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Reaching gay, bisexual, and queer adolescent males: Development and refinement of an online recruitment strategy

Tonya L. Prescott BA[1]
Gregory L. Phillips II PhD[2]
Sheana S. Bull PhD[3]
Jeffrey T. Parsons PhD[4]
Brian Mustanski PhD[2]
Michele L. Ybarra MPH PhD[1]

* Thank you for your interest in this presentation. Please note that analyses included herein are preliminary. More recent, finalized analyses may be available by contacting CiPHR.

[1] Center for Innovative Public Health Research, San Clemente, California, USA
[2] Impact Program, Northwestern University, Chicago, Illinois, USA
[3] Colorado School of Public Health, University of Colorado Denver, Aurora, CA, USA
[4] Hunter College, City University of New York, New York, NY, USA

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Study motivation

- Adolescent gay, bisexual, and queer (GBQ) men represent 70% of new HIV infections among youth in the US (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014)
- Few validated prevention programs exist in the US (Mustanski, 2011; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013)

- 88% of US teens own a cell phone (Lenhart, 2015)
- 91% of cell phone owners text, compared to 33% who use texting apps (Lenhart, 2015)

Guy2Guy: Program description

- Intervention
  - Text-messaging-based healthy sexuality and HIV-prevention program specifically for gay, bisexual, and queer teen guys
  - Six-module program based upon the Information-Motivation-Behavior Model of HIV Preventive Behavior
  - Content tailored on sexual experience
  - Access to Text Buddy and G2Genie
- Control group
  - Blinded and attention matched (e.g., healthy lifestyle messaging)

Eligibility criteria

- 14-18 years of age;
- Male sex assigned at birth;
- Male gender identity;
- Self-identify as: gay, bisexual, and/or queer;
- Owns cell phone;
- Enrolled in unlimited text messaging plan;
- Has texted for at least 6 months;
- Plans to have cell phone number for at least 6 months

G2G advertisements appear on Facebook and partner websites → Individual goes from ad to online screener which they complete → Study manager reviews screeners for eligibility → Study manager contacts those who appear contacts eligible → Eligibility confirmed, assent/consent obtained, capacity to consent, and self-safety assessment completed → Verification text sent to participant → Participant text baseline survey link, completes survey, and is randomized → Intervention participants read and agree to the Text Buddy Code of Conduct

G2G Recruitment and Enrollment Flow

Online recruitment

- 71% of US teens use Facebook (Lenhart, 2015)
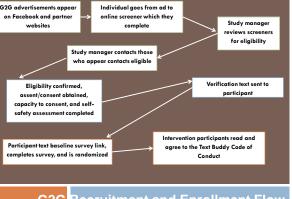- Boy and girls, and those of varying socioeconomic status equally like to use
- Differences in Facebook use apparent by age: older adolescents are more likely to use than younger

- Online recruitment using Facebook is becoming evermore documented in the literature, however gaps exist in terms of *how* it's being used (Lane et al., 2015)
- Few studies use Facebook paid advertising to reach a youth population (Close et al., 2013)
- None specifically focus on LGB population

* Image copyright facebook.com

Designing Facebook campaign

- Benefits of Facebook is that it allows you to target based on key features. For us that meant:
  - location (US)
  - age (14-18 years)
  - sex (male)
  - language (English)
  - "interests" (e.g., LGBT community, katy perry)
- Ongoing monitoring of ads is key because:
  - Facebook updates ad manager regularly
  - Ad performance varies

Example Facebook advertisement

RCT participant demographics (n=302)

Personal characteristics	Control (n=152)	Intervention (n=150)	P-value
Demographic characteristics			
Age (Range: 14-16)	16.3 (1.4)	16.0 (1.3)	0.07
Non-white race	34.2% (52)	30.7% (46)	0.51
Hispanic ethnicity	23.7% (36)	20.7% (31)	0.53
Rural setting	23.0% (35)	23.3% (35)	0.18
Lower than average household income	27.0% (41)	20.7% (31)	0.20
Sexual identity			
Gay	69.1% (105)	76.0% (114)	0.18
Bisexual	39.5% (60)	36.7% (55)	0.62
Queer	7.9% (12)	8.7% (13)	0.81

Conclusions

- Online recruitment strategy is useful reaching a national sample. While telephone-based enrollment strategy allows to facilitate truly informed assent and confirm participants
- Monitoring Facebook ads is critical to ensure efficiency of reaching target audience and Facebook updates ad manager regularly
- With a well-planned recruitment strategy, Facebook can result in a diverse national sample

Thank you!

For more information, please contact:

Tonya Prescott
tonya@innovativepublichealth.org