

Using a Social Justice Framework in Health Education and Medical Care for HIV Positive Adolescents

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Project K.I.S.S.

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Disclosures



Vanessa Ramalho, MA has no financial interests or relationships to disclose.

HRSA Education Committee Disclosures

HRSA Education Committee staff have no financial interest or relationships to disclose.

CME Staff Disclosures

Professional Education Services Group staff have no financial interest or relationships to disclose.



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Learning Objectives



1. By the end of this session participants will gain a working knowledge in social justice education, and how this knowledge can be a critical tool in working with minority HIV-positive youth in medical and community settings.
2. Identify some of the social stigmas and barriers HIV positive youth face in accessing medical care, adhering to medication, and in developing healthier and empowered attitudes toward their HIV-status and their futures.
3. Describe some key strategies in how to implement a social justice framework into existing health education and outreach initiatives and programs.



Project K.I.S.S.

(Know your status, Inform your partner, Stay Safe)

- Ryan White Part D Program
- Adolescent prevention initiative at Pediatric Center for Special Studies.
- Primary purpose:
 - identify through case findings HIV positive youth
 - engage and retain youth in HIV care,
- Mission:
 - is to provide non-judgmental , low threshold, youth friendly health education and HIV testing and counseling to youth 13-24 in New York City and adjacent boroughs.
 - No needles/No parents/No judgments



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Population

- **Age:** Under the age of 24, but falling primarily between the ages of 16-20 years.
- **Race:** Primarily people of color, particularly Black and Latino
- **Sex:** Slightly more than half are young women
- **Gender Expression/ Sexuality:** There are a number of young people who are questioning, or identifying outside of heterosexuality or typical gender norms.
- **Primarily Perinatally Infected:** Most of patients have been part of our clinic since birth, and were born during a time when childhood mortality was expected.



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Our Question:

How can we **mutually** shape patients' medical care and health education and life skill needs to ensure better health outcomes?



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Our Goal:

To ensure that they understood and experienced **equity** and **security** not just in the clinic but in their world outside of our clinic.

Increase patient buy in by making them aware of their ability to contribute positively to society, the clinic, and their own lives by encouraging advocacy

Shift from a hierarchical top-to bottom approach to a reciprocal model that involves youth in decision-making around their health



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Social Justice

Adams, Bell and Griffin (2007) define social justice as both a process and a goal. "The goal of social justice education is full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs. Social justice includes a vision of society that is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure."



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Why social justice?

- Social justice theory suggests that because of structural power and oppression, one's memberships within social identity groups impacts one's access to resources and one's **actual and/or perceived** capacity to utilize those resources.
- When doing the work through a social justice lens, we build awareness around the power relationships we possess and maintain.
- We must provide a space for empowered, equal participation in medical care for our patients.



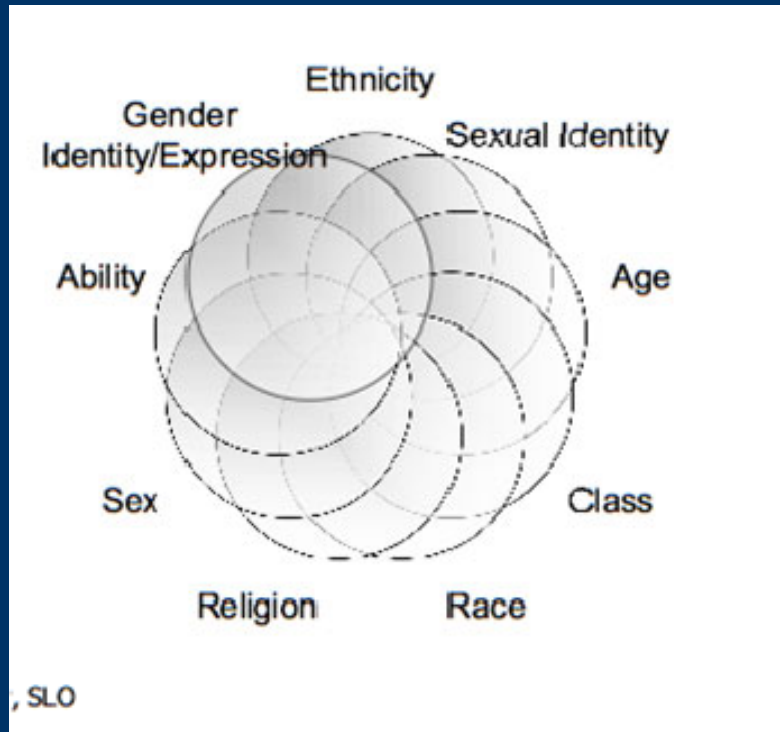
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Intersecting Social Identity Groups



- How does belonging to these different social identity groups affect...
 - Access to resources?
 - Self-esteem?
 - Relationship with doctors, adults, and authority figures?
 - Trust of others and oneself?
 - Values?
 - Perception of illness for HIV positive patients?
 - Perception of risk for HIV negative clients?

How have we incorporated social justice into health education and medical care?

Create curricula that infuses topics of social justice and identity into health education

- Stigma, Gender and Sexuality, A.C.T.! Program (Action and Change Through Theater)



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“Stephen”

19 year old Black male from Brooklyn, NY
Perinatally infected with HIV

- “Participating in workshops with KISS has made me a better person internally and externally in many areas. I have gained more confidence in myself and skills that I can carry a long way. Also you get to meet great people in which they guide you along the way, and I am stronger today because of it.”



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Youth-led training of clinicians and medical providers in social justice issues and diversity, particularly LGBTQ awareness

- Stigma
 - Partnered with GMAD to create awareness around the influence of stigma on HIV positive youth. An early component of an ongoing stigma awareness initiative K.I.S.S. will be developing and implementing this coming year.
- Lost in Translation
 - Translate slang and common terms for clinic staff
- Queer Q & A
 - Short multi-session informational meetings that clarify questions and concerns around young LGBTQ lifestyle and the issues this community faces. Facilitated by youth K.I.S.S. peer advocates.



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Partnerships

- Sadie Nash
- Gay Men of African Descent (GMAD)
- Project SOL
- Young Women of Color HIV/AIDS Coalition (YWCHAC)
- Connect to Protect (C2P)



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Health Outcomes

- Disclosure Increased
- Encouraged Testing among peers
- Partner care:
 - HIV + partners enrolled into care
 - Discordant partners tested regularly
- Increased communication with sexual and romantic partners
- Increased confidence
- Community engagement
- Increased autonomy in health care, eg. Adherence, etc.
- Ability to advocate for themselves



Lessons Learned

- Make a commitment: Encourage staff buy-in
- Create partnerships
- Self-reflection and research
- Train staff
- Involve consumers and youth in leadership roles
- Listen and support
- Ask questions... of others AND of yourself



Resources

- Games for Actors and Non-Actors. Contributors: Augusto Boal - author, Adrian Jackson - transltr. Publisher: Routledge. Place of Publication: London. Publication Year: 2002.
- Gay Men of African Descent. “Understanding Stigma and Discrimination.” Power Point presentation.
- Runell-Hall, Marcella. Intergroup Dialogue Facilitation Training. Center for Multicultural Education & Programs, New York University.
- Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. Edited by Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell, and Pat Griffin.



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