

Making Proud Choices!

FIFTH EDITION

Core Component Summary

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Core Component Summary

Core components are important parts of a program that should be implemented for that program to be effective. They may involve the implementation of the program, including the theme and messages, audience and setting, the implementation schedule, the program leaders and preparation. Core components also include the content of the program activities and the teaching methods (pedagogy) used to cover that content.

This is a summary of the core components in *Making Proud Choices!*

IMPLEMENTATION

Theme/Messages

- ◆ The program title, *Making Proud Choices!*, which emphasizes pride, responsibility and reaching one’s goals and dreams, should remain the same.
- ◆ The messages that, “The proud and responsible thing to do is to use a condom every time you have sex,” and “Protecting yourself will help you reach your goals and dreams,” should remain the same.

Audience and Setting

- ◆ The curriculum may be implemented in a school or a non-school setting.
- ◆ The curriculum is designed for youth who are the appropriate age (i.e., 11–18).
- ◆ The curriculum may be taught to groups of boys only, girls only, or to mixed-gender groups.

Implementation Schedule

- ◆ Outcomes of *MPC* are affected by the dose of the program participants receive. The sessions should be taught so that youth can participate in every module.
- ◆ All curriculum modules should be implemented in order with all of the activities included.
- ◆ The program may be implemented in various delivery formats (e.g., eight sessions of 60 minutes each, four 2-module sessions, two 4-module sessions. The School Edition is implemented in fourteen 40-minute sessions.).
- ◆ The program should ideally be completed within a 2-week period (unless implementing the School Edition). Implementation should not exceed 8 weeks.

Program Facilitators

- ◆ Facilitators for the *MPC* curriculum should be trained and familiar with the *MPC* content, comfortable discussing the material, and experienced in teaching a skills-based program.
- ◆ The facilitators should have credibility with youth.
- ◆ One or two adult facilitators should lead the program.
- ◆ Facilitators must create a supportive and caring environment and demonstrate that they believe in the future of the youth.

Program Facilitators (*continued*)

- ◆ Facilitators must be able to encourage, support and motivate youth in order to build their confidence and self-efficacy for performing the skills of the program.
- ◆ Facilitators should demonstrate empathy throughout the intervention. Youth must understand that instructors truly care about them and their success. Active listening, eye contact, supportive feedback, refusing to pass judgement, etc., are all essential ingredients for this process.

Preparation

- ◆ Appropriate approval to implement the program should be obtained from the school or host organization.
- ◆ Parents should be informed about the program and provide consent and support for their child's participation in the program.
- ◆ Steps necessary to successfully recruit youth must be taken. The facilitators should promote attendance by increasing awareness of the program, communicating to youth that they are happy to see them, making reminder phone calls, providing teasers at the end of each session, and/or completing other activities that will encourage youth to attend.
- ◆ A private meeting space should be secured for implementing *MPC* and the facilitators should be present at all times.
- ◆ Confidentiality should be safeguarded.
- ◆ The facilitators should review preparation needs and obtain needed materials (e.g., videos, data, etc.).

All the activities should be implemented and all the following topics should be covered:

- ◆ **Knowledge** about:
 - HIV and STDs (definitions, transmission, testing and prevention)
 - unintended pregnancy and its consequences
 - condom use
 - problem solving, negotiation and refusals
 - contraceptive methods
- ◆ **Behavioral Beliefs:**
 - Goals and Dreams Beliefs: Sexual involvement might interfere with one's goals and dreams for education and a career
 - Prevention Belief: Abstinence and using condoms can prevent HIV, STDs and pregnancy
 - Partner Reaction Belief: Youth should communicate with partners and advocate for what they want related to abstinence or condom use in spite of the belief that a partner will react negatively
 - Hedonistic Belief: Condoms can be fun and pleasurable

- ◆ **Attitudes** about:
 - contraception
 - safer sex
 - condom use
- ◆ **Perception of Risk** related to:
 - susceptibility to HIV, STDs and unintended pregnancy
 - severity of HIV, STDs and unintended pregnancy
- ◆ **Skills and Self Efficacy** related to:
 - using condoms correctly
 - negotiating abstinence or condom use
 - problem solving
 - refusals

All the activities should be implemented as designed, using the teaching strategies specified. In terms of pedagogy, this means that facilitators:

- ◆ Create a caring and supportive environment by providing frequent encouragement and demonstrating to youth that the facilitators really believe in them and their futures.
- ◆ Clearly state messages about important values and sexual behaviors and emphasize them repeatedly. They focus on pride, responsibility and goals. They also stress that abstinence is safest, but that youth who are sexually active need to know how to engage in safer sex and use condoms.
- ◆ Create a safe, inclusive, and effective learning environment in the classroom by establishing group agreements and including mechanisms for asking sensitive questions, respecting diversity, and actively involving youth.
- ◆ Have comfort with sexual content, including terminology and behaviors depicted/discussed in activities. Facilitators need to be comfortable modeling skills and conducting roleplays and demonstrations.
- ◆ Teach all activities in sequence within each lesson.
- ◆ Address multiple learning styles and use different experiential activities, including videos, worksheets, roleplays and skill practice.

- ◆ Implement all activities using the interactive strategies included in the lessons, as these teaching strategies and activities were designed to influence the theory-based risk and protective factors related to sexual risk behaviors.
 - Encourage brainstorming to allow youth to spontaneously share their knowledge, ideas and/or experience about a topic without being evaluated or criticized.
 - Engage in processing videos after viewing to allow reflection on what is learned.
 - Have students work in small groups to encourage group participation.
 - Use four steps to teach skills: (1) explain the steps to using the skill; (2) demonstrate correct use of the skill; (3) allow time for youth to practice; and (4) provide youth feedback.
 - Implement all roleplaying activities so that youth can practice new skills.
 - Tailor language to increase cultural relevance.
 - Facilitate learning activities in a youth-centered way as much as possible.
 - Present material visually.
 - Reinforce learning with reviews and repetition.
 - Provide clear, succinct directions for interactive activities to ensure they will be carried out as intended.