

Broadening the Study of Risk & Protective Factors for Depression, Drug Use, and HIV Risk among YMSM

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Healthy Young Men's Study (HYM)

Community, Health Outcomes, and Intervention Research

The Saban Research Institute

Childrens Hospital Los Angeles & USC

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Background for HYM study

- HIV rates among young men who have sex with men (YMSM) continue to rise, particularly among young men of color
- Strong relationship between drug use and HIV transmission
- Experiences of harassment, violence and victimization can lead to poorer mental health and HIV risk-related behaviors
- Additional stressors can increase risk for involvement in risky behaviors

HYM Study

Five-year longitudinal study funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (R01 DA015638–03).

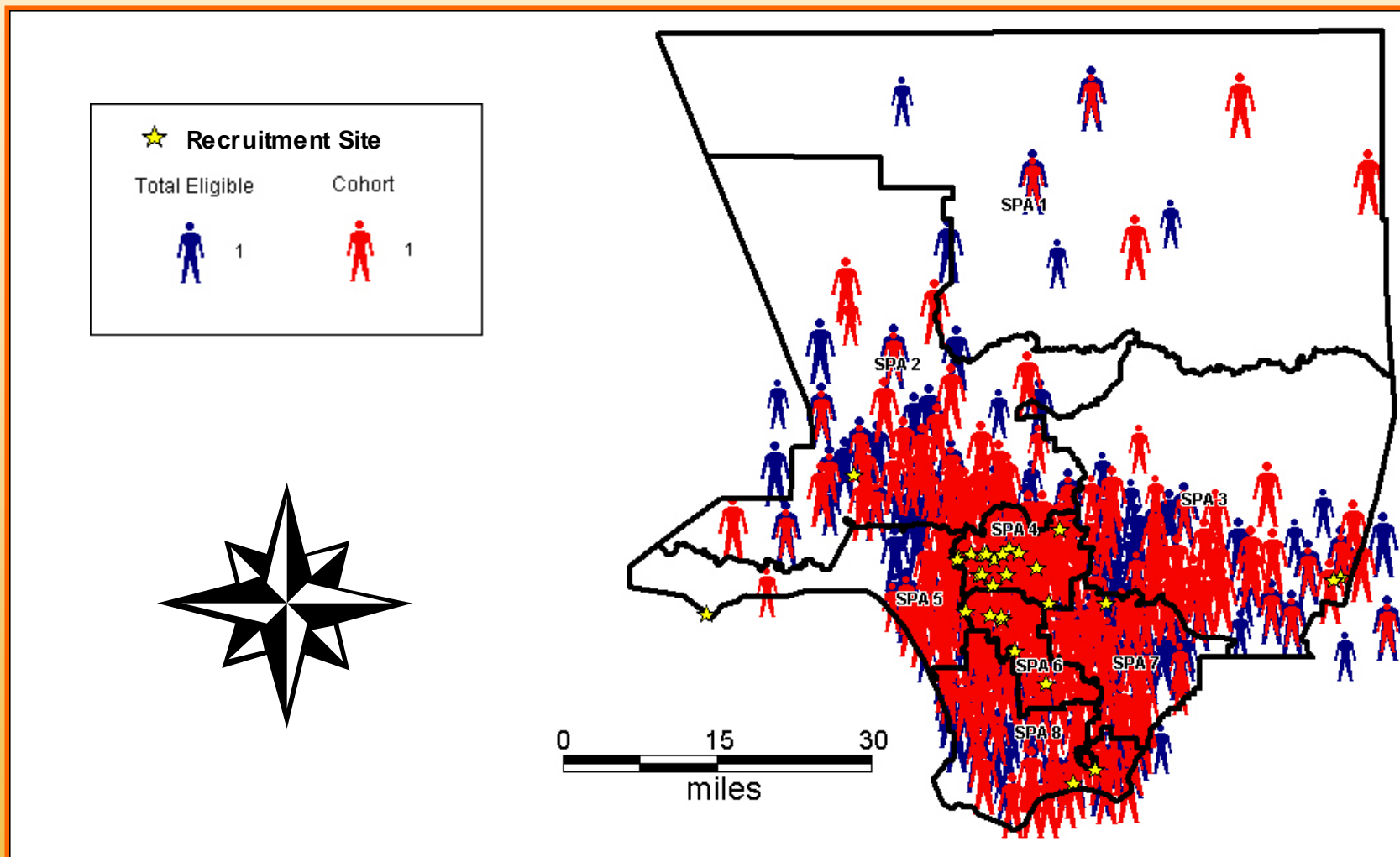
PI – Michele D. Kipke, PhD

- Study Aim: To examine individual, familial, social, and sexual partner risk factors associated with drug use and HIV risk behaviors among YMSM
- Baseline and follow-up interviews every 6 months for 2 years
- Mixed-methods research design
- Active community participation
- Baseline data collection February 2005 – January 2006

Methods

- Venue-based randomized probability sampling in gay bars, clubs, coffee houses, social settings
- Sample stratified by 3 racial/ethnic groups: Whites (W), African American (AA), Latino of Mexican descent (M)
- Surveys administered using ACASI, each 1-1/2 hours in length
- Current retention rate of 92%

Where they live



Sample Characteristics (N=526)

	Categories	n (%)
Age	18 - 19 yrs	206 (40)
	20 - 21 yrs	196 (37)
	22+ yrs	124 (24)
Race/ethnicity		127 (24)
		196 (37)
		205 (39)
Immigration	Born in other country	82 (16)
Residence	Living with family	281 (54)
	Not living with family	245 (47)
		113 (22)
		142 (27)
		201 (38)
		70 (13)
Sexual identity	Gay	391 (74)
	Other same-sex identity	38 (7)
	Bisexual	85 (16)
	Straight	3 (1)
	DK/RF	9 (2)

30% of M cohort were born outside of US

7% ever lived on the street

27% sexually attracted to men and women

Prevalence of Key Predictors

(* $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$)

	Total n=526 %
Experiences of Racism, Violence, & Victimization	
<i>Intimate Partner Violence (physical)</i>	23
<i>Homophobia Growing Up</i>	98
<i>Social/Sexual Racism***</i>	80
<i>Institutional Racism***</i>	52
	M (SD)
Stressful Life Events (range = 0-26)	8.05 (4.70)
Internalized Homophobia**	2.09 (0.30)

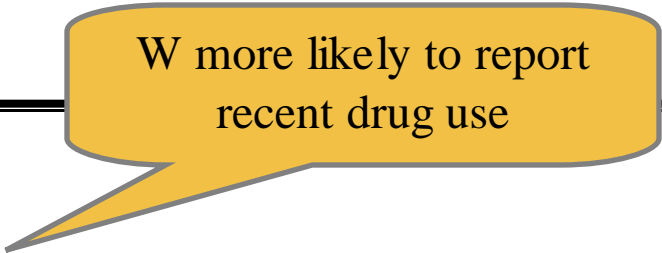
AA more likely to report social sexual racism

AA more likely to report institutional racism

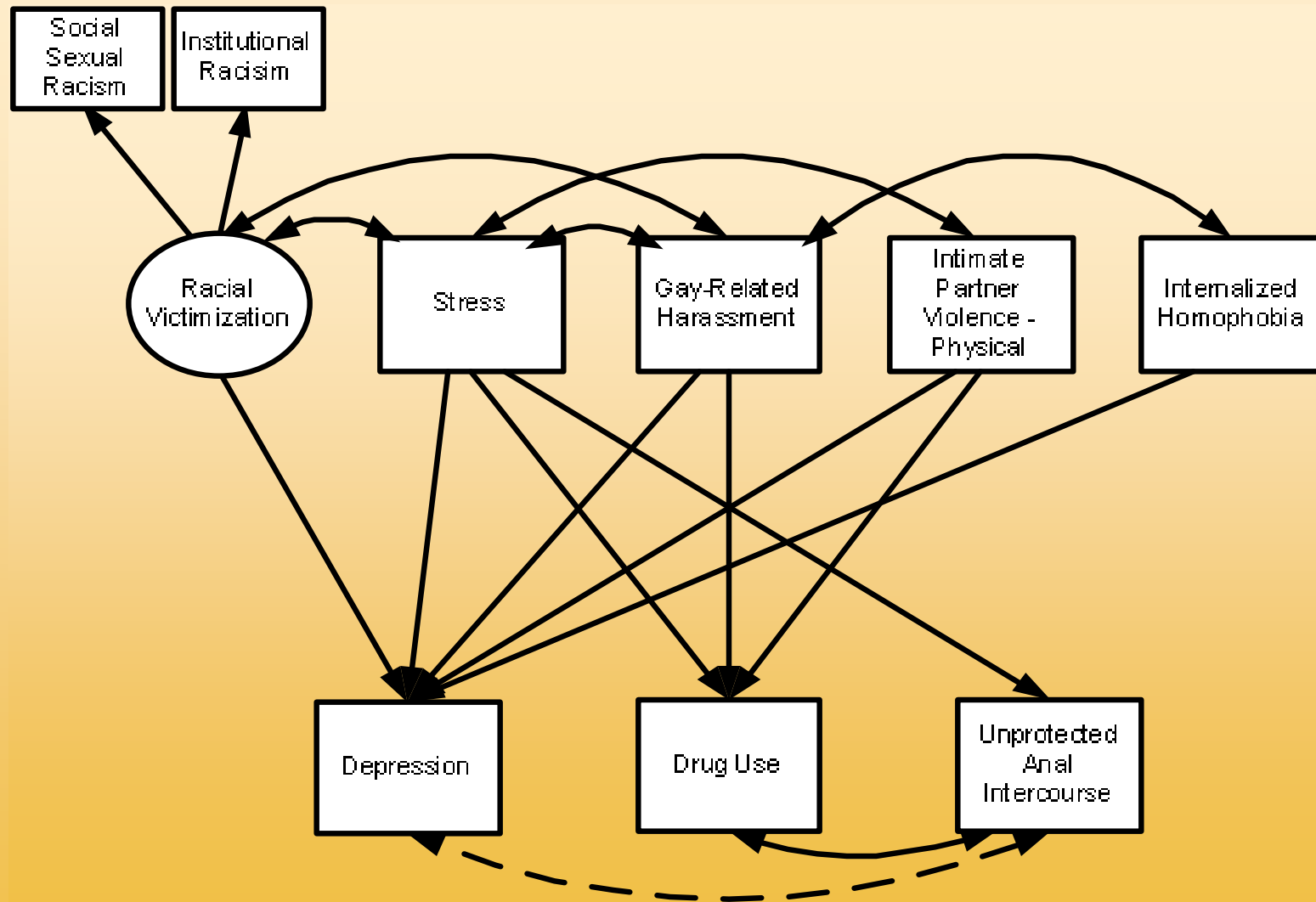
AA report higher levels of internalized homophobia

Prevalence of Outcome Variables

(* $p \leq .05$; ** $p \leq .01$; *** $p \leq .001$)

	Total n=526 %
 Illicit Drug Use***	28
Unprotected Anal Intercourse	38
Depression (CESD) - score of ≥ 22	21

Results



Model controlled for effects of age, ethnicity, residential status, school enrollment status; only paths significant at $p < .05$ are shown; RMSEA = .032; TLI = .93; CFI = .96. Ethnicity and age are covariates for measurement model of racial victimization. Model invariance between ethnic groups confirmed.

Key Findings

- Greater number of stressful life events predicted elevated levels of depression, greater drug use, and sexual risk
- Gay harassment when growing up and intimate partner violence were significantly associated with drug use
- Gay-related harassment when growing up, racial victimization, intimate partner violence, and internalized homophobia were significantly associated with elevated levels of depression
- Drug use and sexual risk were significantly associated with one another, while depression is nearly significantly associated with sexual risk
- The model fits well for the entire sample; meaning, overall findings do not vary significantly by racial/ethnic group

Discussion

- Additional research is needed to identify factors that could reduce the effects of stress on both depression and risk behaviors
- Interventions are needed to reduce YMSMs' risk for discrimination, violence, and victimization, including school-based and/or family-directed prevention interventions
- Imperative to develop interventions and services that address the mental health needs of YMSM

Future HYM Research Activities

- Continue longitudinal data collection through January 2008
- Analysis of longitudinal data
- Triangulating ethnographic and survey data and study findings
- Implementation of a strategic communications and dissemination plan, including dissemination to YMSM, service providers, and policy makers

Contact us

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