Counter Narrative Project in collaboration with Harm Reduction Coalition and BEAM Present

The Coldest Silence:
Crystal Meth and the Impact on Black MSM

Wednesday, August 15, 2018
Agenda

- Welcome and Introduction
- Instructions for Q&A
- Introduction of Presenters
- Learning Objectives For Webinar
- What is Crystal Meth?
- Risk Factors Associated With Using Crystal Meth
- Methamphetamine Use Among Black Gay Men
- Presenters:
  - Justin Smith
  - Dr. Nathaniel Currie
- Q & A
Speakers

Moderator

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Presenters

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Dr. Nathaniel Currie, DSW, MSW, LCSW
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“Silence is a way to grin and bear it. A way to not acknowledge how much my life is discounted each day ... Black men loving Black men is a call to action, an acknowledgement of responsibility. We take care of our own kind when the night grows cold and silent. These days the nights are cold-blooded and the silence echoes with complicity.” - Joseph Beam
Learning Objectives For Webinar

- Provide information on crystal meth and its impact on Black gay men;
- Providing service providers and community advocates with information and tools to serve Black gay men who use crystal meth;
- Provide practical harm reduction strategies in service of Black gay men who use crystal meth.
What Is Crystal Meth?

• Crystallized methamphetamine, a type of amphetamine.
• The term amphetamine refers to a group of synthetic drugs that stimulates the central nervous system by increasing the amount of certain chemicals in the body.
• Other common names for crystal meth are: chalk, crank, crystal, ice, meth, speed, T and Tina.

For more information visit: https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/methamphetamine
Considerations When Using Crystal Meth

• Overamping
• If sharing injection or snorting equipment, increased opportunity of acquiring HIV or Hep C
• If using during sex, increased opportunity of acquiring HIV or other STIs. There’s also increased opportunity for injury due to being mentally compromised and the increased friction from intercourse may form dryness

For more information visit:
Methamphetamine Use Among Black Gay Men

- Participants reported using multiple substances and used, on average, nine days within the last 30 days.
- They spent an average of US$159 per month on methamphetamine and a median of US$398 on all substances.
- Primarily used in private venues, such as at home or in the homes of friends, and reported obtaining methamphetamine from multiple sources.
- Men who reported exchanging sex for methamphetamine reported greater use in public venues, such as sex clubs, sex parties and circuit parties.

For more information visit: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19301167
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My Outreach Experience

- What kind of work do I do?
- What is the population that I serve?
- What is the nightlife in Atlanta, and why is it important that I understand it?
How My Experience Informs My Work

● How my personal experience with crystal meth informs my outreach
  ○ How do I reach Black gay men?
  ○ How do I encourage prevention and testing?

● How I use my position to reach people.
  ○ Sharing personal experience
  ○ Use facts
  ○ Focus on joy & laughter
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Safety & Recovery Through Harm Reduction

- Trauma Therapy- Address emotional or mental health concerns, address trauma history, learn or relearn how to have healthy relationships/attachment.
- Community Support Groups- Generate connection, Empowerment/ownness of your story, share your concerns/struggles and receive peer support/advice, buddy system
- Disconnect Sex with Crystal Methamphetamine use-
  - “Hardest Part”, “Hard to break up this relationship”
  - “Abstinence often does not work... just made me want sex more”
  - “Stay away from hook up apps... these apps got me in trouble every single time”
  - “It’s hard to unlearn years and years of unhealthy sexual behavior”
  - “If you can, seek out the help of a sex therapist in addition to a psychotherapist”
Harm Reduction Interventions

- Harm Reduction Interventions from those that have used/in recovery
  - Look for new/clean needles
  - Be aware of your surroundings
  - Drink lots of water
  - Buddy system- “have somebody looking out for you”
  - Watch the syringe being prepared
  - Decide for yourself how much you use/take, don’t leave the decision up to somebody else
Harm Reduction Interventions

● Harm Reduction Interventions from Providers
  ○ Assess readiness: Contract with client to use less or reduced number of days used instead of “quitting”
  ○ Set client up for success: Provide safety and resource number; help program them, provide client with access to harm reduction materials, condoms, access to PrEP, clean needles, wipes, linkage to health insurance resources, check in calls/texts.
  ○ During face to face/ telephone conversations allow yourself to be present, to listen, to show empathy, without judgement, or panic, or making your priorities the clients.
  ○ Client have a right to self determination.

● Case Example

● Other Thoughts
Thank You