Expanding the Definition of Risk: Integrating Sexual Health & Wellness with Adolescent Substance Abuse Treatment

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Session Overview

• Introductions & Warm-Up
• Background: Need, Prevalence, Practice
• Definition of ‘Risk’
• Benefits of Integration
• Activity: Overcoming Barriers to Integration
• SIROW-HEY Intervention
• Outcomes
• Summary
“Warm-Up”

STAND UP IF...
Background: Current Need

- Arizona youth are at significant risk for unintended pregnancy and STIs, including HIV.

- Adolescents, particularly those who are substance users, lack information on topics such as sex, sexuality, disease transmission and prevention, physiology, and relationships.

- Adolescent substance abuse treatment providers are not experts in sexual health.

- Review of adolescent substance abuse treatment programs indicates a lack of content on sexual health.
## Prevalence and Practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sexual Behaviors</th>
<th>AZ Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2011*</th>
<th>SIROW-HEY Intervention Site, Baseline Data, 2007-2011**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First sexual intercourse… -before age 13 yrs old -at 14 yrs old or younger</td>
<td>46.9%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four or more partners</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AOD use before last sex</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condom use</td>
<td>40.8 did not use a condom during last sex</td>
<td>60% use condoms less than 50% of the time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous sex</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*n=2899  
**n=436
Expanding “Risk”

• “Risky Behavior” - Normal and Necessary
• Healthy vs. Unhealthy Risk-Taking
• Safe Environment & Adult Role Modeling
• Link - AOD Use and Sexual Behaviors
• Developing Protective Factors
Benefits/Advantages

- Holistic approach to wellness
- Self-esteem, peer-pressure, informed decision making
- Theories to Practice
- Additional non-using behavior reinforcers
- Complementary skill building
Overcoming Barriers

Small Group Activity
Overview of SIROW-HEY Intervention

• **The Southwest Institute for Research on Women (SIROW)**
  Health Education for Youth (HEY)
  - Developed for at-risk youth (13 to 17 years)
  - Delivered in various settings (mixed-gender & gender-specific; treatment-residential & outpatient, schools, community, etc.)
  - Intervention includes fact-based and skill-building information and discussion on the following topics:

  - Sex, Sexuality, Gender
  - Body Image & Self-Esteem
  - Puberty
  - Sexual/Reproductive Anatomy & Physiology
  - Men’s/Women’s Health
  - STIs/HIV
  - Safer Sex Protection
  - Negotiation Skills
  - Communication Skills
  - Relationships
  - Substance Use & Sexuality
  - Sleep
  - Healthy Body & Mind
SIROW-HEY Intervention Components

• YOUTH
  – Youth Curriculum
  – Prevention Planning Sessions
  – STI/HIV Testing
  – Visits to Local STI/HIV Clinic
  – Availability of safer sex protection methods
  – Continuing care reinforces health information & practices

• PARENTS/CAREGIVERS
  – Parent/Caregiver Curriculum
  – Email Listserv
  – Support

• STAFF
  – Training
  – Service Coordination
  – Support
SIROW-HEY Approach

• Positive classroom approach
  – Rights & Responsibilities
  – Participant Empowerment
  – Classroom Rituals
• Diverse Learning Opportunities
• Multiple “Safe Adults”
Group Activity

- Is it Normal If…
- What does it mean when a…
- How do I know if…
- Is it possible to…
Training, Fidelity, & Quality Assurance

- Facilitator Training and Certification
- Post-training test (knowledge, soft skills)
- Observation of sessions prior to facilitation
- Teaching performance review
- Completion of Fidelity Forms
- Ongoing In-services
- Periodic observation once certified
# Overcoming Barriers - Revisited

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Strength</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration Amongst Partners</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies &amp; Procedures</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identifying &amp; Accessing Resources</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent Messaging</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact Sexual Decision-Making &amp; Behaviors</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outcomes: Knowledge Test Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>6 months post-baseline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HIV/STIs</td>
<td>57.5</td>
<td>69.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection Methods</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>87.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex and Relationships</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>72.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
<td>64.2</td>
<td>73.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Outcomes: Change in Sexual Risk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pattern of Sexual Risk from Baseline to 6 Months Post-Baseline</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>POSTIVE CHANGE OVER TIME</strong></td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Maintained Low Sexual Risk</td>
<td>71.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Decreased Sexual Risk</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEGATIVE CHANGE OVER TIME</strong></td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Increased Sexual Risk</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Maintained High Sexual Risk</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Outcomes: Engaging Caregivers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent/Caregiver (P/CG) Educational Session Topic</th>
<th>Topic Selected by P/CG</th>
<th>Engaging Parents &amp; Caregivers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relationships/Communication</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>On average, 21 contacts with each parent/caregiver were required to complete two sexual health educational sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Warning Signs</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Answering Difficult Questions</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puberty/Reproductive Anatomy</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexually Transmitted Infections/HIV</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safer Sex Protection Methods</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Summary: Successful Strategies

- Adopt a holistic approach to wellness to include sexual health interventions in treatment settings
- Acknowledge place of adolescent risk-taking and capitalize on healthy risk-taking
- Engage parent(s)/caregiver(s)
- Include treatment staff at all levels
- Work with community partners to provide services & effective collaboration
In Summary: Successful Strategies

- Reinforcement of positive health behaviors with youth by multiple adults
- Understand youth culture and listen to students/clients
- Examine relevant policies and procedures related to sexual health education
- Conduct further research to develop evidence-based practices for improving adolescent sexual health outcomes.
THANK YOU

For questions and more information:

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