

THE SISTA PROJECT

Sisters Informing Sisters on Topics about AIDS A Peer-led Program to Prevent HIV Infection in African American Women Fact Sheet

Program Overview

The SISTA project is a social-skills training intervention for African American women. It is aimed at reducing HIV sexual risk behavior. It is comprised of five 2-hour sessions, delivered by peer facilitators in a community-based setting. The sessions are gender specific and culturally relevant and include behavioral skills practice, group discussions, lectures, role-playing, prevention video viewing, and take-home exercises.

Core Elements

- Convene small-group sessions to discuss the session objectives, model skills development, role-play women's skills acquisition, and address the challenges and joys of being an African American woman.
- Use skilled African American female facilitators to implement SISTA group sessions.
- Use cultural and gender appropriate materials to acknowledge pride, enhance self-worth in being an African American woman (e.g., use of poetry by African American women).
- Teach women to communicate both verbally and nonverbally to show that she cares for her partner and needs to protect herself (i.e., negotiation skills, assertive communication skills).
- Instruct women on how to effectively and consistently use condoms (i.e., condom use skills).
- Discuss cultural and gender-related barriers and facilitators to using condoms (e.g., provide information on African American women's risk of HIV infection).
- Emphasize the importance of partner's involvement in safer sex (i.e., enhance partner norms supportive of condom use).

Target Population

The SISTA project targets heterosexually active African American women.

Program Materials

- Facilitator's manual
- Videotape (*It's Like This*)
- Five Activity Masters packets
- Evaluation materials (including evaluation assistance kit, original and process evaluation)

CDC has developed supplemental materials

- Community Facilitator Guide
- Technical Assistance Guide
- Evaluation Technical Assistance Guide
- Evaluation Plan

Evaluation

The SISTA project was first implemented in an African American community in San Francisco. The results are as follows:

- Participants in the social-skills intervention demonstrated increased consistent condom use, sexual behavior self-control, sexual communication, and sexual assertiveness skills.
- The partners of participants in the social-skills intervention were more likely to adopt and support consistent condom use.

More Information

For more information about the technical assistance system or to get 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.

DiClemente, R.J., Wingood, G.M. (1995). A randomized controlled trial of an HIV sexual risk reduction intervention for young African American women. *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 274 (16), 1271-1276.