

street smart



&



Reducing HIV and STD Risk Among Runaway and Homeless Youth



505 EIGHTH AVENUE,
SIXTEENTH FLOOR
NEW YORK, NY 10018



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Street Smart is an HIV and STD prevention program for runaway and homeless youth in non-school settings. The program is designed to help young people reduce their sexual risk acts and practice safer sexual behaviors. It is based on social learning theory, which links feelings, attitudes, and thoughts to behavior change. Street Smart is a small group intervention that is conducted over a six- to eight-week period with 10-12 youth. The program consists of eight 1½ to 2 hour group sessions, one individual counseling session, and one visit to a community-based health or social service provider. Each session addresses specific HIV/STD prevention goals such as personalizing risk behaviors, identifying triggers, improving social skills, problem solving, reducing drug and alcohol use, and coping and negotiation skills. Group members participate in role plays, games and other activities, and create and star in their own video production.

TARGET POPULATION

Street Smart targets youth ages 11 to 18 whose behaviors place them at very high risk of becoming infected with HIV or other STDs. Life circumstances define risk for some youth: being gay, runaway or homeless, or involved with the criminal justice system increases the potential for risky behavior. Street Smart is designed for runaway and homeless youth, yet it can be easily modified for very high risk youth in other settings.

From the Field

Street Smart "has been a real learning process for staff, and we have been able to share info and strategies picked up from the intervention with other staff"

CORE ELEMENTS

Core elements are the key intervention components that ensure program effectiveness. The core elements of Street Smart 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
- Building skills in problem solving, personal assertiveness, and HIV/AIDS harm reduction

AN INTERVENTION DEVELOPED FROM SCIENCE

The Street Smart intervention is the product of extensive collaboration among researchers, staff from public and private agencies serving homeless and runaway youth, and youth from diverse backgrounds. The original research supporting the intervention's effectiveness among homeless and runaway youth documented the following outcomes:

- Youth reduced their substance use and number of unprotected sex acts;
- Young women reported greater reductions in substance use and unprotected sex than young men;
- African-American youth reported greater reductions in substance use than youth of other ethnic groups.

This intervention was pilot-tested at community-based agencies that serve homeless and runaway youth, where staff and youth were instrumental in identifying key strategies to plan, implement, and evaluate the intervention. Street Smart is meant to supplement existing homeless and runaway youth services, not replace them.

This offering of Street Smart is part of the CDC's Diffusion of Effective Behavioral Interventions (DEBI) project. DEBI was designed to bring science-based, community and group level HIV prevention interventions to community-based service providers and state and local health departments. The goal is to enhance capacity to implement effective interventions at the state and local levels, to reduce the spread of HIV and STDs, and to promote healthy behaviors.

INTERVENTION TRAINING

Program administrators and facilitators from agencies adopting Street Smart are asked to attend a 3 ½ -day training on the intervention, which covers the intervention's theoretical framework, objectives, resource needs, how to conduct the intervention, the practice of group facilitation skills, and identification of agency-specific implementation strategies including monitoring and evaluation.

HOW TO REGISTER FOR TRAINING

To place your name on a list for a future training, please contact your CDC project officer or health department. Additional information: (800) 462-9521 or (202) 884-8712 E-mail: interventions@aed.org TTY 1-800-434-3652 or go to www.effectiveinterventions.org. The intervention materials are available with training on program implementation and technical assistance from CAI and MHRA.

"While the Street Smart groups were not mandated, they have become part of the shelter program. There is good word of mouth because the kids really like it—positive feedback has been tremendous and it provokes a lot of thought and discussion among kids and with shelter staff."

CBA/TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Staff from Cicatelli Associates Inc. (CAI) and Medical & Health Research Association (MHRA) as CDC national capacity building assistance (CBA) providers offer consultation and technical assistance via a variety of modalities such as telephone, mail, e-mail, virtual classroom and personal meetings.

CBA REQUEST INFORMATION SYSTEM (CRIS)

The CBA Request Information System (CRIS) is used to submit CBA Requests, as well as monitor, track, and follow-up on CBA Requests. A user ID and password are required to access this CDC-sponsored web application at www.cdc.gov/hiv/cba (Note: DEBI trainings cannot be requested via CRIS)

"The guys really enjoy the role plays and the tokens—they try to collect them."

"We are thrilled with the program and that somebody is providing the information that Street Smart gives"

Ready to Implement Street Smart? Find Out.

Street Smart Agency Readiness Self-Assessment

This is a brief assessment intended to help you determine your readiness to implement the Street Smart intervention.

Please read each item and place a check mark in the column at the right that best describes your current capacity.

CAPACITIES AND RESOURCES FOR STREET SMART	YES, WE HAVE THIS CAPACITY (1)	WE DO NOT PRESENTLY HAVE THIS CAPACITY, BUT CAN DEVELOP THE CAPACITY (2)	NO, WE DO NOT HAVE THIS CAPACITY (3)
1. Access to high-risk adolescents ages 11-18			
2. At least one person on staff who has experience in group facilitation, HIV/AIDS prevention, and working with youth			
3. Meeting space to conduct group sessions with approximately 10-12 youth			
4. Access to a variety of condoms as well as male and female condom demonstration models			
5. Access to a video camera and TV/VCR for use during the Street Smart sessions			
6. A means to track program activities and collect participant data			
7. Support from the agency's executive director to implement Street Smart			

If your responses were mostly in column 1 (Yes, we have this capacity) or column 2 (We do not presently have this capacity, but we can develop the capacity), then you are likely ready to implement Street Smart.

For more general information on Street Smart training and CBA opportunities you may also contact:

↓ ↓
Cicatelli Associates Inc. (CAI)
Center for Evidence-Based Interventions
505 Eighth Avenue, Suite 1601
New York, NY 10018-6505
Telephone: (212) 594-7741
Web Address: www.cicatelli.org

OR

Medical & Health Research Association of New York City (MHRA)
Center for Intervention Tailoring and Adaptation
220 Church St, 4th floor
New York, NY 10013-2988
Telephone: (646) 619-6400
Web Address: www.fita-mhra.org

+

For more information about the research and development of the intervention:

Mary Jane Rotheram-Borus, Center Director, Center for Community Health, University of California, Los Angeles, 10920 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 350, Los Angeles, CA 90024.
<http://chipts.ucla.edu/interventions/manuals/index.asp>