

# SAFE ON THE OUTS

Good Evidence – Risk Reduction

## INTERVENTION DESCRIPTION

### Target Population

- Adolescents in juvenile detention facilities

### Goals of Intervention

- Reduce risky sex behavior
- Reduce sex while drinking

### Brief Description

*Safe on the Outs* is a group-level intervention delivered in a single session to typically 3-5 adolescents of the same sex. It combines a group psychosocial intervention (GPI) for sexual risk reduction with group motivational enhancement therapy (GMET). The GPI portion uses group activities, videos, condom demonstrations, a videogame, general HIV transmission information, and local information and health services resources to increase HIV knowledge, and develop self-efficacy, normative perceptions, and positive attitudes toward condoms. A movie depicting ethnically representative young people emphasizes and explicitly models being prepared for safer sex and the importance of good communication skills with current and potential sex partners. In a videogame participants make a series of choices related to sexual activity to consider how negative consequences of unprotected sex would impact life goals. Participants then pick a safer sex goal they want to accomplish in the next 3 months to increase positive intentions. The GMET portion focuses on alcohol use, including feedback on drinking behaviors, and uses the FRAMES (Feedback, Responsibility, Advice, Menu, Empathy, and Self-Efficacy) to organize its structure. It uses motivational interviewing (MI) and empathetic, open, and non-confrontational motivational-enhancement-therapy style group discussion to address awareness about alcohol consumption level, consequences of alcohol use, strategies to develop self-efficacy to reduce alcohol use risk, and motivation to change alcohol use behavior during sexual activity. Participants watch an additional video depicting ethnically representative young people at a party with alcohol to provide an example of the negative consequences from alcohol use in sexual situations and provide options for positive decisions. The emphasis is on specific alcohol-related sexual risk reduction skills (e.g., understanding one's limits, avoiding situations in which a risky sexual encounter may happen, having a "buddy system").

### Theoretical Basis

- FRAMES structure
- Motivational Interviewing/motivational enhancement therapy
- Social Cognitive Theory
- Theory of Planned Behavior

### Intervention Duration

- Single session lasting 3 to 4 hours

### Intervention Setting

- Juvenile detention facility classroom

### Deliverer

- Masters-level intervention leaders, gender-matched with participants

### Delivery Methods

- Counseling
- Demonstration
- Discussion
- Goal setting/plan
- Group activities
- Modeling
- Skills building
- Video
- Video game

## INTERVENTION PACKAGE INFORMATION

**An intervention package is not available at this time.** Please contact **Angela D. Bryan**, Department of Psychology and Neuroscience, 345 UCB, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO 80309-0345.

**Email:** [angela.bryan@colorado.edu](mailto:angela.bryan@colorado.edu) for details on intervention materials.

## EVALUATION STUDY AND RESULTS

**The original evaluation was conducted in Denver, Colorado between 2004 and 2006.**

### Key Intervention Effects

- Reduced risky sex behavior
- Maintained condom use

### Study Sample

The baseline study sample of 484 adolescents is characterized by the following:

- 37% white, 28% Hispanic/Latino, 13% black or African American, 13% biracial/mixed, 5% Native American, 3% Asian, 2% other ethnicity
- 83% male, 17% female
- 91% heterosexual, 6% bisexual, 3% gay
- Mean age of 16 years

### Recruitment Settings

Three juvenile detention facilities in the Denver, Colorado judicial district

**Eligibility Criteria**

Adolescents were eligible if they were 14 to 17 years old, English speaking, and current residents at one of the detention facilities.

**Assignment Method**

Groups of 1-10 adolescents of the same sex (N = 117 groups) were randomly assigned to 1 of 3 study groups: Group Psychosocial Intervention and Group Motivational Enhancement Therapy (GPI+GMET; n = 39 groups; 165 adolescents), GPI only comparison group (n = 36 groups; 157 adolescents), or Group Information Intervention comparison group (GINFO; n = 42 groups; 162 adolescents).

**Comparison Group**

The Group Psychosocial Intervention only (GPI) comparison group was one 3-hour group session delivered by masters-level intervention leaders. Participants in this group received the Group Psychosocial components described in the intervention box.

The Group Information (GINFO) comparison was a 1-hour group session delivered by masters-level intervention leaders. The session focused on basic HIV/STD prevention information and definitions, modes and body fluids of HIV transmission, and effectiveness of condom use in HIV prevention. Group discussions covered the need for condom use despite trusting one's partner and how it is impossible to know who may be infected with HIV. Additional information was presented in a video that discussed common STIs with a question and answer session after the video. Participants also received lists of area resources for testing and other sexual health services.

**Relevant Outcomes Measured and Follow-up Time**

- Sex behaviors (including frequency of condom use during past 3 months; and risky sex behavior during past 3 months) were measured at 3, 6, 9, and 12 months post-intervention. Risky sex behavior was an indicator of risk that combined condom use (reverse scored) and frequency of intercourse; the scores ranged from 0 to 20; higher scores indicated more risky sexual behavior.

**Participant Retention**

- GPI + GMET Intervention
  - 71% retained at 3 months
  - 72% retained at 6 months
  - 69% retained at 9 months
  - 72% retained at 12 months
- GPI only Comparison
  - 64% retained at 3 months
  - 62% retained at 6 months
  - 66% retained at 9 months
  - 71% retained at 12 months
- GINFO Comparison
  - 61% retained at 3 months
  - 58% retained at 6 months
  - 60% retained at 9 months
  - 66% retained at 12 months

### Significant Findings

- Among those who engaged in sex between baseline and assessment, GPI+GMET (Safe on the Outs) intervention participants reported a significantly lower score on the risky sex behavior indicator than GINFO comparison participants at 3-months post-intervention ( $F = 1, 77 = 6.05, p < .05$ ).\*
- Among those who engaged in sex between baseline and assessment, GPI+GMET (Safe on the Outs) intervention participants reported a significantly greater frequency of condom use than the GINFO control participants at 9 months ( $p < .05$ ) and 12 months ( $p < .05$ ) post-intervention.\*

### Considerations

- The GPI+GMET (Safe on the Outs) intervention fails to meet the best-evidence criteria due to <70% retention rate per arm at each included assessment.
- Changes in frequency of condom use over time (from baseline to 12 months) were significantly different between GPI+GMET (Safe on the Outs) intervention participants and GINFO comparison participants ( $p < .05$ ). Frequency of condom use significantly declined among GINFO comparison participants ( $p < .01$ ) while remaining relatively stable among GPI+GMET intervention participants. However, the retention at the 6-month follow-up does not meet the minimum retention rate of > 60%. With removal of the 6-month follow-up data, this finding became non-significant, with changes over time not being significantly different.\*
- There were no statistically significant differences in changes over time for condom use or risky sex between the GPI only group and GPI+GMET intervention group and between the GPI only group and the GINFO group.

\*Information obtained from author

## REFERENCES AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Bryan, A. D., Schmiege, S. J., & Broaddus, M. R. (2009). [HIV risk reduction among detained adolescents: A randomized, controlled trial](#). *Pediatrics*, 124, e1180-e1188.

Schmiege, S. J., Broaddus, M. R., & Bryan, L. M. (2009). [Randomized trial of group interventions to reduce HIV/STD risk and change theoretical mediators among detained adolescents](#). *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 77, 38-50.

**Researcher:** **Angela D. Bryan, PhD**

Department of Psychology and Neuroscience  
345 UCB  
University of Colorado  
Boulder, CO 80309-0345

**Email:** [angela.bryan@colorado.edu](mailto:angela.bryan@colorado.edu)

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