Listening to the Voices of Women in the Criminal Justice System: Structural Considerations for HIV Prevention

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HIV among CJ-Involved Women

• Impact and importance (Frost et al, 2006; Maruschak, 2005; CDC, 2011)
  – HIV prevalence
  – Multiple disparities

• Unique HIV risk context (Epperson et al, 2009; Kim et al, 2002)
  – Drug Use
  – Sexual Risk Behaviors
  – Social and economic disadvantage

• Need for targeted HIV prevention (El-Bassel et al, 1997; Flanigan et al, 1996; Vigilante et al, 1999; Havens et al, 2009)
Multimedia WORTH  (PI: Nabila El-Bassel)

• Group-based HIV prevention intervention
  – Rikers Island  (El-Bassel, Ivanoff, Schilling, Gilbert, Borne, Chen, 1995)
  – NIDA CTN  (Tross, Campbell, Cohen et al, 2008)

• NIDA-funded RCT

• Sample: 337 *Community-located, CJ-involved* women

• Adapt into computer-based multimedia format
Intervention Development

• Goal: Incorporate quantitative and qualitative findings
  – Criminal Justice Involvement
  – Norms and attitudes

• Two approaches:
  – Qualitative Study
    • Midtown Community Court (N=10)
  – Applying CBPR Principles
    • Community Consultants (N=8)
1- Factors associated with CJ Involvement

• Relationships
  – CJ-involved partner
  – Drug Use, IPV, availability of partners

My baby’s father, he got arrested, and I was talking with somebody else and we had unprotected sex. That was risky because I could have got something from the other male and . . . my baby’s father [would not know] that I had it. See, in my community, the only time when somebody really messes with somebody else is when their boyfriends go to jail. (ID: 014)
Relationships, cont.

• Negotiating safer sex
  – Financial instabilities, sex trading, norms
Findings Shaping Interventions

• Relationship factors
2- Multiple Service Needs

• Mandated and needed services
  – Mandated: Supervision, child custody, employment, avoiding jail, drug treatment
  – Needed: Housing, food assistance, transportation, trauma, IPV-related services

• Norms / attitudes:
  – Perceived necessity of HIV prevention
  – Mistrust, fear, disempowerment
You are talking about women who have a lot going on. Everyone is telling them what to do, and when to do it. They aren’t encouraged to think or act for themselves. And now you’re talking with them about being healthy….they may not be ready to hear that.
2- Multiple Service Needs

• Mandated and needed services
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• Norms / attitudes:
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Findings Shaping Intervention

• Service needs assessment
  – Mandated vs. desired
• Problem solving – goal setting
• Engagement and empowerment focus
• Peer-led recruitment
Recommendations

- Peer-driven interventions
- CBPR approaches
- CJ system as venue for HIV prevention?
- Norms/attitudes: gender, mistrust, disempowerment
- Social and economic disadvantage
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For more information on WORTH:
http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/portfolio/social_work/multimedia_worth.html
Thank you

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