



# National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day April 10, 2018

Research and Resources for  
Youth HIV/AIDS Prevention

**UCSF** Center for AIDS Prevention Studies  
Prevention Research Center  
Division of Prevention Science



## Center for AIDS Prevention Studies (CAPS)

## UCSF Prevention Research Center (PRC)

### Research & Resources

This brochure lists research projects with Youth or young adults as well as helpful resources produced by CAPS/PRC. You might use it to:

- Stay up-to-date on research and learn what we found out from research
- Provide materials in trainings/presentations
- Advocate for services/funding
- Write grants
- Develop new or modify existing HIV prevention programs
- Evaluate current programs
- Connect with CAPS/PRC to develop new projects. Lead researchers (PIs) are listed for each study. Contact us below to connect.

Questions? Comments? Contact Daryl Mangosing via phone at 415-502-1000 ext. 17163 (vm only) or email at [Daryl.Mangosing@ucsf.edu](mailto:Daryl.Mangosing@ucsf.edu)

This brochure was prepared by the CAPS **Community Engagement (CE) Core**, which is previously known as the *Technology and Information Exchange (TIE) Core*.

#### **Acronyms**

**MSM:** Men who have sex with men

**PI:** Principal Investigator (lead researcher on the study)

**CO-I:** Co-Investigator (contributing researcher or research partner)

# Message from the Director

The Center for AIDS Prevention Studies (CAPS) and the UCSF Prevention Research Center (PRC) are committed to HIV prevention research that focuses on youth. On this fifth annual National Youth HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NYHAAD), April 10, 2018, we acknowledge that youth are deeply impacted by the HIV epidemic.

Globally, 610,000 young people between the ages of 15 to 24 were newly infected with HIV in 2016 alone.<sup>1</sup> In the United States; youth aged 13 to 24 accounted for 22% of all new HIV diagnoses. While rates of HIV among young gay and bisexual males declined by 18% from 2008 to 2014, most (81%) new infections in 2015 occur among this population.<sup>2</sup> About 60% of all youth with HIV do not know they are infected and therefore are not treated.<sup>3</sup> Youth living with HIV who know their status are the least likely of any age group to be linked to care and suppress their viral load, two conditions that would allow them to stay healthy and greatly reduce their risk of transmitting HIV to others.<sup>4</sup> We still have much work to do.



Reducing new HIV infections among youth will require that CAPS research continues to address HIV disparities; develops strategies to engage and retain youth in care; and, empowers youth to reduce their risk, make healthy decisions, and test for HIV.

We are excited to share this Research and Resources Booklet with you, featuring our work and highlighting current research portfolios of faculty who have committed their life work to working with community-based research partners to improve our knowledge and understanding of key HIV prevention issues that affect youth. With our dedication, scientific innovation, commitment to rigor, and commitment to community engaged partnerships, it is our continued goal to improve HIV prevention among youth and ensure that our most precious resource has the opportunity for a healthy, bright and prosperous future.

**Marguerita Lightfoot, PhD**  
CAPS/PRC Director  
Division of Prevention Science Chief

1. UNICEF. Adolescents and Young People - UNICEF Data. <https://data.unicef.org/topic/hivaids/adolescents-young-people/>
2. CDC. HIV Among Youth. <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/group/age/youth/index.html>
3. CDC. HIV Among Youth in the US. <https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/hivamongyouth/index.html>
4. CDC. HIV Among Youth [PDF]. <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/group/age/youth/cdc-hiv-youth.pdf>

## HIV Care, Testing, and PrEP

### The CRUSH Project: Connecting Resources for Urban Sexual Health

**Investigator:** Janet Myers (Evaluation PI)

The CRUSH project demonstrated the feasibility and effectiveness of integrating comprehensive sexual health services in a youth clinic to support HIV prevention and care engagement. Lessons learned here: <http://ow.ly/RiiK30igmPc>



Photo: CRUSH Project

### Technology to Connect At-Risk Youth to Testing

**Investigator:** Marguerita Lightfoot (PI)

Peer education and outreach strategies have been successful at reducing sexual risk behavior and increasing the use of health resources in adolescents and other at-risk groups, including adults residing in census tracts where STI rates are high. A potential vehicle for outreach to adolescents is socially interactive technologies (e.g., text messages).

**Research Finding:** *We found that text messaging between peers is a feasible and acceptable strategy and has the potential for impacting HIV testing. Given the low number of youth accessing health care services and STI/HIV screening, innovative strategies such as this one are needed to address the barriers that exist and encourage connection with the healthcare system and STI screening.*

Common approaches for reaching youth are resource intensive, and frequently implemented in schools or community programs. This neglects those youth not connected to such settings, who are often the most in need of services.

### Project T: MSM and HIV Self-Testing

**Investigators:** Marguerita Lightfoot (PI), Sheri Lippman (Co-I), Nicholas Moss (Alameda County Department of Public Health)

Project T aimed to enhance identification of undiagnosed HIV infection and increase linkage to HIV care among African American and Latino gay and other men who have sex with men in Alameda County utilizing HIV self-test kits.

We enlisted 34 members of the African American and Latino MSM and Transgender communities to act as recruiters. Each was asked to identify 5 MSM peers they believe to be sexually active to complete a HIV self-test. A total of 165 tests were distributed to social and sexual network members. Compared to data from the county testing program, men in our sample were more likely to have never tested and more likely to report a positive test result.

Our findings suggest that using a network-based strategy to distribute HIV self-test kits has the potential to increase testing uptake and reduce undiagnosed infections among African American and Latino MSM. <https://projectt.ucsf.edu/>

### Home Testing Among Young, African American Gay, Bisexual, & other MSM

**Investigators:** Greg Rebchook (PI), Susan Kegeles, John Peterson (Georgia State University), David Huebner (George Washington University)

Encouraging young, African American gay, bisexual, and other MSM (YAAMSM) to know their current HIV status in order to reduce the number of undiagnosed HIV cases is an important part of the National HIV/AIDS strategy, but little data exist about YAAMSM's experience with and attitudes toward home testing. To address this knowledge gap, we conducted an evaluation of an Mpowerment Project adapted for YAAMSM in Texas to learn more about their experience with and attitudes towards home testing for HIV.

Given the strong interest in home testing as an option for YAAMSM, the HIV prevention workforce should consider developing strategies to make home testing more widely available and affordable.

**Research finding:** Among the HIV-negative or status unknown participants, 61% said that they are either extremely likely or somewhat likely to use a home kit in the future. Home testing use increased significantly from 19% in '13 to 27.5% in '14.

## Current ongoing projects

### We Are Family: Testing, Linkage and Engagement in Care among African American Gay, Bisexual, and Trans youth in the House Ball Community

**Investigators:** Emily Arnold (PI), Parya Saberi, Susan Kegeles, Torsten Neilands, Lance Pollack, Michael Benjamin (CAL-PEP), Felicia Bridges (CAL-PEP), and Gloria Lockett (CAL-PEP)

This is a 4-year study supported by the California HIV/AIDS Research Program (CHRP) to develop intervention activities that build upon forms of social support already occurring among young people involved in the house ball and gay family communities, specifically in HIV prevention and care. This is a collaboration between UCSF, CAL-PEP, and the house ball and gay family communities. The We Are Family intervention will have four components: group-level sessions, community-level events, an app to connect participants to services and information, and culturally appropriate delivery of HIV-specific services. We will enroll up to 120 participants to test the acceptability and feasibility of the intervention this year.



Photo: We Are Family Study

### Replicating STYLE: Strength Through Youth Livin' Empowered (M+)

**Investigators:** Greg Rebchook (PI), Janet Myers, Susan Kegeles, Emily Arnold (Co-Is), Rob Newells (APEB)

This project is a collaboration between UCSF and AIDS Project of the East Bay (APEB) to adapt and replicate STYLE in Oakland, CA with Black gay, bisexual, and other MSM who are living with HIV. STYLE is an evidence-based intervention that has been shown to improve engagement in healthcare among young MSM of color living with HIV.

### WYZ: A Mobile Health Application for Engagement in Care among Youth Living with HIV

**Investigators:** Parya Saberi (PI), Theodore Ruel (Co-I), Torsten Neilands (Co-I), Mallory Johnson (Co-I)

In the US, fewer than 6% of all youth living with HIV (YLWH) achieve HIV viral suppression. This health disparity extends to the entire HIV care continuum in that there is a strong association between younger age and later HIV diagnosis, lower engagement in care, lower levels of antiretroviral therapy (ART) adherence, and worse HIV clinical outcomes. In response to this critical public health dilemma, our research team proposes to develop a novel mobile health application ("app") to improve engagement in health care and ART adherence and to pilot test this mobile health app in 18-29 year-old YLWH. The aims of our study are to conduct a pilot randomized trial to assess the feasibility, acceptability, and preliminary clinical impact of the use of WYZ (pronounced "wise") among YLWH and their healthcare providers.

**Research finding:** *After numerous individual qualitative interviews and focus groups with YLWH, we have developed WYZ 1.0 and are currently awaiting funding from the NIH.*

Further details of our app can be viewed here: <http://preview.isu.ucsf.edu/wyz-youth-living-hiv>

### Y2TEC: Youth to Text or Telehealth for Engagement in HIV Care

**Investigators:** Parya Saberi (co-PI), Carol Dawson-Rose (co-PI), Valerie Gruber (co-I), Torsten Neilands (co-I)

Youth who are living with HIV (18-29 years old) have poorer health than older adults living with HIV. There are many reasons for this including a lack of youth friendly health care settings. In addition some youth may not be involved in their health care or taking HIV medications regularly because of their substance use. We propose a study to determine if using technology (e.g. videoconferencing, text messaging, or other forms of technology) to provide health care and counseling will result in better and more welcoming health care services for youth living with HIV. We will also examine whether these forms of technology are useful methods to address and decrease substance use for youth living with HIV.

**Research finding:** *We have conducted 17 qualitative interviews with clinicians/staff from 8 different clinics/organizations serving YLWH in San Francisco and Oakland that show system-level (e.g., availability of technology and clinic capacity), provider/staff-level (e.g., privacy and comfort with use), and youth-level (e.g., changing phone numbers and relationship with provider) as barriers to technology use.*

## A Community-Level HIV Prevention Intervention for Young Black MSM

**Investigators:** Susan Kegeles (PI); John Peterson (Georgia State University, Co-PI); Greg Rebchook (Co-PI); David Huebner (University of Maryland, Co-investigator)

This project involves adapting the Mpowerment Project for young Black MSM in Texas and testing its efficacy in reducing sexual risk behavior and increasing HIV testing. The adapted project is called United Black Ellument. The adapted intervention was first implemented in Dallas, and then it was implemented in Houston. The project also involves a qualitative study of young Black MSM who are being followed over several years to see the issues that they face within HIV prevention efforts.

## Community Mobilization to Improve the HIV/AIDS Continuum of Care Among Young Black Gay Men

**Investigators:** Susan Kegeles (PI), Greg Rebchook (Co-PI), John Peterson (Georgia State University), David Huebner (George Washington University)

This project involves using a community empowerment and mobilization approach to help and motivate young black men who are living with HIV to engage in care and take ART medications regularly. This includes adapting the Mpowerment Project so that it focuses, in addition to risk reduction and HIV testing, on helping men deal with internalized and external HIV stigma, support men living with HIV to get support from friends in their social networks, and increase HIV treatment literacy.

## Translational and implementation research

### Prevention Research Center (PRC)

**Investigators:** Marguerita Lightfoot (PI), Greg Rebchook, Janet Myers, Susan Kegeles, Emily Arnold; George Rutherford (GHS); Rob Newells (AIDS Project of the East Bay or APEB)

This project addresses the significant HIV health disparities among African Americans by strengthening community engagement and supporting implementation of evidence-based strategies and approaches.

The PRC will also translate and disseminate HIV science, train students, public health professionals and community members as well as continually evaluate its activities.



Photo: STYLE Project (M+)

## Capacity Building Assistance (CBA) Project

**Project Staff:** Greg Rebchook PhD (PI); Susan Kegeles PhD, James Dilley MD, JoAnne Keatley MSW (Co-PIs)

This project offers capacity building assistance (CBA) to CBOs by providing information dissemination services, training, and technical assistance (TA)—including the facilitation of peer-to-peer learning in order to increase the capacity of the HIV prevention workforce at CBOs to optimize the planning, implementation, and sustainment of interventions and strategies for High Impact HIV Prevention. <http://cba.ucsf.edu>

## Past projects

### Characterizing the Social Environment for STI Testing and Treatment and STI Testing Preferences for Young, Minority

**Investigators:** Sheri Lippman (PI)

We characterized the sexually transmitted infections (STI) testing and treatment environment for young, African American men in San Francisco by: 1) exploring STI services use, 2) barriers to care, and 3) preferences for future diagnostic technologies and testing strategies.

**Research finding:** *Among the African American adolescent males recruited from a high-morbidity neighborhood, the majority of them (86.5%) preferred to seek care at traditional STD testing venues rather than non-traditional venues.*

## CAPS/PRC Resources

Research and publications with Youth:

[https://prevention.ucsf.edu/library/?\\_sf\\_s=youth](https://prevention.ucsf.edu/library/?_sf_s=youth)

Fact Sheets: [https://prevention.ucsf.edu/library/?\\_sf\\_s=youth&\\_sft\\_resource\\_type=factsheets](https://prevention.ucsf.edu/library/?_sf_s=youth&_sft_resource_type=factsheets)

- What are adolescents' HIV prevention needs?  
<https://prevention.ucsf.edu/library/adolescents/>
- What is the role of the family in HIV prevention?  
<https://prevention.ucsf.edu/library/family/>
- Parents and children  
<https://prevention.ucsf.edu/library/parents-and-children/>
- What works best in sex/HIV education?  
<https://prevention.ucsf.edu/library/sex-education/>

Survey Instruments & Scales: <https://prevention.ucsf.edu/resources/survey-instruments>

- Topics include counseling and testing, healthcare providers, risk behavior, adherence, coping, substance use and knowledge/attitudes.

Evaluation Manuals: [https://prevention.ucsf.edu/library/?\\_sft\\_library\\_type=resource&\\_sf\\_s=manual](https://prevention.ucsf.edu/library/?_sft_library_type=resource&_sf_s=manual)

- Good Questions Better Answers: A Formative Research Handbook for California HIV Prevention Programs
- Working Together: A Guide to Collaborative Research in HIV Prevention

Intervention Curricula: <https://prevention.ucsf.edu/resources/intervention-curricula>

- Healthy Oakland Teens Curriculum (adolescents)
- Mpowerment Project (young gay/bisexual men)

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