

## **SAFETY COUNTS: Risk Reduction Interview**

**Description and Administration.** The Risk Reduction Interview is a means for rapidly assessing the current status of intervention participants' adoption of behavioral strategies to reduce the risk of acquiring or transmitting HIV and viral hepatitis. Seven sexual risk reduction behaviors, six drug-related risk reduction behaviors, and two counseling and testing behaviors are included in the interview. These behaviors are consistent with the individualized risk reduction goals set by participants during Group Session Two and the Individual Counseling Session. The Risk Reduction Interview usually takes around 15 minutes to complete.

This instrument should be administered to each participant at the time of enrollment in *SAFETY COUNTS*, before the first Group Session. It is recommended that it be administered a second time four months following enrollment, after participants have completed all program sessions and activities. This Risk Reduction Interview should *not* be administered during the delivery of *SAFETY COUNTS* intervention activities, including Social Events and Follow-up Contacts. It should be administered by itself, preferably on a different day from any intervention activities.

This structured interview must be conducted on an individual basis with each client. The Risk Reduction Interview cannot be used in a group setting, and it is unsuitable for self-administration by clients. The one-on-one interview format enables the interviewer to assess the internal consistency of the client's responses and provide corrective guidance as needed. Instructions for conducting the Risk Reduction Interview are provided on the interview form (reproduced at the end of this section). Additional details are given in the Program Enrollment Session Guide (Part III of this manual).

The Risk Reduction Interview is used to measure the progress made by individuals in achieving the personal risk reduction goals they have identified for themselves, as well as risk reduction progress they may have made in non-goal areas. Current risk reduction status in each of the 15 areas assessed is expressed numerically on a scale from 0 to 18. Lower numbers indicate earlier stages of behavioral adoption and higher numbers reflect later stages. The later stages, especially action and maintenance, reflect greater success in adopting a specific risk reduction behavior.

This Risk Reduction Interview is the primary outcome monitoring instrument provided for *SAFETY COUNTS*. It can be used to demonstrate the success of the program to your funders. Depending on your agency's needs and the requirements from your funding source, you may choose to use this instrument as a pre- and post-test evaluation to monitor the progress of clients. The two completed interviews can be scored (see new scoring system table below) and compared to assess whether the client has moved from one stage to a higher stage during the individual's time in *SAFETY COUNTS*. While individuals who participate in *SAFETY COUNTS* tend to show positive changes in more than one area of risk, the greatest changes usually occur in the area of their personal risk reduction goal.

**Scoring.** Each of the 15 risk reduction behaviors is scored separately. To do this, find the total number of points earned in each block (behavior) by adding together the numerical scores for the statements in that block. Ignore any statements that do not have check marks. Count 2 points for

each statement checked “Yes,” 1 point for each “Somewhat,” and 0 points for each “No.” There is a maximum possible score of 18 points for each risk reduction behavior.

Scores may be interpreted in relation to the five stages of change as shown in the following table. The score ranges are suggestive rather than exact, but they do provide a general indication of the position of individuals on the widely used stages-of-change continuum.

#### NEW SCORING

Score	Stage Name
0	Pre-contemplation
<b>1-8</b>	<b>Contemplation</b>
<b>9-14</b>	<b>Preparation</b>
15-17	Action
18	Maintenance

*NOTE:* As of August 2006 we have established a new scoring system that supersedes prior scoring. Agencies must use the new scoring scale to assess behavioral move. Please see above table especially on **Contemplation=1-8; Preparation 9-14;** vs. old scale: Contemplation=1-7; Preparation=8-14).

## Sample Responses and Scoring Example for One Behavior

(X's Indicate Client's Responses Obtained during the Risk Reduction Interview)

8. Not sharing needles <i>(Skip if no injection drug use last 90 days: Q4=No)</i>	Score _____	Yes (2)	Somewhat (1)	No (0)
I believe doing this can keep me from getting or giving HIV or hepatitis.		X		
Doing this has more positives than negatives in my mind.		X		
I believe that I am ready to do this.		X		
I am confident in my ability to do this.		X		
I have planned how to go about doing this.			X	
I have tried doing this in the last 30 days.		X		
I have been able to do this in the last 30 days.		X		
I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days.			X	
I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this for the next six months.				X

*Calculation of score for this risk reduction behavior:*

6 "Yes" responses	@ 2 points each	= 12 points
2 "Somewhat" responses	@ 1 point each	= 2 points
1 "No" response	@ 0 points each	= <u>0</u> points
Total Score		14 points

*Response consistency check:*

The client's responses show a satisfactory degree of consistency in that there are no reversals in the pattern of yes-no responses going from Statement 1 ("I believe doing this can keep me from getting HIV...") to Statement 9 ("I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this..."). In other words, there are no instances where a "No" response on an earlier statement is followed by a "Yes" response on a later statement. The "Somewhat" response, instead of a "Yes," that is checked for Statement 5 ("I have planned how to go about doing this") is considered a minor deviation from the ideal pattern.

*Stage of change:*

Using the scoring table at the end of the Risk Reduction Interview, a score of 14 points places the client at the high end of Stage 3, "Taking Steps" (Preparation).

Client Name or ID \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Risk Reduction Interview

**Instructions to Interviewer:** This instrument is intended to be administered individually to each client using an interview format. Read each question or statement to the client exactly as it is written. **Do not change the wording of the items.** Text that should be read aloud to the client is shown in bold. Record the client's responses by checking the appropriate box following each question or statement. **Some of the 15 risk reduction behaviors may be skipped, as determined by the client's responses to the four general risk questions that are administered first.**

For each one of the risk reduction behaviors listed, read the behavior aloud to the client (e.g., "using condoms for vaginal sex," then read each of the nine statements below it and mark "Yes," "Somewhat," or "No" for each statement according to the client's response. **Do not let the client fill out the form him or herself.** Be sure that the client responds to all of the statements in each block that is administered. As each block of statements is administered, check for obvious inconsistencies in responding (e.g., saying "No" to "I have tried doing this in the last 90 days," and "Yes" to "I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days"), and bring these to the attention of the client. Resolve response inconsistencies as they are encountered.

**Interviewer Read Aloud:** This is a brief questionnaire to find out where you stand in reducing your personal risks of getting or giving HIV and viral hepatitis. It will take about 15 minutes to complete. I am going to describe some different ways of reducing HIV and hepatitis risk, and then for each way I am going to read aloud a list statements that go along with it. I want you to tell me how much you agree or disagree with each statement by saying "Yes," "Somewhat," or "No" as I read it to you. I'll help you with the first few—you'll see it's really easy once we get going. Before we get started, I need to ask you a few quick questions to get a general idea of your risk situation:

- 1. Have you had vaginal sex in the last 90 days?  Yes  No
- 2. Have you had anal sex in the last 90 days?  Yes  No
- 3. Have you had sex of any kind with another person in the last 90 days?  Yes  No
- 4. Have you used injection drugs in the last 90 days?  Yes  No

Good, here is the first way of reducing HIV or hepatitis risk. *(Read the risk reduction behavior aloud.)*

Now, tell me how much you agree or disagree with the following statement: *(Read the first opinion statement aloud.)* Say "Yes" if you agree with the statement and believe it is true for you, "No" if you disagree with the statement and believe it is not true for you, and "Somewhat" if your opinion is somewhere in between. So, for the statement I have just read, would you say "Yes," "No," or "Somewhat" so far as *[risk reduction behavior]* is concerned for you?

Now, here is the next statement. Tell me "Yes," "No," or "Somewhat," depending on how you believe it applies to you. *(Read the second opinion statement aloud. Follow the same procedure for the remaining seven statements.)*

Here is another risk reduction behavior. *(Read the second risk reduction behavior aloud.)* After I read it, I'm going to read the same statements again and ask you to tell me "Yes," "No," or "Somewhat" for each one. *(Follow the same procedure for the remaining risk reduction behaviors.)*

1. Using condoms for vaginal sex <i>(Skip if no vaginal sex last 90 days: Q1=No)</i>	Score ____	Yes (2)	Somewhat (1)	No (0)
I believe doing this can keep me from getting or giving HIV or hepatitis.				
Doing this has more positives than negatives in my mind.				
I believe that I am ready to do this.				
I am confident in my ability to do this.				
I have planned how to go about doing this.				
I have tried doing this in the last 30 days.				
I have been able to do this in the last 30 days.				
I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days.				
I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this for the next six months.				

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<b>2. Using condoms for anal sex</b> <i>(Skip if no anal sex last 90 days: Q2=No)</i> Score ____	<b>Yes</b> (2)	<b>Somewhat</b> (1)	<b>No</b> (0)
I believe doing this can keep me from getting or giving HIV or hepatitis.			
Doing this has more positives than negatives in my mind.			
I believe that I am ready to do this.			
I am confident in my ability to do this.			
I have planned how to go about doing this.			
I have tried doing this in the last 30 days.			
I have been able to do this in the last 30 days.			
I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days.			
I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this for the next six months.			

<b>3. Not having vaginal or anal sex</b> <i>(Skip if no vaginal or anal sex last 90 days: Q1 &amp; Q2=No)</i> Score ____	<b>Yes</b> (2)	<b>Somewhat</b> (1)	<b>No</b> (0)
I believe doing this can keep me from getting or giving HIV or hepatitis.			
Doing this has more positives than negatives in my mind.			
I believe that I am ready to do this.			
I am confident in my ability to do this.			
I have planned how to go about doing this.			
I have tried doing this in the last 30 days.			
I have been able to do this in the last 30 days.			
I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days.			
I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this for the next six months.			

<b>4. Having fewer sex partners</b> <i>(Skip if no sex partners last 90 days: Q3=No)</i> Score ____	<b>Yes</b> (2)	<b>Somewhat</b> (1)	<b>No</b> (0)
I believe doing this can keep me from getting or giving HIV or hepatitis.			
Doing this has more positives than negatives in my mind.			
I believe that I am ready to do this.			
I am confident in my ability to do this.			
I have planned how to go about doing this.			
I have tried doing this in the last 30 days.			
I have been able to do this in the last 30 days.			
I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days.			
I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this for the next six months.			

<b>5. Having fewer sex partners I don't use a condom with</b> <i>(Skip if no sex partners last 90 days: Q3=No)</i> Score ____	<b>Yes</b> (2)	<b>Somewhat</b> (1)	<b>No</b> (0)
I believe doing this can keep me from getting or giving HIV or hepatitis.			
Doing this has more positives than negatives in my mind.			
I believe that I am ready to do this.			
I am confident in my ability to do this.			
I have planned how to go about doing this.			
I have tried doing this in the last 30 days.			
I have been able to do this in the last 30 days.			
I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days.			
I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this for the next six months.			

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<b>6. Having sex with only one partner</b> <i>(Skip if no sex partners last 90 days: Q3=No)</i> Score ____	<b>Yes</b> (2)	<b>Somewhat</b> (1)	<b>No</b> (0)
I believe doing this can keep me from getting or giving HIV or hepatitis.			
Doing this has more positives than negatives in my mind.			
I believe that I am ready to do this.			
I am confident in my ability to do this.			
I have planned how to go about doing this.			
I have tried doing this in the last 30 days.			
I have been able to do this in the last 30 days.			
I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days.			
I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this for the next six months.			

<b>7. Having protected sex when drunk or high</b> <i>(Skip if no sex partners last 90 days: Q3=No)</i> Score ____	<b>Yes</b> (2)	<b>Somewhat</b> (1)	<b>No</b> (0)
I believe doing this can keep me from getting or giving HIV or hepatitis.			
Doing this has more positives than negatives in my mind.			
I believe that I am ready to do this.			
I am confident in my ability to do this.			
I have planned how to go about doing this.			
I have tried doing this in the last 30 days.			
I have been able to do this in the last 30 days.			
I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days.			
I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this for the next six months.			

<b>8. Not sharing needles</b> <i>(Skip if no injection drug use last 90 days: Q4=No)</i> Score ____	<b>Yes</b> (2)	<b>Somewhat</b> (1)	<b>No</b> (0)
I believe doing this can keep me from getting or giving HIV or hepatitis.			
Doing this has more positives than negatives in my mind.			
I believe that I am ready to do this.			
I am confident in my ability to do this.			
I have planned how to go about doing this.			
I have tried doing this in the last 30 days.			
I have been able to do this in the last 30 days.			
I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days.			
I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this for the next six months.			

<b>9. Not sharing injection equipment (water, cotton, cookers)</b> <i>(Skip if no injection drug use last 90 days: Q4=No)</i> Score ____	<b>Yes</b> (2)	<b>Somewhat</b> (1)	<b>No</b> (0)
I believe doing this can keep me from getting or giving HIV or hepatitis.			
Doing this has more positives than negatives in my mind.			
I believe that I am ready to do this.			
I am confident in my ability to do this.			
I have planned how to go about doing this.			
I have tried doing this in the last 30 days.			
I have been able to do this in the last 30 days.			
I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days.			
I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this for the next six months.			

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<b>10. Using a new needle for every drug injection</b> <i>(Skip if no injection drug use last 90 days: Q4=No)</i> Score ____	<b>Yes</b> (2)	<b>Somewhat</b> (1)	<b>No</b> (0)
I believe doing this can keep me from getting or giving HIV or hepatitis.			
Doing this has more positives than negatives in my mind.			
I believe that I am ready to do this.			
I am confident in my ability to do this.			
I have planned how to go about doing this.			
I have tried doing this in the last 30 days.			
I have been able to do this in the last 30 days.			
I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days.			
I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this for the next six months.			

<b>11. Bleaching my needle before every use if a new needle is not available</b> <i>(Skip if no injection drug use last 90 days: Q4=No)</i> Score ____	<b>Yes</b> (2)	<b>Somewhat</b> (1)	<b>No</b> (0)
I believe doing this can keep me from getting or giving HIV or hepatitis.			
Doing this has more positives than negatives in my mind.			
I believe that I am ready to do this.			
I am confident in my ability to do this.			
I have planned how to go about doing this.			
I have tried doing this in the last 30 days.			
I have been able to do this in the last 30 days.			
I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days.			
I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this for the next six months.			

<b>12. Decreasing or managing my drug use</b> <i>(Ask of everyone)</i> Score ____	<b>Yes</b> (2)	<b>Somewhat</b> (1)	<b>No</b> (0)
I believe doing this can keep me from getting or giving HIV or hepatitis.			
Doing this has more positives than negatives in my mind.			
I believe that I am ready to do this.			
I am confident in my ability to do this.			
I have planned how to go about doing this.			
I have tried doing this in the last 30 days.			
I have been able to do this in the last 30 days.			
I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days.			
I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this for the next six months.			

<b>13. Getting into drug treatment</b> <i>(Ask of everyone)</i> Score ____	<b>Yes</b> (2)	<b>Somewhat</b> (1)	<b>No</b> (0)
I believe doing this can keep me from getting or giving HIV or hepatitis.			
Doing this has more positives than negatives in my mind.			
I believe that I am ready to do this.			
I am confident in my ability to do this.			
I have planned how to go about doing this.			
I have tried doing this in the last 30 days.			
I have been able to do this in the last 30 days.			
I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days.			
I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this for the next six months.			

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14. Using HIV counseling and testing services every 3 months (Ask of everyone) Score ____	Yes (2)	Somewhat (1)	No (0)
I believe doing this can keep me from getting or giving HIV or hepatitis.			
Doing this has more positives than negatives in my mind.			
I believe that I am ready to do this.			
I am confident in my ability to do this.			
I have planned how to go about doing this.			
I have tried doing this in the last 30 days.			
I have been able to do this in the last 30 days.			
I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days.			
I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this for the next six months.			

15. Using hepatitis counseling and testing services every 3 months (Ask of everyone) Score ____	Yes (2)	Somewhat (1)	No (0)
I believe doing this can keep me from getting or giving HIV or hepatitis.			
Doing this has more positives than negatives in my mind.			
I believe that I am ready to do this.			
I am confident in my ability to do this.			
I have planned how to go about doing this.			
I have tried doing this in the last 30 days.			
I have been able to do this in the last 30 days.			
I have had 100% success doing this in the last 30 days.			
I feel certain I will be able to continue doing this for the next six months.			

**Scoring Instructions:** For each risk reduction behavior, compute the total number of points for the nine responses to the statements in that block. Count 2 points for each statement checked "Yes," 1 point for each statement checked "Somewhat," and 0 points for each statement checked "No." Write the score obtained in the blank provided. Each risk reduction behavior should be scored separately. There is a maximum possible score of 18 points for each behavior. (Part IV of the Program Manual provides a scoring example.)

Behavior scores may be interpreted in terms of the five stages of change, as shown below. These ranges are suggestive rather than exact, but they do provide a general indication of the position of an individual on the widely used stages-of-change continuum.

Score	Stage Description	Stage Name
0	Not Considering It	Pre-contemplation
1-8	Planning to Do It	Contemplation
9-14	Taking Steps	Preparation
15-17	Doing It	Action
18	Staying with It	Maintenance

Note: The maintenance stage as measured by this instrument is most accurately described as a "maintenance intention" stage. This is because, strictly speaking, to be in maintenance a person must have actually performed a particular risk reduction behavior for a period of at least six months, as opposed to merely expressing the intention to do so.