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HIV HEALTH MESSAGING AMONG THE BLACK AND QUEER COMMUNITY TOOLKIT

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CENTRAL MESSAGE

HIV risk and infection is not shared evenly in communities around the world. Men who have sex with men (MSM), racial minority groups, people who inject drugs, and sex workers are more affected by HIV risk and infection.¹ Simple and useful HIV health messaging is needed to help people, especially if they are at higher risk of becoming HIV positive, live with HIV, or who are hard to reach.

ABOUT THIS TOOL

Suggestions from this tool came from a literature search that pulled information and recommendations from 26 articles and books, published between 2000 and 2022, about HIV health messaging. The search was done from October through December 2022. This document sums up HIV health messaging recommendations for different groups, including the number of sources that addressed that group, broken out by age range, HIV status, HIV risk, urban versus rural location, resource limited (low income), gender, and vulnerable groups including MSM, injection drug users, and sex workers. Several sources overlap across break out groups.

Age

- Early to middle aged adults (24-48 years) ²⁻²⁶
- Young adult (18-24 years) ^{3,4,6,9,12-17,19,20,23-25}
- Youth (less than 18 years) ^{1,3,9,19-21,24}

HIV positive persons

^{2-4,6-11,18-22,24-26}

HIV at risk persons

^{3,12-17,23-26}

Location

- Urban ^{2,3,5-7,9,10,14,18,19,21,22}
- Rural ^{3,8,9}

Resource limited (low income) ²⁻⁵

Vulnerable groups

- MSM ^{3,10,18,23,24}
- Injection drug users ^{3,22,23}
- Sex workers ^{3,24}



TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Interpersonal Communication

using other people, such as community health workers, doctors, health professionals, friends, or peer educators to give health messaging and support to people at risk of infection or living with HIV. This type of communication can occur in the healthcare setting and in a person's community.

Interpersonal communication examples include:

- Use of community health workers to educate and assist people with their health needs
- Counseling (individual and group)
- Support groups
- Use of peer led health educators

Audience segmentation

means separating groups of people apart by their differences when giving health risk information. An example of audience segmentation is "Black MSMs have a greater chance of HIV infection compared to other races of MSMs in the United States."

Vulnerable persons

are individuals or groups of people that have higher risk of HIV and are harder to reach with health messaging. This may be due to low/limited income, long distance to healthcare services (rural locations), lack of internet or cellular phones, injection drug users, and sex workers.

Message framing

how health messages are most likely to impact health behavior

- Loss framing points out negative things that may happen to a person, group, or community because of activities like having unprotected sex, injecting drugs, and not getting tested for HIV.
- Gain framing points out positive things that may happen to a person, group, or community because of activities like getting tested for HIV, taking HIV medicines, and practicing safe sexual activities.

HEALTH MESSAGING BEST PRACTICES

General society

Mass media campaigns, like television and radio advertisements, have been shown to raise general HIV awareness and help decrease shame or embarrassment of HIV infection for people of all ages. ^{25,26}

Vulnerable persons (HIV+ persons, people who inject drugs, and resource limited persons):

Interpersonal communication is documented to be the most effective health messaging method to affect HIV health behaviors, get and maintain contact with HIV+ persons or those at high risk of HIV across the age range. These recommendations come from six sources that include information about HIV vulnerable persons. ^{1,3,9,19-21,24}

• Interpersonal communication

- Community health workers
- Support groups

• Presence and participation at community-based events

- Night clubs
- Balls
- Pride events
- Digital/live events

• Digital Toolkits/ Reference materials

- Brochures
- Toolkits
- Factsheets

Youth & Teens:

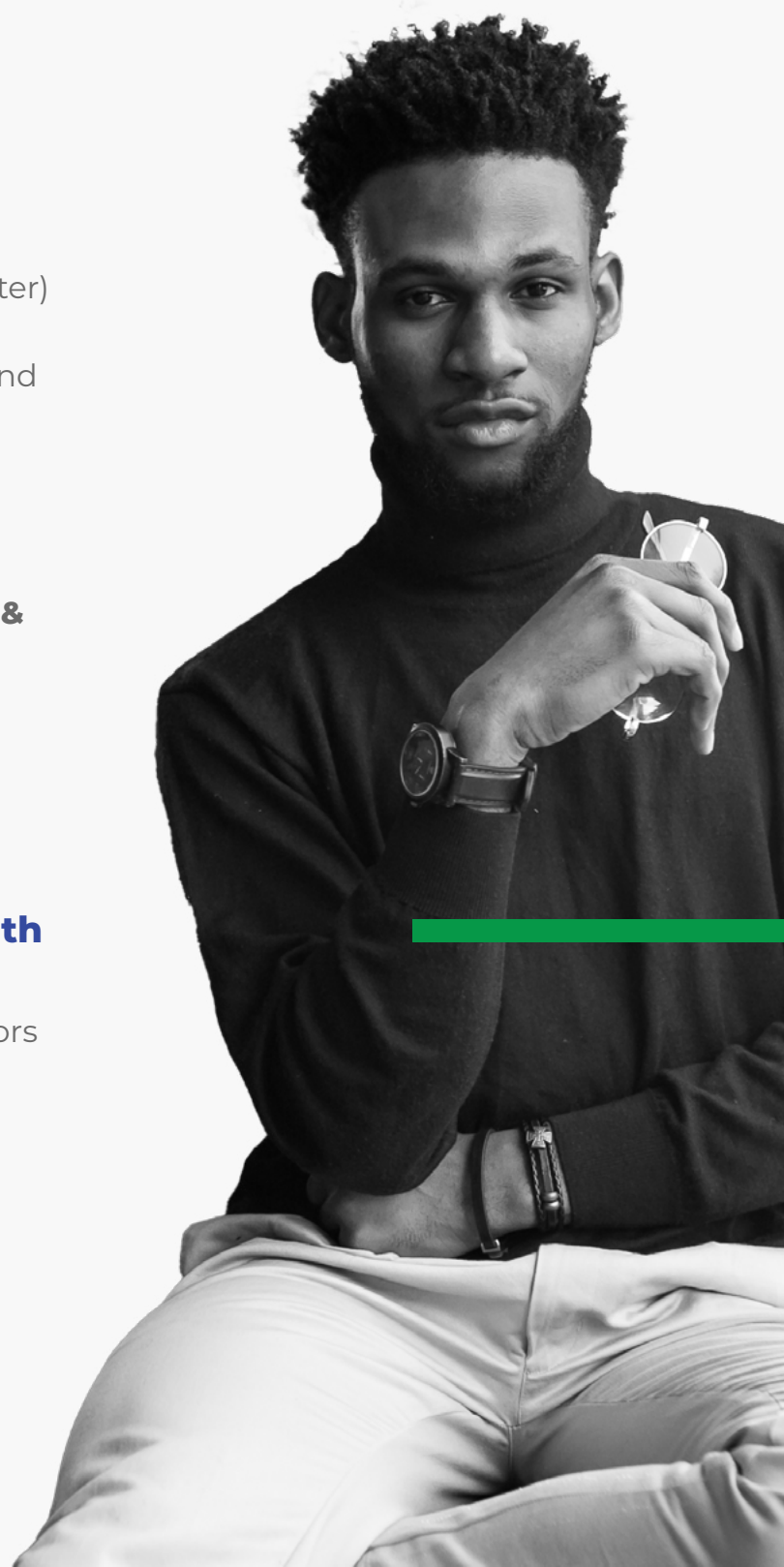
These recommendations come from seven sources that include information about youth and teens and HIV prevention, testing, and treatment.

1,3,9,19–21,24

- **Mass media campaigns for prevention, to encourage HIV testing and treatment, and to reduce shame around HIV.**
 - Online resources (Tiktok, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter)
 - Virtual community listening sessions (Tiktok, Instagram, and YouTube)
 - Television and radio advertisements
 - Animated series
- **Interpersonal communication & community based methods**
 - School-based education programs
 - Youth center education programs

HIV+ youth & vulnerable youth

- **Interpersonal communication**
 - Peer educators and/or mentors
- **Community based resources**
 - Medical clinics
 - School-based education programs
 - Youth center education programs



Young adults

These recommendations come from 15 sources that include information about young adults and HIV prevention, testing, and treatment.^{3,4,6,9,12–17,19,20,23–25} Avoid using targeted audience segmentation particularly for Black and Latino/x folks which may lead to increased perception of shame regarding HIV risk or infection.

- **Mass media campaigns for prevention, to encourage HIV testing and treatment, and to reduce shame around HIV.**
 - Television and radio advertisements
 - Podcasts
 - Booklets/flyers

HIV+ young adults & vulnerable young adults:

Use of loss framed messaging has been shown to be a more effective framing method, especially for young Black women.

- **Interpersonal communication**
 - Community health workers
 - Support groups
 - Individual counseling
 - Peer led educators
 - Use of community-based clinics/organizations to provide ongoing medical management and counseling
 - Partnership with academic institutions
 - » HIV education inclusion into coursework
 - » Use of university health counselors and medical professionals



Middle aged adulthood

These recommendations come from 25 sources that include information about middle aged adults and HIV prevention, testing, and treatment. ²⁻²⁶

- General population for prevention efforts and stigma reduction
- **Mass media campaigns**
 - Television and radio advertisements
 - Conferences
 - Billboards
 - Podcasts
 - Use of newsletters

HIV+ adults & vulnerable persons

Use of loss framed messaging has been shown to be a more effective framing method, especially for young Black women

- **Interpersonal communication**
 - Community health workers
 - Peer led educators
 - Support groups
 - Individual and/or group counseling
 - Use of community-based clinics/ organizations to provide ongoing medical management and counseling

HIV + persons living in rural and resource limited locations

These recommendations come from 6 sources that include information about HIV + persons in rural locations and/or resource limited. ^{2-5, 8,9}

- **Use of SMS messaging to improve health behaviors**
- **Interpersonal communication**
 - Small group discussions
 - Community health workers
 - Support groups
 - Individual/group counseling





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KNOWLEDGE GAPS

The literature suggests that mass media campaigns are useful for general HIV prevention, testing, treatment and to decrease shame.

Interpersonal communication is the most effective way to affect HIV health behaviors and is particularly useful for vulnerable populations across age. However, limited sources could be found for older adults at risk of HIV or living with HIV, and hard to reach individuals who may be at higher risk of HIV infection and untreated HIV infection, and use of technology in urban and resource rich settings. Future funding and research efforts should be directed towards exploring these topics to promote future effective HIV health messaging.

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Creating Possible

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