

# Developing and utilizing a Young Adult Advisory Board (YAB) to improve intervention effectiveness

## BACKGROUND

The purpose of STYLE 2.0 is to support the implementation and evaluation of evidence-informed models of care designed to engage, link, and retain Black Men who have Sex with Men (BMSM) in HIV medical care and supportive services.

### Target Population:

- HIV positive
  - 18-35 yrs old
  - Black
  - Men who have sex with men
  - Cisgender men
- HIV Care Status:
- Newly diagnosed/new to care
  - Never entered into care
  - Fallen out of care
  - At risk of falling out of care
  - Not virally suppressed

### Intervention Components:

- Social Marketing Campaign & Outreach
- STYLE 2.0 HealthMpowerment App
- Health Care Navigator
- Medical-Social Support Network
- Ancillary Support Services
- Mental Health/Substance Use Intervention
- Support Groups

## YAB RECRUITMENT

- Health Care Navigator known in the community, able to recruit individuals to join the YAB through personal connections
- Word of mouth; as participants joined the YAB, they were able to share with others they knew in the community
- Medical providers identified individuals they believed would be a good fit
- Individuals offered to be part of the YAB if they identified as a peer group to the target population and identified their HIV care status as currently enrolled in care and doing well



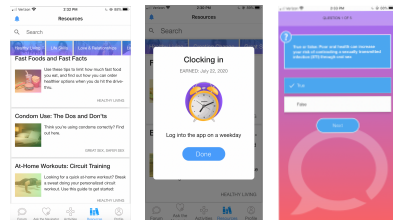
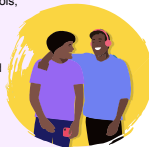
## YAB DEVELOPMENT

- The YAB formed prior to any engagement in project activities in order to have feedback on all aspects of project prior to implementation
- Planned to engage 6-8 individuals, enrollment has fluctuated from 3-7 members throughout the project period
- Members attend meetings as needed, generally on a monthly basis
- Meetings generally last 1-2 hours
- YAB members receive a \$35 e-gift card to attend meetings

## YAB ACTIVITIES

The YAB reviews and provides feedback on a wide range of STYLE 2.0 materials (e.g. logos, advertising materials, app content, protocols, and surveys) to determine ways to optimize the material for YBMSM:

- Recruitment materials – The YAB found that the original materials were not unique enough to catch potential participants' eyes, and they made suggestions to add more color and images to improve engagement (e.g. the graphic on the left was redesigned into the graphics on the right using YAB feedback)
- Screener – From a group of example screeners, the YAB determined which screener was best and shared information to change the introductory language:
  - "Be wary of clinical wording. Turns people off, makes it seem too impersonal and research-y"
  - "First paragraph: last sentence lacks emotional support (I didn't feel like I wasn't being embraced). Too clinical. Need content to be friendlier and actually appealing towards the audience"
  - "The last question about needing resources for managing health seems iffy as it stands right now. Someone might see the last question and answer they have enough resources because they're just managing enough even if they're technically at risk"
- Tested timing of screener and surveys for protocol development
- App content:
  - Graphics
  - Activities – suggested various quizzes
  - Articles – reviewed and offered feedback to help make articles longer and better connected; Suggested articles to address various topics including online dating profiles and messaging, limiting fast food consumption, and oral health



The YAB provides critical feedback on STYLE 2.0 app engagement activities including articles, badges, and quizzes

## LESSONS LEARNED

- Regularly scheduled meetings are great, but given that many members work varying schedules, we found it to be helpful to poll individuals prior to a meeting and arrange meeting times when they were available
- Flexibility in YAB member enrollment, this population can be quite transient so being flexible in bringing on new members and working with individuals remotely has allowed the YAB to thrive
- The YAB has been especially excited about building a BMSM community, having a larger goal outside of just helping the project succeed has given individuals buy-in to the YAB and created a foundation for a growing community

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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