



A public health evaluation of the implementation of Healthy Relationships: Results from a pilot study

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HSRC RESEARCH OUTPUTS

6039

Public Health Evaluation of the Implementation of Healthy Relationships: Results from a Pilot
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Project Context and Background

- The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) was funded by the USA's President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) through the USA's Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 2006
- To undertake a public health evaluation of a culturally adapted existing CDC intervention for promoting HIV status disclosure and behavioural risk reduction strategies among people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) developed in the United States of America (USA) that is known as Healthy Relationships
- The goal of the pilot study:
 - to determine the feasibility and acceptability of the implementation of Healthy Relationships among people living with HIV attending support groups in the OR Tambo District of the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa (SA)

The Intervention...Healthy Relationships

- Five session intervention for use among small-groups of 8-12 HIV-positive men and women
- Establishing and maintaining healthy and satisfying relationships in the face of living with HIV
- Three behavioural domains:
 - Disclosure to sex partners
 - Disclosure to family and friends
 - HIV transmission risk reduction
- Behavioural domains are conceptualised as potentially stress producing situations for PLWHA and the intervention activities are therefore framed around stress reduction skills and strategies

Movie Clips* for Communication and Behavioural Skills



Realistic situations

Non-threatening and engaging

Identify risky situations and triggers

Problem solving

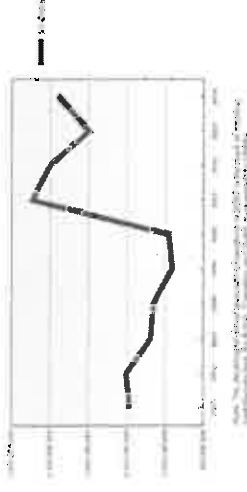
Communication skills building

*** Now changed to story boards.**



Methods

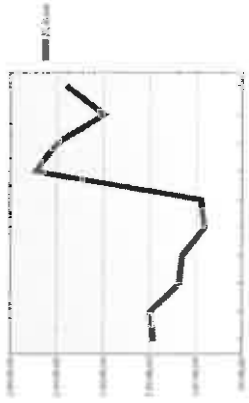
Total Doses Required for Condoms, 1995-2004
(Number of Condoms)



- **Recruitment of participants**
- **Study procedures**
 - **Three sites (rural clinic, non-governmental organisation (NGO), service provider for PLWHA in semi-urban setting)**
- **Qualitative methods of data collection**
 - Session Surveys
 - The intervention sessions
 - Data Analysis
- **Pre-test assessment**
- **5 Day post test assessment**



Total Doctor Support for Candidates, 1995-2004
(% of total of Candidates)



Source: HSCRC, 2005. Data for 1995-2004.

RESULTS



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1968-2008



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Participants (1)

Demographic and Health Characteristics

- Male (n=41); Female (n=99) , Black African
- Average age - 33.7
- Mean number of years since tested HIV positive - 2.7
- 98% of the sample were unemployed
- Half of the sample reported that they were taking ARVs;
- Ten percent had no schooling

Participants (2)

Disclosure decisions, condom attitudes and condom use in the last 3 months

- **62% reported that they would rather not have sex with someone than to deal with disclosure**
- **49% reported to have disclosed their HIV status to their sex partner(s)**
- **78% were certain on how to use a condom**
- **Only 36% trusted condoms not to break**
- **69% of the sexually active sample used a condom at last sex**
- **Over half (52%) reported that their partners did not like condoms**

Pre and Post test

	Pre	5 Day post
Rather not have sex than to deal with disclosure	62%	43%
Condoms can be trusted not to break	36%	64%
Confident about using a condom	78%	81%

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1968-2008



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Session Surveys

1. How do you feel about this group?	• Positive (97%)
2. How did this group go for you?	• Better than expected (77%)
3. What is the thing you liked most about this group?	• The lessons learnt (98%)
4. What did you not like?	• Nothing (98%)

Intervention session - Session 4

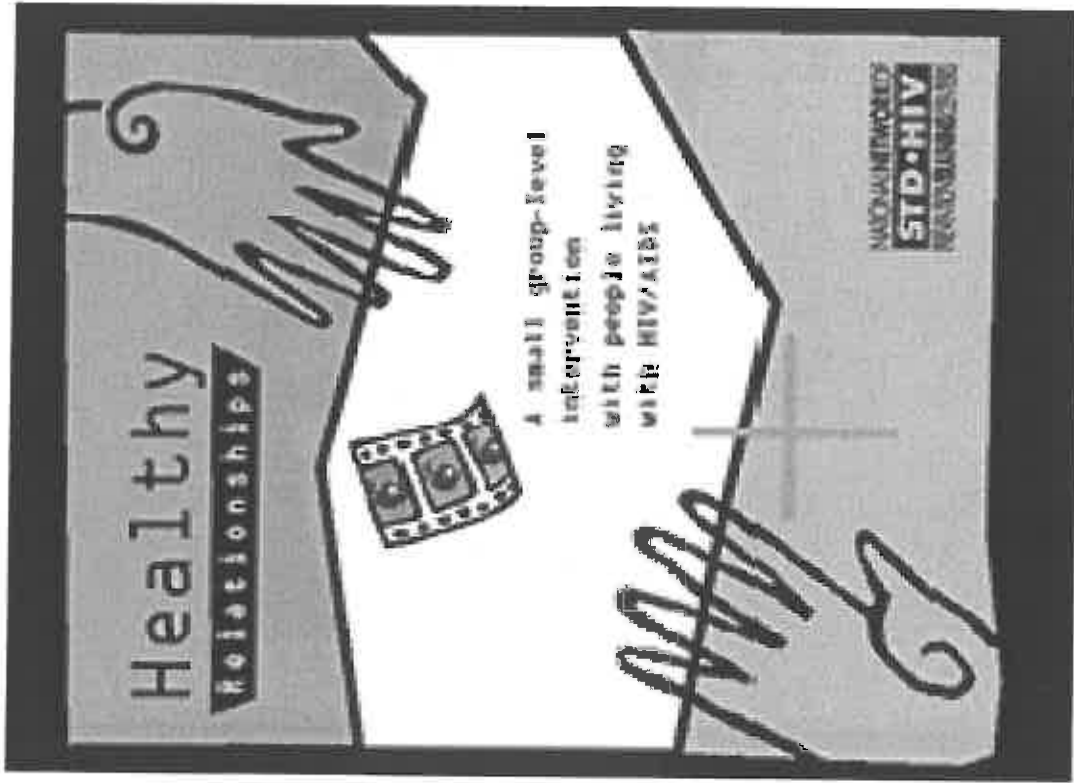
- Participant 1:** *Yesterday is John's wife. John is at Gauteng. Yesterday goes to John at Gauteng and John doesn't know that. She wants to tell John that she is living with HIV. John doesn't know what Yesterday comes here for. She asks him at work. She asks someone to call for her. When John comes, she did say what she came for.*
- Facilitator:** *We must not put all of this to her. Is there anyone who can help her or maybe she must carry on.*
- Participant 1:** *When John asks what Yesterday wants, she said she come to him. He said what you want from me. She said I have come to see you after that she said I am sick.*
- Facilitator:** *I want to know that is she used all of our skills? What if the first skill?*
- Participant 2:** *Here is Yesterday, she doesn't speak clearly, she doesn't say that she is a wife.*
- Facilitator:** *It is the skill of noticing, is it so? Do we agree when he says she doesn't say that she has something to do with John.*
- Participant 2:** *What I observed she doesn't speak clearly I agree with you, because if she tell John that John there is problem that need the two of us not at work.*
- Facilitator:** *(Participant 2) says that she doesn't say what she wants him for what. The skill that she doesn't use, she doesn't notice.*
- Participant 3:** *The skill of the place, the place that she tells him on.*
- Facilitator:** *Ok, she at his work, at work there are people who are going up and down and they are talking their things and this place is exposed.*
- Participant:** *That place was not safe for them to talk.*

In conclusion...

- **PLWHA who took part in the study indicated their willingness and satisfaction with the content whilst participating in the intervention**
- **The group facilitators had been able to implement the full intervention as was planned although they experienced some minor problems during early stages of intervention implementation**
- **Low literacy level of participants**
- **Time allocated for intervention activities and content were significantly extended**
- **Structural challenges**

Recommendations

- **Not only rigorous adaptation of the intervention materials are needed but concepts also has to be examined for their appropriateness to African context**
- **Need to tailor risk reduction intervention for use with couples (discordant or concordant)**
- **The implementation of the intervention could be done simultaneously with the roll out of antiretroviral treatment**
- **More in -depth analysis is needed to assess the acceptability and feasibility of the implementation of the intervention before scale up**



THANK YOU

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