

Core Elements and their key characteristics

The following chart lists the Mpowerment Project's 7 **Core Elements** and 1 Optional Element. Core Elements are intervention components that should be maintained with as much fidelity as possible to ensure program effectiveness. **Key characteristics**, listed in bullets, represent desired qualities about each Core Element. The key characteristics are based on the Guiding Principles of the Project. For example, the first key characteristic listed under the Core Group is “makes important decisions,” which is in accordance with the Guiding Principle of empowering young gay/bisexual men.

1 Core Element 1

Core Group and Volunteers

- Make important decisions
- Base decisions on the Project's Guiding Principles
- Membership has racial/ethnic/socioeconomic/educational background diversity
- Meetings are fun, social, productive, and scheduled regularly
- Engage in reflective analysis of all parts of Project, own role in Project, and own sexual risk behavior
- Address issues facing young gay/bisexual men
- Learn new skills and conduct meaningful/interesting work
- Support and encourage each other about safer sex
- Create a warm, appreciative, social, and welcoming atmosphere

Core Element 2

2

Coordinators

- Understand HIV prevention and community-building
- Knowledgeable about local young gay/bisexual men's community
- Demonstrate leadership skills
- Oversee all Project activities
- Promote diverse racial/ethnic/socioeconomic involvement
- Support Core Group and volunteers to develop and implement activities
- Begin the safer sex diffusion process
- Engage in reflective analysis of all parts of Project, own role In Project, and issues facing young gay/bisexual men

Core Element 3

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Project Space

- Safe and comfortable
- Accessible and appealing location
- Safer sex and HIV testing promotional posters and literature on display
- Condoms and lubricant available
- Referral information available

Core Element 4

4

Formal Outreach

- Promotes safer sex and HIV testing
- Includes an Outreach Team that goes to venues to distribute safer sex and HIV testing promotional materials and conducts engaging performances
- Helps build community
- Hosts Social Outreach Events that provide social opportunities and promote HIV prevention and are fun and appealing
- Creates opportunities for positive peer influence
- Recruits for M-groups and other Project activities
- Empowers Project volunteers
- Scheduled regularly

Core Element 5

Informal Outreach

- Diffuses a norm of safer sex
- Uses peer influence to change behavior
- Achieved through nonjudgmental and supportive peer interactions
- Reinforced through other Project activities

Core Element 6

M-groups

- Facilitated by well-trained and skilled Project staff and/or volunteers
- Address issues that are important to young gay/bisexual men
- Create social opportunities
- Eroticize safer sex
- Teach and motivate informal outreach
- Teach sexual negotiation skills
- Encourage Project involvement and volunteerism
- Scheduled regularly

Core Element 7

Publicity Campaign

- Creates attractive and informative materials
- Reminds young gay/bisexual men to practice safer sex
- Reaches all young gay/bisexual men in community
- Targets young gay/bisexual men, not general community

Core Element 8

Community Advisory Board

- Serves as resource for Core Group
- Does not have day to day decision-making power
- Uses available local expertise
- Not a required Core Element