

Adaptation of the Mpowerment Project for Young Latino MSM (YLMSM)

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Goals

- To contribute to better adapt and tailor MP to the HIV prevention needs of YLMSM taking into account the sociocultural context of their lives.
- To develop guidelines for CBOs on what issues (cultural, social, and economic) to consider when implementing MP with YLMSM



Specific Aims

- To identify issues influencing HIV prevention needs of YLMSM
- To examine how MP has been implemented with YLMSM
- To develop suggestions on how to operationalize and integrate issues impacting YLMSM into MP



Methods

- Secondary data or data already published
- 6 Focus groups with YLMSM participating in MP projects
- Interviews with 21 staff at agencies implementing MP with YLMSM
- Meeting with a Board of 13 Cultural Experts (BOCE)



Diversity of YLMSM in MP

- **Socio-economic**
- **Cultural**
- **Language**
- **Country of origin**
- **Ethnic and sexual identity**



Unmet Needs of YLMSM

- **Jobs**
- **Education**
- **Legal status**
- **Language**
- **Changing social norms**
- **Addressing HIV prevention**



Cultural Relevance of MP

- **Diversity of YLMSM**
- **Latino cultural values**
 - confianza
 - importance of family
 - respeto
- **Intersection of gay/queer identity and Latino values**



“ ...how to create that sense of *familia*...and of that *casita*. A program with heart, *with corazón*, that will motivate men to come back.”



Addressing Unmet Needs and Individual Empowerment

- **Variety of life skills**
- **Self-esteem/self-worth**
- **Opportunity for self-reflection**
- **Sharing experiences**
- **Learn about HIV and negotiating safer sex**
- **Better deal with life in the US**



Constructing a Healthy Community and Addressing HIV Prevention

- Team building and unity
- Reaching out to subgroups of YLMSM
- Talking to friends
- Mobilization events and activities
- Changing social norms
- Bridge between English and Spanish speakers



Adaptations

- **Unfolding the M-Group**
 - beginning (similar to original model)
 - advanced M-Group
- **Adding a support group**
- **Providing individual Counseling**
- **Forming a group for HIV+ participants**
- **HIV Testing**



Motivation to participate

- Having fun
- Socializing and making new friends
- Social support
- A place to be oneself and “desahogarse”
- “Get condoms without feeling ashamed”
- “Tener más conciencia” about HIV
- Learn to help friends



“Being in a place where you can feel that *confianza* and something you identify with, without being in a place where culture is different and no one is trying to impose their culture on you.... Because of Día de los muertos, Día de las madres, Mexican Independence Day, you feel at home, como en casa. If not the same language, or culture you do not feel that *confianza*.”



MPowerment Does...

- **Create a space/project/movement of YLMSM**
- **Help redefine and transform the life experiences of YLMSM**
- **Address unmet needs and issues of importance for YLMSM at the confluence of ethnicity, race, gender, and sexual orientation**
- **Contribute to HIV prevention, health, and activism**
- **Construct and imagine a healthy Latino gay community**

