

Locally-Developed HIV/AIDS Prevention Intervention Profile



New Mexico

Project Title: Positive Adventures
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Population(s) served by this intervention: HIV-positive individuals

Length of time this intervention has been funded: Approximately 10 years

Goals and objectives:

Positive Adventures is an HIV prevention program at the Santa Fe Mountain Center (SFMC), with the following program goals and objectives:

- To create a physically and emotionally safe environment in which HIV-positive participants and their partners have the opportunity to take risks, face challenges, set goals, make choices and express themselves.
- To achieve an increased sense of understanding of HIV and its impact in the participants' sexual practices.
- To discuss factors that enhance or detract from our ability to make healthy choices.

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- To identify personal learning made during the program and verbalize how participants can use these lessons to make positive concrete changes in their own lives.

Intervention specific activities:

The length of the intervention varies from 2-4 days, as a long weekend trip, or spread out over multiple weeks, depending on the group participants, weather and other logistical factors.

Positive Adventures is guided by behavior change theory, with adventure-based experiential education that includes the following activities:

- Ropes course
- Hiking and river trips
- Movie night viewing and discussion
- Wellness programs (e.g. Thai massage, yoga, cooking class)

Social determinants of health/co-morbidities addressed by this intervention:

STD
Viral hepatitis
Substance use/abuse
Mental health issues
Other: Cultural and societal influences

New technologies utilized in this intervention:

Social networking websites (e.g. Facebook, MySpace, etc.): Used to recruit participants into the program

Costs of developing and implementing this intervention:

Currently: \$120,000 per year contract and 2 FTE at the agency to cover multiple cycles of 2 related interventions (Positive Adventures and Adventure Out).

Evaluation findings related to this intervention:

Pre-tests and post-tests, filled out by participants at the beginning and conclusion of the weekend's activities, showed improvements in skills and attitudes.

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Lessons Learned:

Need: Funding: The development and implementation of interventions must be adequately funded.

Need: Patience: It takes time to recruit participants and the implementation of interventions is time intensive.

Need: Agency Staff Training: Agency staff implementing this intervention need to be trained in a high level of facilitation and in these experiential activities.

- Not just anybody can pull this off

"It's a big investment but it has a big return."

The Way Forward:

Currently, the agency is running Positive Adventures for HIV-infected persons of all ages and ethnic/racial backgrounds. With additional funding, sessions can be tailored to specific ethnic groups and/or older and younger persons.

Additional Resources:

Santa Fe Mountain Center website: <http://www.santafemc.org/index.html>

*For more information, including the Positive Adventures curriculum, contact the SFMC.