

Intervention Checklist: Elements of Successful Programs A Tool for Assessment of Local HIV/AIDS Interventions

Background

The *Compendium* provides ready access to many interventions with known effectiveness, however, program planners, managers, or prevention service providers may be using an existing intervention that has its own advantages. For instance, it was developed locally and there is consensus in the community about its value. The *Intervention Checklist* was developed as a tool to help with assessment of these existing interventions. *Checklist* items were derived primarily from the common characteristics of successful programs in the Reputationally Strong Programs Project (RSP), funded by CDC. Public and private AIDS organizations and CDC Project Officers nominated HIV prevention programs that were viewed as “strong” because of their innovation, organizational characteristics, field experience, and contributions to our understanding of intervention. Eligible programs had to be located in the U.S., be locally based, be currently operational, have a strong reputation for showing promise for preventing HIV, and could not have been formally evaluated

How to Use This Tool

One may want to use the *Checklist* to fine-tune a strong program, or to consider new ideas for program implementation or organizational planning. It may be helpful simply as a programmatic inventory. This tool could be used in a regular staff or planning group meeting or an annual program review to help measure progress.

Instructions:

1. Consider each of the four sections and each item within the sections. It may be useful to record examples from your local intervention onto the form in the space provided (if needed, use bottom, back of page, etc.) Also, you may want to add items.
2. Working individually or in a group, complete the *Checklist*. Rate each item High, Medium, or Low. For instance, for the first Intervention item, a clearly defined audience, a “high” rating would mean that the audience is very clearly defined, i.e., with enough precision (e.g., ethnically/culturally, by risk behavior, gender, or other characteristics) for optimal planning, tailoring of materials to that audience, and targeted recruitment.
3. Review your responses. Consider each section separately. For example, are there one or two items in the Implementation section that need attention?
4. How do you/your group assess the current intervention overall? Is it satisfactory or can it be strengthened? If you want to improve the activity, who would develop an action plan for that? What accomplishment would address your current concerns? How feasible is that? What technical assistance might be helpful? What time lines would you anticipate? What resources would be needed?

¹ References

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- Mezoff, J., Seals, B., Sogolow, E., Komescher, R., Wooden, G, Bye, L., Tijugum, B. (1998). Reputationally Strong HIV Prevention Programs: Organizational Characteristics. Poster presentation, 12th World AIDS Conference, Geneva.
- Kirby, D. (1995). A review of educational programs designed to reduce sexual risk-taking behaviors among school-aged youth in the United States. In *The Effectiveness of AIDS Prevention Efforts, HIV Prevention: State-of-the-Science*, commissioned by the Office of Technology Assessment, compiled and produced by the American Psychological Association Office on AIDS, Washington, D.C.

A. Intervention Items	Examples from Effective Interventions	Examples from Local Interventions (Write In)	Rating (Circle One)
1. The intervention has a clearly defined audience	STD patients who are at risk based on current STD infection Runaway youth living in shelters who are at risk through survival sex		High Medium Low
2. The intervention has clearly defined goals and objectives	To change risky sexual norms and behaviors in the gay community through personal endorsement of safer sex by key opinion leaders To reduce risk for HIV/STD and unintended pregnancy among young women by increasing condom use		High Medium Low
3. The intervention is based on sound behavioral and social science theory	Diffusion theory guides plan for key opinion leaders to speak with certain number of people (representing proportion of the at-risk population) Stages of change model calls for tailoring the role model stories used in the intervention to level of readiness for risk reduction in the community		High Medium Low
4. The intervention is focused on reducing specific risk behaviors	Reduce unprotected anal sex among men who have sex with men Reduce “never using” condoms with steady and casual sex partners		High Medium Low
5. The intervention provides opportunities to practice relevant skills	Role play condom negotiation with steady sex partner Exercises for trying out personal coping strategies		High Medium Low

B. Implementation Items	Examples from Effective Interventions	Examples from Local Interventions (Write In)	Rating (Circle One)
1. There is a realistic schedule for implementation	Six months of preparation and coordination is needed before starting an intervention in a large health care organization Two years of implementation are required for community level change		High Medium Low
2. Staff are adequately trained for sensitivity to the target population	Staff receive training on responding to disclosures of domestic violence Staff attend three, 1 hour sessions on the target population's culture, risk factors, and barriers to accessing service		High Medium Low
3. Staff are adequately trained to deliver the core elements of the intervention	Peer volunteers receive 32 hours of interactive training on the intervention's goals, objectives, core elements, and delivery methods Staff read intervention manuals, view training videos, role play intervention delivery, and have "booster" training one month after starting the intervention		High Medium Low
4. Core elements of the intervention are clearly defined and maintained in the delivery	Health educators use an intervention manual that labels the core elements Supervisor observes intervention performance at least once a month and provides feedback on delivery of the core elements		High Medium Low
5. Staff uses a variety of teaching methods, strategies, and modalities to convey information, personalize the training, and repeat essential HIV prevention messages	Lecture, discussion, group art and music projects, stress coping exercises, and individual counseling Staff use of culturally specific video soap opera as a springboard for problem solving client's barriers to condom negotiation; condom information is repeated in large-scale poster format		High Medium Low

C. Organization Items	Examples from Effective Interventions	Examples from Local Interventions (Write In)	Rating (Circle One)
1. There is administrative support for the intervention at the highest levels	State health department commits to delivering the intervention in all STD, HIV, and family planning clinics holding state contracts Local public housing authority provides on site office space for intervention activities		High Medium Low
2. There are sufficient resources for the current implementation	Existing facility incorporates intervention into its continuum of care by replacing didactic information delivery with an information and skills-building intervention Suitable space for the activities is located and rent is paid		High Medium Low
3. There are sufficient resources for sustainability	Redefinition of duties makes intervention delivery part of staff job description Intervention is not tied to grant funding but is part of agency's overall budget		High Medium Low
4. Decision-makers are flexible and open to program changes	"Ownership" of project is shared with target population volunteers who select new venues for delivery Non-agency staff are permitted to deliver intervention to agency clients on-site		High Medium Low
5. HIV/AIDS intervention is embedded in a broader context that is relevant to the target population	Runaway youth receive shelter, medical care, mental health counseling, and service referrals in addition to HIV prevention intervention Inner city women receive HIV/AIDS intervention woven into the context of women's health, pregnancy planning, and caring for one's family		High Medium Low

D. Consumer/ Participant Items	Examples from Effective Interventions	Examples from Local Interventions (Write In)	Rating (Circle One)
1. The intervention meets specified priorities and needs defined by the community	Intervention sponsors social events for young men who have sex with men in communities that do not have places for them to congregate Intervention empowers peer volunteers to intervene in their own communities		High Medium Low
2. For the target population selected, the intervention is culturally competent	“Role model” stories used within the community are experiences of actual members of the community (with their names changed) English-Spanish video portrays real-life situations, decision-making processes, and condom negotiation strategies in appropriate Hispanic/Latino cultural context		High Medium Low
3. For the target population selected, the intervention is developmentally appropriate	The need for safer sex is introduced naturally into the casual conversations of mature adult men who have sex with men Runaway youth, ages 11 to 17, receive intervention messages in many entertaining ways and learn realistic expectations for skills development		High Medium Low
4. For the target population selected, the intervention is gender specific	An intervention targeting inner-city women is delivered by community women and focuses on women’s health issues Young gay men receive an intervention through their social networks		High Medium Low
5. The intervention as implemented is acceptable to the participants	Participants continue to come, even without incentives Participants recommend the intervention to their friends		High Medium Low