



# COMMUNICATION ABOUT RISKS AND SAFER SEX\*

## ▶ ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

 **Time:** 60 minutes

 **Objectives:** By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate the importance of communicating clearly with others.
- Assist clients in making and following through with their safer sex decisions.
- Establish a link between effective communication and prevention.

 **Training Methods:** Role Play, Small Group Activity, Skills Practice

 **In This Activity You Will...**

- Explain and organize the role play activity (10 minutes).
- Conduct the role plays (30 minutes).
- Facilitate a discussion about the role plays and communication skills (20 minutes).

 **Materials:**

- Method for breaking people into small groups (play money)
- Handout - Safer Sex Role Play Client Characters (with each scenario on separate strip of paper)
- Flipchart
- Markers
- Masks (optional)—one for each character. These should be cut out and laminated before training.

 **Preparation:**

- Prepare Role Play paper strips

## Instructions

1. Explain that this is an exercise to practice discussing safer sex with clients while maintaining a supportive and nonjudgmental attitude. For groups larger than 10, break participants into triads using three different denominations of play money (e.g., \$1; \$5; and \$10). For groups of 10 or fewer, break into pairs.

*We're going to do an activity now to practice ways to talk about issues with your peers. What are some topics that could be difficult to talk about with someone? [Some possible answers include: sexual orientation, marital status, relationships, drugs, etc.]*

2. Explain that because they will be doing only two role plays, not everyone will have a chance to be in each role. Have the person with the brightest-colored shirt be the counselor; the person with the birthday closest to today's date be the client; and the other person will be the observer. For the second role-play, the observer becomes the counselor; the counselor from the first role play becomes the client and the client becomes the observer.
3. Pass out role-play index cards to the "clients" in each triad, and ask them not to share. Give them five minutes to prepare their roles; then, they can act out the discussion for the group (30 minutes).

*The client's job is to play the character on their index card. The counselor's job is to use what s/he has learned in the workshop while counseling the client. The observer's job is to give the counselor honest feedback about strengths and areas for growth. Counselors should take in the feedback without dismissing compliments or making excuses.*

4. Allow 10 minutes for each role-play—six minutes to role-play and four minutes for feedback. Cue participants to switch. Trainers should check in with all groups. Also, some groups might need help reading cards, so trainers should be available to assist.

\* This module comes from Duke University, Partners in Caring; Center for Creative Education, 2006.

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## ► KEY POINT

It is important that peer educators demonstrate non-judgmental communication.

5. After 30 minutes, call group back together and process with the following questions (20 minutes):

- What did you learn about listening?
- What was successful?
- What was difficult?
- What will you do the same way or differently when talking to peers in the future?

## Summary

- It is important that peers help clients identify their prevention support needs.
- Communicating effectively is hard work and takes practice.

\* This module is part of the online toolkit Building Blocks to Peer Success. For more information, visit [http://www.hdwg.org/peer\\_center/training\\_toolkit](http://www.hdwg.org/peer_center/training_toolkit). This module comes from Duke University, Partners in Caring; Center for Creative Education, 2006.

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## SESSION HANDOUT

### SAFER SEX ROLE PLAY CLIENT CHARACTERS

#### **Frita/Freddie Frightened**

You are in an abusive relationship.

You have been having unprotected sex, and know your partner is cheating on you. Tell your counselor: “I’m afraid I’ll get hit if I ask my partner to use a condom.”

#### **Teresa/Thomas Too-late-Now**

You’ve had unsafe sex a couple of times with your new partner. Tell your counselor that you don’t see why you should have safe sex now—if you are going to catch something you would have already and it’s too late to do anything about it.

#### **Sally/Sammy Sex-Worker**

You are a prostitute and sometimes your Johns don’t want to use condoms, or they offer to pay you a lot more to go without. Tell your counselor that you really need the money.

#### **Geraldine/George Go-Down**

You are HIV+, heterosexual or bisexual and date a lot.

You’ve had several sexual partners in the last year.

You use condoms for vaginal/anal sex, but not for oral sex. Ask your counselor if s/he thinks that’s okay.

#### **Carlotta/Charles Caught-in-the-Moment**

You are currently in non-monogamous relationships with two men. You always have the intention of having safer sex, but you hate the way latex feels.

Sometimes intercourse even hurts with latex whereas it feels fantastic without. Frequently you get caught up in the passion and don’t use a condom for several minutes, or sometimes the whole time. This happens with both partners. Tell your counselor that you’re worried about your risk.

#### **Maria/Martin Mood-Saver**

You are a single person who has dated several people in the last year. Sometimes you have unsafe sex because it feels like dragging out the latex will ruin the mood. Tell your counselor that you just don’t like condoms. (Make your counselor ask why.)