

Street Smart

Reducing HIV Risk Among Runaway & Homeless Youth FACT SHEET

Program Overview

Street Smart is an HIV/AIDS and STD prevention program for runaway and homeless youth. Your staff may use this skills-building program to help groups of young people reduce their unprotected sex acts, number of sex partners, and substance use. It is based on social learning theory, which links feelings, attitudes, and thoughts to behavior change. Street Smart is conducted over a six- to eight-week period with 10-12 youth. The program consists of eight 1 ½ to 2 hour group sessions, one individual counseling session, and one visit to a community-based organization that provides healthcare. Each session has specific goals on HIV/AIDS, STDs, pregnancy prevention, coping and negotiation skills, personalized risk behaviors and reducing drug and alcohol use. Group members participate in scripted and non-scripted role plays, activities, and video production.

Core Elements

The core elements of the Street Smart program include:

- Enhancing affective and cognitive awareness, expression, and control;
- Teaching HIV/AIDS risk hierarchy and its personal application;
- Identifying personal triggers, using peer support and small group skills-building sessions; and
- Building participant's skills in problem solving, personal assertiveness, and HIV/AIDS harm reduction.

Target Population

The Street Smart program targets runaway and homeless youth, ages 11 to 18.

Program Materials

- Facilitator training manual (for program staff)
- Orientation video (for program staff)
- Workbook for participants
- Sample social marketing and recruitment materials
- Handouts for participants

Research Results

After Street Smart was implemented, it yielded these results:

- Participants reported lower rates of substance use and unprotected sex acts.
- After the group sessions, young women self-reported greater reductions in substance abuse and unprotected sex acts than young men.
- African-American youth self-reported less substance use than youth of other ethnic groups.

For More Information on Street Smart

To obtain additional information about the technical assistance system and/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 (800) 462-9521, or email interventions@aed.org.

Rotheram-Borus, M., Van Rossem, R., Gwadz, M., Koopman, C., Lee, M. (1997). Reductions in HIV risk among runaway youths. Los Angeles, University of California, Department of Psychiatry, Division of Social and Community Psychiatry, Los Angeles, CA.

Rotheram-Borus, M.J., Song, J., Gwadz, M., Lee, M., Van Rossem, R., Koopman, C. (1993). Reductions in HIV Risk Among Runaway Youth. *Prevention Science*, 4(3), 173-187.