

## A WORD FROM THE EXPERTS

# Sisters Saving Sisters!

Evidence-Based Safer Sex Approach to STDs, Pregnancy,  
and HIV Prevention



*This webinar was developed by Child Trends under contract #GS-10F-0030R for the Office of Adolescent Health; US Department of Health and Human Services as a technical assistance product for use with OAH grant programs.*

*Inclusion on the HHS Teen Pregnancy Prevention Evidence Review does not indicate HHS or OAH endorsement of a program model.*



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## Program goals:

- Empower young teenage women to change their behavior in ways that will reduce their risk of becoming infected with HIV, other STDs, and unintended pregnancies.
- Enhance knowledge, skills, and motivation to reduce high-risk sexual behaviors
- Increase confidence/self-efficacy and skills in negotiation, refusal, and problem solving for using condoms.
- Bolster positive attitudes and intentions to use condoms if they have sex.
- Increase correct condom use skills.

## Key components:

- Use of activities and materials in curriculum provides adolescents with the knowledge, confidence and skills necessary to reduce their risk of STDs, HIV and pregnancy by abstaining from sex or using condoms if they choose to have sex.

## Delivery methods:

- Interactive group discussions
- Games/activities/role-plays
- DVDs/Video clips
- Practice and feedback

## ■ **Study #1 –Randomized Controlled Trial**

- ✓ Population: African American and Latina adolescent females (n=682)
  - Urban Adolescent Medicine Clinic
  - 88.6% were retained at the 12 month follow-up
  
- ✓ Findings: Those in the Skill-based Intervention reported:
  - Reduction in frequency of unprotected sexual intercourse
  - Reduction in the number of sexual partners
  - Stronger self-efficacy and intentions to use condoms
  - Reduction in rate of STDs

## ■ Evaluated Populations

- Sexually active African American and Latino Adolescent females

## ■ Target populations

- Latina and African American Adolescent Females
- Multi-ethnic/racial female adolescents who attend adolescent medicine clinics, middle and high schools, and youth-serving community based programs.
- Age 11 to 14 and 15 to 18



## ■ Evaluated settings

- Medical clinic serving low-income inner-city communities

## ■ Other settings

- In school/classroom based
- After school programs
- Youth serving community-based organizations
- Group homes for teens



## ■ Potential adaptations

### ○ Settings

- Community agencies serving the LGBTQ female youth
- Community agencies serving female youth with disabilities
- In-school and after school program and other youth serving agencies

### ○ Cultural Relevance

- Adapt and change the DVDs and the names used in interactive activities for different ethnic/racial groups, while maintaining the integrity of the program

### ○ Target population

- LGBTQ youth, youth with disabilities, incarcerated youth, ethnic-diverse youth ages 11-18.

### ○ Implementation time frame

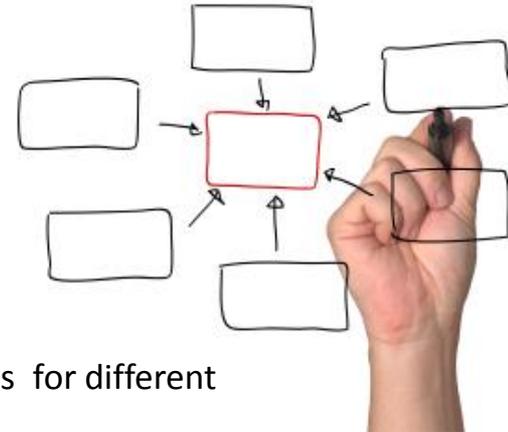
- The 5 modules can be delivered in different ways (e.g.1 module/ day, 2/per day or 4 per day)

### ○ Group size

- Groups can be larger than 8 participants

### ○ Facilitators

- Facilitators can be of different ethnic and professional backgrounds.
- Peer educators can be used



**Note: TPP grantees must obtain prior approval from OAH for any adaptations.**

## ■ Staffing considerations

- Number
  - 2 facilitators (one to serve as back-up)
  - Support staff (e.g. admin. assistant)
- Experience/background
  - Professional background is highly recommended (e.g., nurse, teacher, health educator, social worker, counselor)



## ■ Required/recommended skills

- Formal training on the curriculum
- Experience working with multiracial youth from diverse backgrounds and ages recommended
- Experience in group facilitation
- Comfortable discussing sexual health issues with teens and bolster positive sexual health development
- Be able to relate to youth and their life circumstances, believe in them, and believe in their resilience.

## ■ Training considerations

- Facilitator training model (TOF)
  - A 2-day training program
  - Designed to develop skills in effectively implementing the curriculum
- Train-the-trainer (TOT) model
  - 3-4 days, depending on organizational needs)
- Cost varies with group size and needs
- Training available on-site or at other settings through Jemmott Innovations Group, Inc. and their partnering agencies, e.g., Healthy Teen Network, JSI, ETR, Teenwise Minnesota, Select Media



## ■ Common challenges

### ○ Clinical setting

- Time to do it with fidelity
- Space/room allocation for the group

### ○ School setting

- Policies about sexual health and condom use education
- Parental attitudes regarding sexual health education



## ■ Strategies for success

### ○ Flexibility

- Meet with clinical directors, nurses, health care staff, school boards, principals, and parents to discuss their issues and strategies to resolve them.

### ○ After school and community based programs

### ○ Reach out to partners for wrap-around services

- Recent or planned curriculum revisions
  - Most recent curriculum publication of *Sisters Saving Sisters Facilitator Manual 1<sup>st</sup> Edition* in 2012 by Select Media
  - Statistical and health-related information that may have changed since publication is updated by trainers, as necessary
- Further information on publication of Facilitator Manual is available at Select Media
- Training materials is available through Jemmott Innovations Group, Inc.

- **HHS Teen Pregnancy Prevention Evidence Review**
  - <http://tppevidencereview.aspe.hhs.gov/>
- **Link to implementation report**
  - <http://tppevidencereview.aspe.hhs.gov/document.aspx?rid=3&sid=210&mid=1>
- **Link to model developer's website**
  - <http://jemmottinnovations.com/meet-the-developers/>
  - <http://www.selectmedia.org/programs/sisters.html>

Thank you!

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