrollment and schedule two pre-release sessions within 2 months before a client's release.
- Schedule four post-release sessions. Hold the first session as soon as possible, ideally within 48 hours of release. The next three sessions should be spaced out over 3 months after release.
- Provide condoms at each post-release session.
- Actively maintain contact with clients, using individual-based outreach and program flexibility to determine the best time and place to meet with them.

Target Population

Project START is for *any individual* who is being released from a correctional facility back into the community.

Program Materials

- Program Implementation Manual
- Starter Guide
- Technical Assistance Guide

Research Results

In the original research, fewer men reported unprotected sex at six months after release from the correctional facility.

For More Information on Project START

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.

Wolitski, R.J. and the Project START Writing Group, for the Project START Study Group. (2006). Relative Efficacy of a Multi-session Sexual Risk-Reduction Intervention for Young Men Released from Prisons in 4 States. *American Journal of Public Health*, 96(10), 1854-1861.