

Assessing students' barriers to being tested for HIV on Historically Black College and University Campuses

November 6, 2007

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Presentation Outline

- **Need for testing and CDC's HIV prevention Initiative**
- **Rapid Testing demonstration project**
- **Focus groups**
 - **Background**
 - **Methods**
 - **Findings**
 - **Impact**

Too Many African Americans

- **With HIV**
 - 50% of new infections but only 13% of population
 - 61% of persons < age 25 diagnosed with HIV
- **Unaware of their HIV Status**
 - One-third are still never been tested,
 - Two-thirds have not been tested in past 12 months



- **Introduced in April 2003**
- **Emphasis on**
 - **Reducing barriers to early diagnosis of HIV**
 - **Providing better preventive health services for persons living with HIV**
- **Identify undiagnosed infection**
- **One of the key AHP strategies:**
 - **To Implement new models for diagnosing HIV infections outside medical settings**

Rapid HIV Testing in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)

- **Initiated in September 2004**
- **4 sites to provide HIV testing at 7 HBCUs**
- **2 year project**
 - **Demonstrate new models for HIV testing**
 - **Include testing in alternative venues**
 - **Use creative strategies to encourage people to be tested**

Project Sites

- Albany State University, Albany, GA **(ASU)**
 - Fort Valley State University, Fort Valley, GA
- Howard University, Washington, DC **(HU)**
- Jackson State University, Jackson, MS **(JSU)**
- Jefferson Comprehensive Care, Inc., Pine Bluff, AR **(JCCSI)**
 - University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff
 - Philander Smith College, Little Rock, AR
 - Arkansas Baptist College, Little Rock, AR

Demonstration Project Objectives

- Demonstrate the feasibility and acceptability of conducting rapid HIV testing among students and persons
- Increase knowledge of HIV serostatus among individuals within the HBCU community
- Improve prevention and care services for persons identified to be infected with HIV

Project Components

- **Focus Groups with students**
 - Learn about barriers and facilitators to testing for some HBCU students
- **Rapid HIV testing**
- **Surveys**

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Focus Group Objectives

- **Identify:**
 - **Students' perceptions of their risks**
 - **Attitudes and beliefs about HIV and HIV testing**
 - **Institutional, social, and personal barriers to HIV testing**
- **Develop more effective ways to recruit students to be tested**

Methods

- **2 gender-specific focus groups at each of 4 demonstration project sites**
- **African American moderators of the same gender as focus groups**
- **Audio taped / Transcription**
- **Qualitative thematic analysis**

Recruitment

- **Ideal focus group**
 - **Diverse demographics**
 - **Unprotected sex within last year**
 - **Sex with >1 partner within last year**
- **Inclusion Criteria**
 - **Sexually active within the past year**
 - **Not know to be HIV positive**
- **15 participants invited to each focus group**
- **\$50 incentive given to all 15 students**

PARTICIPANT PROFILES

Attendees	ASU n = 20	JCCSI n = 17	JSU n = 20	HU n = 20	Total N = 77 (%)
Freshman	5	4	3	7	19 (25)
Sophomore	2	5	6	3	16 (21)
Junior	8	5	4	4	21 (27)
Senior	5	3	7	6	21 (27)
Off Campus	6	10	9	10	35 (45)
Greek/Sports	4	5	2	9	20 (26)
Other activities	7	8	10	2	27 (35)

ASU - Albany State University; JCCSI - Jefferson Comprehensive Care Systems Inc.;
 JSU - Jackson State University; HU - Howard University

PARTICIPANT PROFILES

In the past year have you?	ASU n=20	JCCSI n=17	JSU n=20	HU n=20	Total N=97 (%)
Been tested for HIV	14	10	15	13	52 (54)
Had unprotected sex	18	17	18	19	72 (74)
Had multiple partners	12	10	14	12	48 (49)

ASU - Albany State University; JCCSI - Jefferson Comprehensive Care Systems Inc.;
JSU - Jackson State University; HU - Howard University

FINDINGS

Perceptions of Risk for acquiring HIV

- **Varied perceptions of the risk of HIV**
- **High risk groups identified by participants:**
 - **Freshmen women**
 - **Students and non students living off campus**
- **High perceived female to male ratio on campus**

Perceptions of Risk for acquiring HIV

- *“I’m a freshman and we haven’t even been here a month and you can see freshman girls sleeping with football players, I mean sneaking in and out all the time.” (Female)*

Perceptions of Risk for acquiring HIV

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- High risk groups identified by participants:
 - Freshmen women
 - Students and non students living off campus
- High perceived female to male ratio on campus

Perceptions of Risk for acquiring HIV

- *“I think when guys just see the ratio and then they got to go sample everything that is walking on campus... they have to go from one female to the next...so kind of like if you sleeping with five girls, and you protect yourself two times, that puts you at risk...” (Male)*

Attitudes and Beliefs about HIV and HIV Testing

- **Most participants thought that many HBCU students were not concerned about HIV/AIDS**
- **HIV testing did not typically come up as a topic of discussion among friends**
- **Discomfort of living with HIV+ persons**
- **Testing Frequency seen as “every 6 months”**

Attitudes and Beliefs about HIV and HIV Testing

- *“I don’t even know how I would bring it up. Because like you sitting there playing Play Station II and you just like... ‘Hey let’s go get tested for HIV’. I wouldn’t... I mean me and my best friends we don’t really talk about it.” (Male)*

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Attitudes and Beliefs about HIV and HIV Testing

- *“I would no longer share drinks or food. I know that it’s not transmitted by saliva but you don’t know people have cuts in their mouth and that would just make me feel a little bit better in that situation.” (Female)*

Barriers to Testing

- **Fear of testing positive and the changes it would bring about**
- **Low opinion of student health services**
 - **Confidentiality / Privacy**
 - **Lower standard of care**
- **Convenience**
- **Knowledge of project testing sites on campus**

Barriers to Testing (continued)

- *“I think my mom would be nervous. She would be like... I know she wouldn't say it but in the back of her head she would be thinking ‘what the hell you be doing down there?’”(Male)*
- *“the people and then... The person giving you the test. The nurses in there going to talk.”
(Female)*

Ideas for Creative Ways to Increase Testing

- **Participants came up with novel ideas for increasing the number of students that could be tested on campus**
- **Large events such as a block party, concert with a popular musical group, step show or talent show**
- **Students could be entered into raffle for a free trip for two to Cancun.**
- **“Competition among HBCUs”**

Ideas for Creative Ways to Increase Testing

- *“Our sponsors would be Beyonce, Faith, Usher...they will perform the concert...Our testing will be from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm. They will give you a ticket when you get [tested]...”
(Mississippi, Female)*

IMPACT

- Findings were used to modify the demonstration project.
- Make HIV testing more feasible and accessible on HBCU campuses.
 - Innovative testing strategies
 - Creative messages

Project implementation recruitment and testing (only) outside of school clinic



Project Implementation Event testing



Philander Smith College,
JCCSI, and the
Gamma Alpha Chapter
of Alpha Kappa Alpha
Sorority, Inc.
presents...

Bless the Mic: The After-Party



DATE: Thursday, March 30 (after the Mr. Essence Pageant)

LOCATION: Philander Smith College Campus, Tate Center

TIME: 10:00 PM – 2:00 AM

ENTRY: HIV Test or "I Know...Do You" T-Shirt ONLY

Guest DJ
Kookieman.com
of Hot 96.5

Schedule of Events:

Monday, March 27 - Free HIV testing at Philander Smith (12:00 PM – 2:00PM)

Tuesday, March 28 - Free HIV testing at Arkansas Baptist College (10:00 AM – 2:00PM)

Thursday, March 30 - Free HIV testing at Philander Smith (12:00 PM – 2:00PM)

Thursday, March 30 - Free HIV testing at UAPB on Thursday (10:00 AM – 2:00PM)

Get tested and receive:

Admission ticket to after-party Free T-shirt Chance to win \$25.00 gift certificate
Philander Smith College • University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff • Arkansas Baptist College

THANK YOU



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