Formal Outreach—Social Outreach Events and Outreach Team

Objectives

To familiarize you with the elements of the Mpowerment Project’s formal outreach, including:

1. Social Outreach Events (ranging from events that attract 10 men to events that attract 200-300 or more men)
2. The Outreach Team, and
3. Outreach materials that promote safer sex and testing.

What you’ll find in the Appendix to this module:

- Figure 7.1 Sample timeline for planning large and medium sized Social Outreach Events
- Figure 7.2 Sample monthly events calendars
- Figure 7.3 Sample weekly event email reminders, Austin, TX
- Figure 7.4 Sample weekly event email reminders, Albuquerque, NM
- Figure 7.5 Sample Outreach Team Planning Form
- Figure 7.6 Outreach Team Evaluation Form
Formal Outreach is a critically important component of the Mpowerment Project. As most AIDS service organizations can attest, very few young gay/bisexual men will seek out HIV prevention services on their own. Instead, an effective HIV prevention program must reach out to these young men where they are, or attract them to activities that are naturally appealing to them and then, once they are there, promote safer sex and testing within the context of the event. The Mpowerment Project uses a variety of creative and innovative approaches to reach young gay/bisexual men with safer sex and testing messages.

Formal Outreach is different than Informal Outreach (See Module 8: Informal Outreach). Formal Outreach refers to the Social Outreach Events that the Project conducts and to the Outreach Teams who engage the community in fun, interactive HIV prevention activities. Informal Outreach involves young men talking with their friends and acquaintances about the need for HIV testing and safer sex in order to establish safer behaviors as the community norm.
The elements of Formal Outreach

**Social Outreach Events**
The Project attracts young gay/bisexual men to it by sponsoring fun, interesting Social Outreach Events where safer sex and HIV testing is promoted, although HIV testing is not offered during the events themselves. The events provide participants with opportunities to make friends who can support them in HIV prevention and in becoming further involved with the Project. The outreach events are social in nature, and they range from large dances and parties to smaller activity groups and video nights. They give young gay/bisexual men a chance to meet and socialize while also being exposed to safer sex messages. In addition, these Social Outreach Events provide opportunities to invite young gay/bisexual men to participate in M-groups and other Project activities.

**Outreach Team**
A group of young men conduct engaging, interactive, and creative performances at community venues and at the Project’s larger Social Outreach Events. Outreach Team performances involve a group of volunteers who go to settings frequented by young gay/bisexual men, including bars and gay community events, as well as larger outreach events that the Project sponsors. There they promote safer sex and testing using entertaining and often humorous approaches. As part of these performances, the Outreach Team distributes safer sex promotional materials developed by the Project. Other Outreach Team performances use the same approach to publicize the Project in general or advertise specific, upcoming outreach events.

**Outreach Materials**
The Project creates attractive and engaging printed materials to distribute to young gay/bisexual men. The materials promote HIV prevention by focusing on issues of special concern to young gay/bisexual men that may be barriers to safer sex and to testing.
Rationale for the use of Social Outreach Events

In designing the Mpowerment Project, we conducted extensive research into what accounts for high-risk sexual behavior among young gay/bisexual men. This research clearly shows that many young men are not sufficiently motivated by or interested in HIV prevention issues to seek help in changing risky sexual behavior (See Module 1: Overview). We learned, for example, that when community-based organizations offer safer sex workshops and other HIV-prevention services, very few young gay/bisexual men attend.

We also discovered that many young gay/bisexual men tend not to read safer sex promotional materials and are likely to throw them away. The reason for this is because many of these materials still contain the same sorts of messages found in more traditional HIV prevention materials. They often tell the reader how to behave (“use condoms,” “don’t have unsafe sex,” and so on), and these messages do not fully address the HIV prevention needs of most young gay/bisexual men.

In contrast to the lack of interest in HIV/AIDS, social concerns are highly motivating for young gay/bisexual men. They are very interested in opportunities to meet other men of their own age, and to find places besides bars and nightclubs where they can socialize. Many are seeking a sense of community and therefore desire stronger, more supportive social ties with other young men. So if the goal is to attract large numbers of young gay/bisexual men, it makes more sense to host a fun event than to offer a safer sex workshop. Once they have come together for a Social Outreach Event, the event provides an excellent opportunity to promote safer sex and testing and to recruit them into further involvement with the Project’s activities. Therefore, a focus on attracting young gay/bisexual men through addressing social concerns is one of the Project’s Guiding Principles. Although young gay/bisexual men want to feel connected to each other, there are relatively few physical spaces where they can gather. Gay bars and public cruising spots are often the only non-virtual places where young gay/bisexual men can meet and socialize. Usually these two venues do not lend themselves to developing a strong, supportive, and healthy community. In fact, both settings are problematic in meeting young gay/bisexual men’s social needs or in addressing at-risk sexual behavior. Generally bars only admit men who are 21 years of age or older, and they promote alcohol use that can facilitate opportunities to engage in sex while high. Engaging in sex while high has repeatedly been found to contribute to unsafe sex. Public cruising spots are often dangerous and limit social interaction. In addition, condoms are rarely available there.

Some communities have a university nearby, and many universities have a Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender (LGBT) student group on campus. However, these groups are often only open to college students. Even when student groups are open to the larger community, the groups are designed for students and typically focus on their particular needs, which may alienate non-students. Furthermore, university groups are frequently perceived as “too political” or “too out” for many young gay/bisexual men, or primarily focus on issues of importance to lesbians.
Being part of a supportive, health-promoting gay community, rather than only having a few gay friends, means that a young man can hear supportive messages about being gay, and about having safer sex and HIV testing from many people.
Social Outreach Events

Since most young gay/bisexual men will not seek out HIV prevention services, attracting them to Social Outreach Events is an excellent way of reaching them so that they can be recruited to attend M-groups, join the Core Group or volunteer with the Project. Social Outreach Events are also an excellent way to attract men who would never show up for any activity that is promoted as pertaining to HIV prevention. Our research showed that many young men who engage in unsafe sex were unlikely to attend M-groups, volunteer with the Project, or join the Core Group. However, they were more likely to attend Social Outreach Events, as well as being reached by their friends through informal, supportive conversations (See Module 8: Informal Outreach). Therefore, Social Outreach Events and Informal Outreach by their friends may be the best ways to reach many risk-taking men about safer sex and testing.

Planning and producing Social Outreach Events

It’s very important to create fun events in settings that will attract a diverse crowd of young gay/bisexual men where safer sex can also be promoted. Social Outreach Events must capture the attention of young gay/bisexual men in order to be effective. It is up to the event organizers to be as creative as possible in coming up with ideas and methods that will appeal to this age group. The following suggestions will help you to design and implement a successful Social Outreach Event.

The common complaint of young gay/bisexual men is “There’s nothing to do here.”
If conducted successfully, Social Outreach Events accomplish a number of important goals for the Project. Project Coordinators should keep these goals in mind when planning, implementing, and evaluating outreach events.

The Project facilitates the empowerment of young gay/bisexual men, so that ultimately they can help themselves and create solutions to their own issues. The goals of every Social Outreach Event reflect this Guiding Principle. Event goals (See below) pertain as much to the men who help plan and implement the events as to those who attend them. In fact, our research has demonstrated that working together on Mpowerment Project events is empowering for many men and increases their sense of community and social responsibility.

**Goals of Social Outreach Events**

- promote safer sex
- promote HIV testing
- attract young gay/bisexual men, including those who would not typically attend HIV prevention activities
- provide enjoyable social opportunities for young men to meet each other, build supportive friendships, and create a sense of community
- recruit men to M-groups
- recruit men to volunteer for other Project activities
- facilitate the empowerment of the Core Group and volunteers in planning the event and reflecting about it afterwards
- increase morale and team building among Core Group members
- create good publicity that attracts more men to the Project

**Determine specific responsibilities**

The Core Group decides what activities will take place. It is also the Core Group’s job to make sure the activities actually happen, and that every Social Outreach Event promotes safer sex in some way. The number of people involved in planning and implementing each event may vary depending on the event’s size and complexity. A large, community-wide event may require the careful attention of the Events Coordinator and an event committee, and a Team of volunteers may also be necessary. However, a single Core Group member may be able to plan and implement a video night or book group on his own. For large events, the Events Coordinator and event committee members are responsible for actually planning the details and carrying out the event. The Outreach Coordinator, together with the Outreach Team, is responsible for planning the details of safer sex promotion for each event. *(The Outreach Team and ways to promote safer sex at outreach events are discussed in detail later in this module.)*
To make sure a large Social Outreach Event is a success, the event committee must anticipate and pay attention to many details, while at the same time making sure that the event also meets the Project’s broader goals. Depending on the event, individual volunteers or subcommittees may need to plan its various aspects including the timeline, budget, publicity and materials, decorations, food, entertainment, and safer sex and testing promotion. To assist in this process, we have developed the Mpowerment Project Event Planning Form. We recommend using this form for all events. (See Module 12: Evaluation, figure 12.7 for a copy of the Mpowerment Project Social Outreach Event Planning Form.)

For smaller events, it is also important that the host anticipate and plan for all the necessary details, such as the recruitment of new participants into M-groups, having safer sex materials available, organizing the equipment needed, arranging for the Project space to be unlocked, etc. The Mpowerment Project Event Planning Form is useful for planning the smaller Social Outreach Events as well (See Module 12: Evaluation, figure 12.7 for a copy of the Mpowerment Project Social Outreach Event Planning Form).

Keep in mind that an important goal for the event is creating a sense of empowerment and community-building among the young men who plan and carry out the events. Remember—the process of planning and conducting the event is as important as the event itself. This is best accomplished through teamwork. As many participants as possible should have the opportunity to provide input in designing and carrying out the event. This will help them feel ownership of the event and of the Project itself, and will motivate them to speak with their friends to encourage them to join the Project.

Get input from the Core Group early on

Although it may seem easy to throw a successful party or other Social Outreach Event, each requires a great deal of planning and thought in order to accomplish Project goals. Planning is required regardless of the size of the event, although obviously more planning—and hence more time and effort—is required for larger events. Such planning often extends over several meetings.

The first step in planning a large Social Outreach Event is for the Core Group to work together as a team to develop a good idea. The best themes for Social Outreach Events arise when the Core Group takes the time to brainstorm and discuss a variety of options during a Core Group meeting. The Project Coordinators can best facilitate this brainstorming process by encouraging each Core Group member to suggest ideas, regardless of how outlandish they are. Generally, no feedback or evaluation is offered during the brainstorming process. This helps encourage creativity and innovative thinking. The most ridiculous suggestion may spark an idea that has tremendous potential for a great outreach event. One Coordinator can write up every idea on a flip chart, while someone else facilitates the discussion.

After the Core Group generates a large list of ideas, a quick group discussion can eliminate those suggestions that no one is really interested in. After paring down the large list of all the ideas to one of a more manageable size,
the Coordinators can facilitate a group discussion on the pros and cons of each idea. After this discussion, each Core Group member votes on his top 3 to 5 choices. The suggestions that get the most votes then become the “finalists.”

Before making the final decision about which idea to use, we suggest that Core Group members test market the ideas with other young gay/bisexual men in the community. The easiest way to do this is simply by having Core Group members talk with their friends between Core Group meetings to see which of the ideas they like the best. The Core Group members should also note any additional ideas their friends suggest. This process helps everyone feel involved, starts publicizing the event, and is much more likely to result in success.

When the Core Group returns for the next meeting, each member can share his experiences and feedback about the various ideas, and the Core Group can then decide which event to produce. We recommend that the Coordinators save the list of suggestions, because this list can be used to select future events as well. In fact, reminding the Core Group that the “runner-up” ideas can become themes for future events often helps speed up the decision-making process.

Having the Core Group spend time creating an event is important because it helps them develop critical analysis skills. Learning to be reflective about goals and objectives of Social Outreach Events, who attends, and how to integrate HIV prevention into an event can help members to be more analytical about their own lives.

Here are key issues for the Core Group to consider in planning an event:

- **What is the size and budget of the event?**
- **What are the goals of the event? How will we know if they are achieved?**
- **Who in the community will the event appeal to?**
- **What groups of young men might be alienated by the event?**
- **What are the opportunities for promoting safer sex and/or HIV testing at the event?**
- **What “party favors”/safer sex promotional materials will be given out?**
- **What events may be happening in the community on the same date that may compete with a Project-sponsored event, or that offer possibilities for collaboration?**
- **Is the location accessible to young gay/bisexual men, in an appealing location, and near public transportation?**
- **How will participants at the event be informed about the Mpowerment Project and be invited to become volunteers or attend M-groups?**
- **Is there sufficient time to plan and carry out the event?**
Choose dates carefully

Make sure there are no competing events happening that will draw away lots of young men from your event. For example, it is not a good idea to schedule a big party the week before final exams at a local university if a sizable proportion of the men in the young gay/bisexual men’s community is attending college. During popular holidays like Halloween or Christmas it is sometimes better to hold holiday themed events weeks before the holiday itself. This way the Project can host the first holiday event of the season. This leaves the busier holiday schedule free for men who may have other commitments to family and friends. Similarly, it is not advisable to schedule a discussion group at the same time as television programs that are the most popular with these young men. Sometimes it may be possible to schedule a Project event on the same day as another event by collaborating with organizers of those activities.

Use a team approach, but also designate an event chair

Once an initial idea and date are chosen for each event, an event chair should be designated to oversee and coordinate it. For larger events, usually the Events Coordinator serves as the event chair unless there is a long-term, very reliable Core Group member who wants to volunteer. The event chair then organizes the event committee—a team comprised of Core Group members and interested volunteers who plan and conduct the event. Reliable Core Group members can also be recruited to host smaller, weekly or ongoing events.

For large events, the event committee should involve many young gay/bisexual men in the work of organizing and carrying it out. Working together on an Event Planning Team while having fun is a great way for Project volunteers to get to know each other and serves as a team building experience. It also creates a sense of ownership of the event, which then extends to the Project and its goals. Furthermore, having a team of participants attend to an event’s details is a great way for men who have never before organized complex events to gain valuable experience.

An effective event chair will:

- determine which skills will be useful in producing the event
- find out what special skills volunteers have who are on the event committee
- invite volunteers to be involved in the areas needed for the event
- support and recognize the work of the volunteers throughout the planning process
- One volunteer may have DJ experience, while another may be skilled with decorations. The goal is to fully involve as many people as possible so they feel a sense of ownership while putting on the event, and pride and accomplishment after an event is over.
- When events are carefully executed, it is likely that volunteers will have had a good time working on them, experience effective HIV prevention promotion, and come away with a positive view of the Project. This positive experience increases the likelihood they will want to become more involved with the Project and tell their friends about it. For all of these reasons, we believe the process of planning and creating a Social Outreach Event is as important as the event itself.
Make a timeline

Once you have selected a date for large or mid-sized events, make a detailed timeline of everything that needs to be done. *(See Figure 7.1. in the Appendix to this module for a Sample Timeline for Social Outreach Event Planning.)* There are a tremendous number of details that need to be attended to, particularly when planning larger events. (For smaller events, a checklist may suffice.) These include such things as publicity, safer sex promotion and/or testing promotion, refreshments, entertainment, and decorations. Many of the details are dependent upon other details being worked out. For example, if you want to advertise an upcoming event in a newspaper, you need to know the deadline for placing the ad. If a newspaper comes out monthly, the advertisement or calendar announcement deadlines may be six weeks or more before the event. In order to meet that deadline, you would need to know even earlier the name, time, date, and location of the event, and allow sufficient time to develop an attractive looking advertisement.

Strive for variety, especially in mid-size and larger Social Outreach Events

Since Social Outreach Events are often the most visible aspect of the Project, in many ways they define the Project in the eyes of the young gay/bisexual men’s community. The key to planning an effective program of outreach events is variety. Young gay/bisexual men have very diverse tastes. No one event will appeal to everyone. Make sure your monthly calendar of events offers enough different types of activities so that every young man can find something that appeals to him.

Here’s a case in point: if the Project only sponsored athletic activities, men who do not enjoy or feel comfortable participating in athletic events would not participate. Likewise, if all events featured balls, young men uninterested in the ball scene would not attend. This is a complaint we have heard from many Projects: a type of event may be enormously appealing to one segment of the community, but fails to reach other groups of men. A Project that offers only one type of event may even alienate other young men in the community as the Project becomes defined by that activity, and therefore by the segment of the community that likes that event. By offering a variety of events, you will reach different segments of young gay/bisexual men in your area. If you do, it is more likely you will be able to spread the norm of safer sex and knowing your HIV status throughout the young gay/bisexual men’s community.

Repeating the same large Social Outreach Event over and over can get boring, doesn’t attract new men, and can define the Project to the young men’s community as attracting only one segment of young gay/bisexual men.
Yet, there is one activity we have seen that does work to hold repeatedly: Mpowerment Detroit hosts a large social gathering and home cooked dinner every Sunday evening that attracts many young African American men. Dinner is provided, and a safer sex promotional activity is held every week, which can include breaking into discussion groups or role playing about how to respond to difficult situations. There is always variety in the activity that is conducted at the gathering. Because this Social Outreach Event is held every Sunday, young men know that it will occur and plan on attending. Culturally this activity is successful because many young Black men go to church earlier in the day, but then want an activity where they can be with each other later. In addition, many people traditionally spend Sundays with family. For this reason, it feels right to many young men to also spend at least part of the day with their “gay family” or community.

Tackle events that are achievable

In order to help Project volunteers gain experience and develop teamwork, try organizing some smaller Social Outreach Events before producing your first large one. Smaller events are usually easier to carry out, and therefore build a sense of competency among the event organizers. Therefore, focus the event on something you are likely to do well and keep the planning simple. Examples include video and television nights, volleyball games, beach outings, small barbecues or picnics, hikes, and discussion groups.

Larger Social Outreach Events, such as parties and dances, generally require considerable time, energy, and money to produce. The more complex an event, the greater the chances that not all parts will be carried out successfully. Nothing can more quickly destroy a growing sense of empowerment among volunteers and the Project’s reputation during the first few months of its existence than a large, well-publicized event that flops.

Having said that, it is also true that producing a larger event early on in the Project can generate a lot of interest in the community and begin disseminating information about it quickly. So we would not advocate putting off a large event for many months if it seems that the Core Group and volunteers can handle it.

Carefully select event size and frequency

It is very difficult for a Project to produce successful large Social Outreach Events more frequently than once every six weeks. Even for Projects that are fully staffed and have strong Core Groups, one large Social Outreach Event every other month and about two or three smaller activities each week is considered a full schedule. One advantage in putting on a number of smaller events each week is that there is usually some activity going on all the time. Not only does this convey the impression to young gay/bisexual men that the Project is exciting, but it also helps maintain the Project’s momentum.

The types of social interactions that occur in larger versus smaller events are different and complement each other in important ways. Large events can be more conducive to attracting young gay/bisexual men who are new to the Project, but the social interactions that occur at larger events may be more superficial. Smaller events are more conducive to participants getting to
know one another on a personal level and developing supportive friendships, but may not draw in as many new men to the Project.

The opportunities for safer sex promotion also vary in different size groups. In larger groups, an interactive and theatrical safer sex performance might be appropriate, whereas a smaller group might lend itself better to a topical discussion. The safer sex promotion at small, informal events housed in the Project space may be as simple as having a display of safer sex posters and providing condoms and lube in various places in the space, such as the main meeting space and the Project’s bathroom (See also Module 6: Project Space).

Another important reason to hold Social Outreach Events is to recruit young men to M-groups (See also Module 9: M-groups). Larger events can be especially helpful for M-group recruitment because they attract more new men to the Project. A team of men might be needed for collecting men’s names and contact information for subsequent recruitment to M-groups at a large Social Outreach Event, whereas only one man might be needed to recruit men to groups at small events.

**Vary the schedule** Remember to vary the days and times that ongoing Social Outreach Events are scheduled. Many young men have work or school commitments that prevent them from attending events at certain times. Although there will never be a perfect time for everyone, by varying the schedule no one will be completely excluded from attending.

**Be resourceful** In designing Social Outreach Events, the Project should carefully assess the physical resources the community offers and draw upon them (See also Module 2: Community Assessment). In many locations, there is at least one coffee shop, cafe or other public meeting space that is either gay owned or gay friendly. These locations can serve as ad hoc meeting spaces where men can engage in supportive conversations, plan events for the Project, have fun, and support a locally owned business. An ongoing activity in a location such as this can be listed on the monthly calendar as a place where newcomers are welcomed and can cost virtually nothing for the Project to sponsor.

The local gay bar(s) offers another potentially cost-effective meeting place for Project events. Therefore it is worth exploring whether a bar may be interested in cosponsoring some Project events. Events at bars can vary tremendously by planning special theme parties and offering entertainment that will appeal to young gay/bisexual men. Typically, both bar owners and regular bar patrons appreciate it whenever a special event is held that draws lots of young gay/bisexual men into the bar. If the bar offers an attractive space and has good lighting and a great sound system, it may make more sense financially if the Project sometimes collaborates with the bar in producing special events, rather than trying to compete with the bar by staging events in other venues. Admittedly, the downside of using a bar for Project events is that those under 21 might not be able to attend. Sometimes, however, a bar can make special arrangements to admit underage patrons by sponsoring an all ages night or stamping the hands of those 21 and over (the laws in some states allow this, but other states do not).
Being resourceful also means seeking out the advice and ideas of people in the community who may not be involved with the Mpowerment Project, but who are experts at organizing the type of event you are planning. Not only will the Project benefit, but you will be helping to build networks and coalitions for the Project within the community.

**Use the Project space**

If your Project has its own space that is comfortable and accessible, having outreach events there is an excellent way to introduce newcomers to the range of activities the Project offers. For the young men who attend the event, it also creates in their minds a positive association between the Project and having fun.

For example, in Dayton, OH, the Mu Crew had what they called a “Black and White Ball” that they held at their Project space. Everything from decorations to costumes and even refreshments was black and white. A disco ball hung from the ceiling and the Project served black and white food like Oreos and chocolate covered pretzels. They had a video game tournament, played music, and took advantage of their great space.

The Austin Men’s Project Core Group held a Haunted House and a Halloween carnival party, and turning the Project space into a Haunted House was a challenge. All the furniture was either moved into one room and stacked safely, or stored in a U-Haul trailer rented for the weekend. The interior walls of the entire house were covered with black plastic, and new maze-like walls were constructed out of PVC pipe frame with black plastic stretched over the entire structure. The new walls demarcated small areas, and these were the rooms of the haunted house. Each area had its own theme, including a room that had spray foam “brains” hung from the ceiling accompanied by disturbing buzzing fly noises; a room with hands grasping through the walls; a jumping alien; a long, pitch black hallway; a witch; a Satanic priest with a hidden scary attendant that jumped out at people; and a chainsaw killer.

Project WOW in Newark, NJ held several mini-balls at their space, which consisted of a very large room, with several smaller rooms for offices. They created a runway for ball contestants to walk on, with sitting areas on either side. The space was crowded and the excitement at the events was palpable as contestants vied for prizes. Judges were seated at the end of the walkway area.

Numerous events were held at the Project space in Albuquerque. The first event, which became an annual event, was the “We are Family Picnic.”
event was held immediately following Albuquerque’s gay pride parade, and the Project space was decorated with a multitude of rainbows across the ceilings, walls, and tables in keeping with the theme of gay pride week. A picnic was held in the backyard of the space. Another event, “Viva Las Vegas,” was also held in the Project space, and each room was decorated to represent a different casino and casino activity. (Both events are described more fully below).

**Consider providing refreshments** Since free refreshments are nearly always a draw for young men, many Projects provide some type of food for participants at events. These can range from entire meals, which is what Mpowerment Detroit offers at their weekly Sunday socials, to very light refreshments, which is what many other Projects offer. Light refreshments can include drinks and popcorn and chips. Whether or not to provide entire meals depends on Project budgets, as well as the cultural meaning of sharing food. Several Projects have expressed the sentiment that “providing food is not an option: our community gathers around food.”
Examples of large Social Outreach Events (More than 100 men)

Note: The following examples are general descriptions and do not include all the important details of every event. It is critical that safer sex (or other appropriate HIV prevention) and community-building messages and activities have a central role in each large Social Outreach Event. Concrete ideas about safer sex promotion at Social Outreach Events are discussed later in this module.

**Speed Dating**

The Mpowerment Project in Anchorage, AK, called Adam and Steve, initiated a series of speed dating events that were very successful. They made arrangements with a local restaurant that had an open yet private upper mezzanine area where the participants could mingle. Each table had information about Adam and Steve as well as safer sex packets. The speed dating events had different themes, such as a Wizard of Oz theme, with Wizard of Oz safer sex related questions and a Friends of Dorothy related skit.

**Red Carpet Affair**

Mpowerment Detroit hosted what they called the “Red Carpet Affair” in their space. It was loosely based on the celebrity runway scene for the Oscar ceremony. The event was presented as an opportunity for men to showcase their gifted fashion sense. Since there are few opportunities in Detroit for men to show off their fashion creations, they created such an opportunity through this event. It was so popular that they decided to produce it every year, although each year it was varied to maintain interest. The first year men who wanted to “walk the runway” had to come dressed in an outfit that they had created. The next year, “Old Hollywood” was the theme. At the end of the runway, men were asked to give an interview and one of the interview questions centered on safer sex. For example, they were asked, “What’s hot about a guy who is into playing safe?” The guys in the audience got to choose their favorite outfit and participants were given awards for their effort.

**Club M**

The Core Group in Eugene, OR initiated a very popular series of dance parties called Club M, which were the largest outreach events the Project sponsored, and occurred every other month for several months. The Project rented a large empty warehouse for the parties, which the Core Group creatively transformed into a trendy nightclub space. They completely covered the walls with black plastic sheets, and where needed, erected artificial walls also covered with black plastic. They set up a stage, sound system, and lights, and also enlisted volunteer go-go dancers. Outreach Team members dressed up in costumes representing different brands of condoms, and performed a sketch at each event. During one such performance, the volunteers demolished a wall of hate built from blocks with homophobic messages that were written on one side of them, and then rebuilt a wall of pride by turning each block around to show the pride messages that were written on the opposite side. Admission was free and open to all, but the
events were marketed very clearly to young gay/bisexual men. Club M events were very popular, attracting about 200 to 300 young gay/bisexual men.

**Brokeback Mountain Party** In San Juan, Puerto Rico, Guateke threw a big party with a Brokeback Mountain theme. All the publicity focused on Ennis and Jack (the main characters) and the safer sex messages were all puns on how to safely ride a stud.

**Big Gay Beach Day** In Charleston, SC, the CHAMP Project hosted beach parties that attracted around 300 young gay/bisexual men. The beach day was scheduled shortly after pride events in the area took place, allowing outreach for the event to take place at various pride functions. They had a professional DJ spin records on the beach, and the Core Group came up with 20 different messages that were prerecorded and played throughout the day in between songs. Some messages had a safer sex theme to them, while others were simple invitations to get more involved in the Project.

**We Are Family Picnics** In Albuquerque, for their first large event, MPower hosted a barbecue at the Project space that drew more than 150 young gay/bisexual men. One year later the theme was repeated, and again attracted well over 100 men. The picnics were held immediately following the local gay pride parade. Invitations to the picnics were distributed at the weeklong festivities that preceded the parade. During the second year, the Project entered a float in the parade and won first prize! The theme of both the float and MPower’s barbecue party was “We Are Family” to emphasize the diversity and solidarity of the emerging young gay/bisexual men’s community. It was also a theme that resonated with the many young Hispanic men in the community, since family is very important in many Latino cultures. The Project space was decorated with a multitude of rainbows across the ceilings, walls, and tables in keeping with the theme of gay pride week. Core Group members warmly greeted all men who attended at the door. The Project provided some of the food and community members donated the rest.

**Joker’s Wild** In Roanoke, VA, Roanoke Mpowerment hosted a large event in a local bar at the end of March, just before April Fools’ Day (hence, the Joker’s Wild theme). The party had a Mardi Gras feel to it, and they handed out simple masks for people to wear as they entered the bar.

**Uniformity** In Santa Barbara, CA, Pride Mission threw a party called Uniformity that attracted about 150 young gay/bisexual men. The party was held at a rented space and focused on the theme of “Men in Uniforms (and those who love them).” Men were invited to come dressed in uniforms worn by various working people, including doctors, police officers, fast food workers, military, and so forth.
**Homo-Coming**  In Orange County, CA, Mpower OC (Orange County) had a homecoming dance that attracted well over 100 young men. The event was held at their Project space, and they brought in a stage, had tables with tablecloths, provided food, and played music. They heavily promoted the event at local gay venues. Since the theme was “homecoming,” they dressed up as schoolboys for the outreach, with shorts and ties and dress shoes and school bags. The outreach created quite a buzz and the men had a blast doing it. During the event, members circulated among the participants, talked to them about Mpower OC, invited them to get involved with the Project, and recruited men to M-groups. Condoms, lube, and safer sex images were everywhere since it was held at the Project space.

**Lava Luau**  The Austin Men’s Project sponsored an annual Hawaiian Luau-themed pool party that drew between 170 to 250 men. The theme was revised each year. The first year the theme was just Lava Luau with Outreach Team members wearing Hawaiian shirts and grass skirts. In year two, the theme was Lava Luau 2 with a “ship-wrecked-survivors” theme culled from the current Abercrombie and Fitch catalogue. The following year the theme was Lava Luau: “I’m a survivor!” that capitalized on the popular TV show and the Destiny’s Child song. Event promotional outreach changed with each theme, and the theme influenced the safer sex promotion at the event.

**Gay Prom**  In Newark, NJ, Project WOW hosted a gay prom with a “Free to Be You and Me” theme. One year earlier, a 15-year-old lesbian was murdered in the city, and the youth who were part of Project WOW wanted to honor the anniversary of her death by creating an environment where everyone could be themselves and still feel safe. They worked with other gay groups in the area, including local university groups, to promote the prom, which was very successful.

**Haunted House Halloween Party**  The Austin Project put on a Haunted House event, described briefly earlier. A large group of volunteers built the Haunted House and decorated the yard for the party. A volunteer, or group of volunteers, took responsibility for “haunting” each room, which included decorating and acting in their particular room or area of the Haunted House. In turn, they recruited other men to act in the Haunted House, either as a character in a room, jumping out and scaring someone, or being invisible hands that reached out from the wall. After the Haunt, everyone gathered in the backyard of the house for a Halloween carnival party. The Outreach Team planned the event and the corresponding safer sex promotion activities.
Examples of medium-sized Social Outreach Events (30-100 men)

**House parties**

For Projects that have their own space, house parties are a relatively easy and popular outreach event. They also offer two advantages over events held elsewhere. First, they avoid the cost of renting a separate space. Second, they draw people to the Project space so they are more likely to learn about some of the other activities the Project sponsors. Depending on the size of the space, house parties have accommodated between 30 and 100 people. Typically they are held on a weekend night and revolve around a particular theme. The party decorations and activities usually reflect this theme.

For example, in Atlanta, Da CRIBB (Creating Rich Intelligent Black Bruthas) hosted a mini ball at their Project space. Participants walked in a variety of categories and the community came together to support the participants and learn about the Project. In Nashua, NH, Code M hosted a house party called Frostbite that took place after the winter holiday season. It gave the men a chance to reconnect after the usual holiday madness. In Nashville, TN, Exodus Mpowerment held a Valentine’s Day event to give both single men and couples a place to go and celebrate their love for themselves and their community. Albuquerque continued the “We Are Family” theme during the winter by holding a “Home for the Holidays” party, for which the Project space was decorated like a North Pole chalet. Core Group members dressed like sexy gay elves and toy soldiers. The Project space was decorated with a Christmas tree and Christmas lights. One young man dressed up as both a “naughty” and a “nice” Santa (accomplished through a simple change of costume.)

**Events held at a park**

There are good reasons to hold Social Outreach Events in a park. A park can be an easier space to hold some activities in (e.g., picnics, sporting events), can hold more men than a Project space, and can take advantage of good weather. In Santa Barbara, Pride Mission sponsored an afternoon garden party at a local park called “Prideshead Revisited” in the spirit of the old television series, “Brideshead Revisited.” The event featured lawn games such as croquet, picnic food, music, and a chance for 75 men to mingle and have fun in a pleasant, relaxing setting. In Albuquerque, MPower sponsored “Groove is in the Park,” a spring picnic that included games such as volleyball, races, a frozen t-shirt contest, and an unconventional but very gay-friendly Spring egg hunt with plastic eggs containing safer sex messages, candy, and condoms. This picnic attracted 80 young men. In Texas, the Austin Men’s Project sponsored an annual Olympic Games-themed event called the Camp AMP Gay Games. The event featured games like football and volleyball, activities like tug of war, water races, sand castle building, and a sack race, along with music, a barbecue cookout, an inflatable castle/trampoline, and a show-stopping safer sex Outreach Team performance.
Examples of small Social Outreach Events (10-30 men)

In most communities, a Project Coordinator or individual members of the Core Group usually hosts small events. During events at the Project space, call new participants’ attention to the calendars, posters, condoms, referral lists, and other resources and make sure that participants know they can take materials with them when they leave. If small events take place at other venues, a selection of appropriate safer sex, testing, and Project promotional materials can be made available for the participants. As with other Social Outreach Events, it is vital to collect the names and contact information of each new participant at the small events, and to follow up with them soon after the event to recruit them into the Project and to M-groups. Refreshments such as juice, soda, chips, fruit, or popcorn are either provided by the host or brought by the participants.

For video or television parties, showing a short gay-themed or safer sex informational video or clip as a preview to the feature fits in nicely with the event. For other small events, such as book clubs or discussion groups (described below), introducing the topic of safer sex somewhere into the discussion is usually not difficult. These types of activities are often held at the Project space, where there are numerous visual reminders to practice safer sex including posters, leaflets, condoms, and lubes. Thus one advantage to holding activities at the Project space is that these materials are around and reinforce the message of safer sex.

Movie nights

In each community, weekly video nights have been popular. Most communities have chosen to select gay-related films for viewing, although occasionally showing camp and horror films have also been successful. In Lafayette, LA, the Mpowerment Project called their video night “Q-tube.” In Detroit, they called it “Knights Together.” Austin Men’s Project occasionally showed homemade videos of Outreach Team performances during video nights. In Albuquerque, Friday nights were reserved for gay-related movies, and Sundays for science fiction films.

It is important to recognize that movie nights are not solely about providing entertainment. As with other Social Outreach Events, they provide opportunities for Informal Outreach and community-building to occur, and any new men who show up for movie nights should be recruited to M-groups and invited to volunteer with the Project. Movie nights can also provide opportunities to further analyze important issues of relevance to the young men’s lives. For example, questions can be asked of the group following a movie, such as, “What was the overall message of the movie? Did you see any unsafe sexual practices in the movie? Based on the sexual nature of the movie, what would you rename the movie? Would you add or delete any characters and why?” The selection of movies for movie nights events should take into account the messages conveyed in them.

For example, an Mpowerment Project for young gay/bisexual African American men once showed a movie that only portrayed African Americans in a negative light. The film focused on drug use and addiction, but did not
provide any messages about how to change the situation. After the film showing, the TV was turned off and the men in the room simply turned to other activities. Thus, the Project lost an important educational opportunity to have the men analyze the movie’s content and discuss possible solutions to the problems portrayed in the film.

**Television nights**

There is often a television program that is popular with young gay/bisexual men, either because of the topic or because it has a gay character. Building a weekly event around watching a television program is a simple, effective, and inexpensive way to bring a group of young men together. In addition to ongoing shows, sometimes parties can be organized around popular TV specials such as the Emmys, the Academy Awards, Grammy Awards, Super Bowl, BET Awards, or MTV Awards. We have found that low-key events such as television nights or occasional special TV events are often the first Project-sponsored activity that new men will attend.

**Book clubs**

A book club is a good way of attracting some men in a format that allows for a deeper analysis of some issues. If there is a book that is attracting a lot of attention among young gay/bisexual men, or a topic that is of great interest to them, then a book club can be organized to focus on the book or topic. Men attending the group can collectively decide which book to read, how often to meet, and how much to read between meetings. However, based on experiences from Mpowerment Projects, book clubs often do not work well after the group has read and discussed more than one or two books because attendance becomes spotty. Therefore, we suggest that Projects not sponsor a book club as a recurring activity. A book club can be started up again after some time passes between reading books. One Project merged their struggling book club with another “all ages” men’s book club that was also struggling with attendance. Once combined, they were able to maintain the book group with good attendance, and everyone said they benefitted from the input into the discussions by men of all ages.

**Poker or game nights**

Creating a space to play dominos, cards, or board games is a relatively simple event that can be an excellent way for young men to have fun together in a safe, supportive environment that indirectly promotes messages of safer sex (with promotional posters on the walls, and condoms and lube freely available). Knowing that every week provides an opportunity to play hearts, spades, or bid whist with other young gay/bisexual men can attract men to the Project on a regular basis.

**Outdoor and sports activities**

Volleyball, basketball, rollerblading, hiking trips, bicycle rides, ice skating, or whatever else your community offers as outdoor recreational opportunities can be enjoyable for many men. At Project WOW in Newark, NJ, they sometimes sponsored water balloon fights during the hot summer months. At CHAMP in Charleston, they hosted what they called the Gay Open, which was centered around golf. The Austin Men’s Project hosted football games. Some men liked participating in the football game, whereas other men preferred to be onlookers or
cheerleaders. In Albuquerque, the Project collaborated with a local GLBT friendly martial arts school that offered members free training.

**Field trips** Many of the outdoor activities mentioned above can also be promoted as “field trips.” Many Mpowerment Projects around the country have planned field trips, such as Adam and Steve in Anchorage that organized an outing called “Neon Bowling” because everything in the bowling center was lit using black lights. Other field trips that have been successful include miniature golf, bingo, laser tag, scavenger hunts, and even group treks to the movie theatre. Sometimes Projects paid part or all of the costs for the activities, but often the participants covered their own costs. Often participants first meet at the Project center and then go as a group on the field trip.

**Discussion groups** A weekly or biweekly discussion group can be very attractive to some men. In Detroit, the event Coordinators called their discussion groups “VENT (Voicing Everything Not Told).” Through these discussions, they would try to address topics such as: “What is it like being a Black gay male in Detroit?” The Project in Honolulu hosted regular discussion groups called “Chitty Cha Cha.” Topics included how and where to meet other guys, moving from dating to being boyfriends, monogamous vs. open sexual relationships, long-term relationships, and intergenerational relationships.

On Thursday nights at Da CRIBB in Atlanta, the Project held discussions called “Real Talk.” Everyone who came was given a pad of paper and a pen to write down proposed questions or topics of conversation. The pieces of paper were then placed in a jug so that they were anonymous. Questions could be about anything, such as “Why are there so many bottoms?” or “Can you tell if someone is a top or a bottom by what clothes they wear?” Someone then read the questions or comments out loud and they discussed some of them as a group. Albuquerque’s MPower held an ongoing “Coffee Talk” which addressed any issue that someone in the group wanted to bring up. Sometimes the men would discuss topics that affected nearly all of them, such as coming out to one’s family. At other times more provocative issues came up, such as whether or not gay/bisexual men should raise children.

The discussion group format lends itself well to explorations of issues that are important to young gay/bisexual men. Based on feedback from Mpowerment Projects around the country, certain issues seem to resonate with a majority of these men. For example, what do young men want from different types of relationships? How does a man’s body image affect how he views himself and what he does sexually? When and how do young men feel objectified by other gay/bisexual men? How can men plan ahead to be safe sexually when they go to bars specifically looking to “hook up” with someone that evening? The format of discussions groups, or small community forums (discussed more below), can provide opportunities to get into “heavier,” more in-depth discussions of important issues for young gay/bisexual men. Therefore we strongly recommend that Projects organize discussion groups, while at the same time we realize that not all men will want to attend them. It is worth noting here that while initially men may only attend a Project’s fun
events, after awhile many decide to participate in events that offer them an opportunity to do something they don’t often get to do—talk with other young men about issues that are important to them.

Discussion groups can also be used for an entirely different purpose—to secure input from men who are not part of the Core Group on proposed Project activities and outreach. For example, Mpowerment Detroit also used its VENT discussion sessions to come up with “tag lines” to use on publicity materials for the sessions. The tag line the Project ended up using to describe the VENT Sessions actually came out of one of them: “to empower young gay and bisexual men who have sex with men of color by giving them opportunities to express their ideas and concerns and allowing them to make changes to affect the community.”

**Community forums**

In many communities, forums on topics of interest to young gay/bisexual men can be popular. They have included such topics as dating and relationships, oral sex, racism, substance use, and body image. Forums can be an effective means of provoking self-reflection, and the discussion offers young men opportunities to hear and learn from each other. As with other Social Outreach Events, HIV prevention is not usually the main topic at a forum, but risk reduction can be woven into the forum’s main topic. Some of the most successful forums have utilized entertaining, interactive exercises as well as discussion.

Depending on the topic and community, forums can attract from 20 to 100 young men. Smaller forums have been held in the Project space, while larger ones have been held on university campuses, and at places such as gay community centers, community theaters, and Metropolitan Community Churches. These are described in greater detail below.

**Successful forums focus on topics of interest to young gay/bisexual men. They often utilize entertaining, interactive exercises, and weave HIV/AIDS prevention into the discussion or activities.**

**Small forums**

Many Projects sponsor smaller forums at their Project spaces which focus on special interest topics. The intent is for these to be for a larger group of men than the small discussion groups, and for the topic to be planned ahead of time. Some of the topics described in the previous section on Discussion Groups are suitable for small forums. Forums may use outside speakers or a panel of discussants to present diverse views on an issue. Subsequent to these presentations, there can be a discussion by attendees. Some Projects that target young men from economically disadvantaged backgrounds have also hosted workshops on life skills issues,
such as how to balance a checkbook, apply for a job, hold down a job, and understanding apartment rental leases.

**Larger forums** Forums that are designed to attract larger numbers of men can be set up in a number of ways. One effective method—although more traditional—is to arrange for a moderator and several panelists to participate. The panelists, representing different perspectives on an issue, first present their views on a topic, followed by questions and a group discussion. Forums using this format usually have a serious tone. For example, San Francisco’s STOP AIDS Project sponsored forums on methamphetamine use and barebacking. Forums can also focus on serious topics while using methods that are more interactive, lively, and entertaining. Whether the forums are serious or entertaining, be sure to give a great deal of thought to their planning. It will be necessary not only to consider what topics will be covered, but also how HIV prevention can be worked into the discussion.

**Use playful themes** MPower in Albuquerque held three large community forums that each attracted 40 to 50 young men. The first one, “The Body Beautiful,” focused on young gay/bisexual men’s concerns about body image. The second, called “Man Hunt,” explored how “to find your man in the urban jungle.” In the third one, “Fantasy Island,” participants shared their fetishes and fantasies. These events were fun— not only for the young men who attended them—but also for the men who staged them. Each forum featured entertaining skits and good music, and offered men numerous opportunities to meet one another. All three were designed to delve into these challenging issues, but in humorous and engaging ways.

For example, the Man Hunt forum featured a dating game in which the contestant asked three eligible bachelors questions about a variety of topics, including their sexual practices. Inevitably this led to the subject of safer and unsafe sexual practices (e.g., the bachelor who expressed a lack of concern about engaging in safer sex was not selected). The forums were scripted out in advance, with individuals acting out particular characters in the skits or activities. In The Body Beautiful forum a young man dressed up in drag to assume the role of a talk show host and moderated the event. At one point the host sought questions and comments from the audience. Cleverly, some volunteers with the Project acted as audience “plants” and asked specific questions that moved the discussion to issues of HIV prevention.

**Be entertaining while also being thought-provoking**

To appeal to the desire of young men to have fun, find creative ways to present ideas and to get men to be more analytical about what they are doing in their lives through games, activities, and interactive exercises. At Mpowerment Detroit, the Core Group created small folders, each with a different image of a guy on the front. The folders were taped to a wall, and participants were asked to go up and choose a folder. Inside the folder, the Core Group had created little bios about the guy pictured on the front, including sexual health history and sexual likes/dislikes. The participants were then broken up into groups to discuss what they thought about the
sexual history of the young man pictured on the front of their chosen folder, including assumptions and stereotypes.

One engaging approach has been playing “stand-up, sit-down” exercises. Project volunteers who had already served as moderators at various community forums in Albuquerque led the following exercise:

**Moderator:** “Stand up if you’ve ever met a date through a personals ad or on the Internet.”

*A group of men stood up.*

**Moderator:** “OK, stay standing if the guy lied about how he looked.”

*A number of men sit down.*

**Moderator:** “Now keep standing if you lied about the way you looked!”

In another example from Albuquerque, the line of questioning went as follows:

**Moderator:** “Stand up if you’re single. Okay, now look around, check for a ring. Now stay up if you’d like to meet someone here tonight. Well, you’re in luck, because we’ve got a little project for you. Go find two people here who you don’t know and who share your astrological sign.”

Games like the interactive ones described above are fun for the men taking part, keep the atmosphere lively, and can also help men explore sensitive issues in a comfortable atmosphere.
HIV prevention at Social Outreach Events

Promoting safer sex at Social Outreach Events

Social Outreach Event should include some type of safer sex promotional activity. Testing can also be promoted, although we do not advocate dropping the emphasis on safer sex. In the desire to develop a fun and exciting event, it is easy for the Core Group or the Outreach Team to overlook safer sex promotion. There are four things that differentiate “having a party” from “having an outreach event,” and they are listed below:

- conducting some type of safer sex promotional activity at each event
- signing up men to attend M-groups
- always collecting names and contact information of men attending events so that they can be recruited for future M-groups
- encouraging men to volunteer for other Project activities

It is important that safer sex and testing promotion contributes to the spirit of the event, rather than detracts from it. Otherwise, the young men attending the event may not attend future events or want to become further involved with the Project. The type of event will determine the type of safer sex promotion that is appropriate. The Core Group and Outreach Team should decide what form the safer sex promotion will take and who will be responsible for it. For example, large dance parties are not conducive to in-depth conversations about how to negotiate using condoms with a boyfriend. However, they may be effective places for theatrical performances about safer sex. In this instance, the Outreach Team would be in charge of putting together the safer sex promotional activity. In contrast, a community forum on dating might be the perfect place for conversations about how to negotiate using condoms with a new boyfriend. In this case, the event organizer for the forum would make sure that safer sex was included. Each of these approaches to safer sex promotion has an important place in the Mpowerment Project. (How to promote safer sex at medium and large outreach events is discussed in more detail later in this module under Outreach Team Performances.)

Recruiting men to M-groups and into the Mpowerment Project

Every Social Outreach Event not only offers an opportunity to promote safer sex and testing, but should also be regarded as an opportunity to recruit men to M-groups. As described in Module 9: M-groups, collecting names and contact information to recruit men to M-groups is an ongoing challenge. Therefore, it is important to take advantage of every opportunity to do so. In addition, every Social Outreach Event also provides an opportunity to encourage men to become more involved with the Project, which empowers participants. Furthermore, as more young men join the Project, it makes it possible for the Project to reach new social networks of young gay/bisexual men through their Informal
Outreach to friends. This “diffusion process” (one of the Project’s Guiding Principles) exposes more men to social norms supportive of safer sex, which is why it is so important to continually interest new men in the Project. Therefore, it is crucial that every young man who shows up for an activity for the first time be approached and asked for his name and contact information. Different non-threatening ways of doing this are described below.

### An active approach to recruiting is best

Men can be actively recruited to become more involved with the Project in various ways, depending upon the nature of the Social Outreach Event. The Coordinators can approach new men, describe the M-groups, and invite them to sign up for one. Often they can be scheduled right then and there. Additionally, interest sheets (See Module 5: Core Group, Figure 5.2) that ask for names, contact information, skills, and interests can be given to newcomers. (On a side note, you may want to keep a stack of interest sheets handy at the Project space as well. When new men drop by the space, you can give them an Interest Sheet to fill out so you can have a record of their name and contact information). Raffles can be a great way to collect contact information at events. To enter the contest, each young man who attends a Social Outreach Event should be encouraged to provide his name, personal e-mail address, social networking e-mail addresses he uses, such as on MySpace, Facebook, or Twitter address, cell phone number, and possibly a home address. Raffle prizes can range from lunches at local restaurants to movie tickets to gift certificates redeemable through iTunes. Prizes don’t have to be expensive and can often be donated. Guest books are another way to collect contact information. Participants can be directed to the guest book when they arrive or at any other point throughout the event. More information on recruitment to M-groups can be found in Module 9: M-groups.

More passive ways of collecting names don’t work nearly as well. We have found that simply setting up a table at an outreach event and asking men to provide their names and contact information does not yield many new names. In fact, many men may intentionally avoid such tables which is why more creative and active approaches to collecting names are required. Likewise, simply posting a sign-up sheet also does not work well. (See Module 9: M-groups for more ideas about recruiting men to M-groups).

---

**Interest Sheet**

Please check those areas of AMP that interest you:

- [ ] Outreach/Safer Sex Promotion
- [ ] distributing materials at bars and around town
- [ ] developing safer sex promotional strategies
- [ ] participating in safer sex promotion at public venues
- [ ] Marketing/Public Relations
- [ ] designing marketing materials for AMP, including websites and profiles (Facebook, MySpace, Twitter)
- [ ] Small Event Planning
- [ ] Large Event Planning
- [ ] Public Forum Planning
- [ ] Administrative
- [ ] AMP House Maintenance
- [ ] Sign up for UnPlugged Session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other ideas for involvement, talents you’d like to share or ideas for new projects you’d like to suggest? Please use the back to explain...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

---

Every Social Outreach Event is a golden opportunity to recruit men to M-groups and for them to become more involved with the Project. At least one person at every event should be assigned to recruit men, or at least get their names and contact information.

---

**AMP**

Austin Men’s Project
Greeting newcomers at Social Outreach Events

**Hospitality counts**

At each event, Coordinators and Core Group members should be on the lookout for young men who are new to the Project. Often men who are attending a Project event for the first time are shy and uncertain how to meet others. Each new young man should be approached personally by a Coordinator, Core Group member, or volunteer. Welcome him to the event, explain more about the Project, introduce him to others, and eventually encourage him to get involved. At M-Project in Wilton Manors, FL (near Fort Lauderdale), the Coordinator made sure that each new person who walked through the door was made to feel personally welcome. The Coordinator understood how hard it might be for guys to walk into a space where they didn’t know anyone, and how important it was to set a standard of friendliness for everyone else to follow. Similarly, in MPower in Albuquerque, a team of men served as “greeters” at each medium- and larger-sized event. Their responsibility was to meet all newcomers, show them around the Project space, and introduce them to young men already involved with the Project.

**Breaking the ice**

Making initial contact with a stranger can be a difficult experience for some volunteers, and even sometimes for Coordinators. There are some strategies, however, that will make it easier to do. For example, think ahead of time about what to say to someone new. How will you introduce yourself? What words will you use to describe the Project in the most appealing way possible?

Many Projects come up with a simple way of describing what they’re about that works really well when Project volunteers greet someone new. The Mu Crew in Dayton, Ohio describes their Project this way: “The Mu Crew is like a fraternity for gay/bi guys ages 18-29ish. We encourage making new friends, relaxing, continuing our own education about life, doing new things, and keeping a mindset that everyone’s cool as they are.” In Austin, the men describe the Project this way: “We are a group of young gay, bi, and curious guys working together to build a stronger, more supportive community here in Austin.”

Remember, when meeting someone new it is as important to listen as to talk. Finding out important details about a potential volunteer can help you match each individual’s talents, skills, and interests to the needs of the Project. For example, if you find out that someone is an art student or particularly skilled at graphics, you can invite him to work on developing outreach materials.

Sometimes newcomers to the Project will arrive together. In this situation, you may need to approach a group of young men rather than an individual. One strategy we have found helpful here is for two or more volunteers (or a Coordinator and a couple of volunteers) to greet a group of newcomers together. This way you can support each other as you initiate conversation.

Be sure to greet every newcomer to the Project and briefly describe what the Project is about. But keep in mind the Guiding Principle about the Project having a social focus. Don’t refer to it as “an HIV prevention project” or describe M-groups as “safer sex workshops.”
If a newcomer shows up for an event with someone who is already involved in the Mpowerment Project, you may want to make sure that the Mpowerment Project participant has explained the Project to his friend and invited him to attend an M-group. You’ll still want to get the newcomer’s name, phone number, and e-mail address so that you can keep him informed about the Project and recruit him to a future M-group (if he is not yet ready to sign up for one). You might also take the opportunity to ask him what questions he has about the Project.

**Responding to very personal HIV/AIDS questions at Outreach Events**

Sometimes young gay/bisexual men may approach a Coordinator or Core Group member with very personal questions or concerns about safer sex or HIV/AIDS at an outreach event. This is a good sign that your Project has created a safe space where it is natural to discuss such topics. However, having these types of conversations at an outreach event may be difficult given their rather social atmosphere. Finding a quieter place to have a one-on-one conversation is probably a good idea. At the end of the conversation, encourage him to attend an M-group and get his contact information.

**Publicity for Social Outreach Events**

There are numerous ways to publicize Social Outreach Events. As with all Project activities, it is important that publicity reach as many young gay/bisexual men in the community as possible without attracting the attention of potentially non-supportive individuals. For this reason, we have avoided advertising outreach events in the mainstream media. Instead, to publicize events we have relied on flyers in gay or gay-friendly venues (bars, cafes, and campus organizations); advertisements, announcements, and calendar listings in local gay and alternative newspapers; word-of-mouth communications by men who are involved with the Project; and postings on voicemail, web pages, and electronic bulletin boards. We briefly cover publicity here, but it is covered in more depth in *Module 10: Publicity*.

**Bar theatrics**

For large- or mid-sized events, it is helpful for the Outreach Team to advertise the event at community venues 1-2 weeks before the event. This is accomplished by giving an engaging event-promotion performance and distributing invitations during visits to bars, community events, coffeehouses, and other appropriate locations. For example, the Spectrum Project in Tallahassee, FL decided to use a mailman theme to promote one of their first events. The Outreach Team dressed up in simple costumes with bags slung across their shoulders, brimmed hats, and a simple patch on the chest with an image of a rooster. On the invites for the event, the safer sex tagline read, “We want to ensure that your ‘package’ gets delivered safely.”
For MPower’s “We are Family” Picnic in Albuquerque, an Outreach Team of 12 volunteers visited each gay bar in Albuquerque wearing specially made “We are Family” t-shirts. They asked the DJ to announce the picnic and play the “We are Family” theme song, during which they danced as a group and later passed out invitations throughout the bar, along with safer sex promotional materials. This relatively simple performance generated a lot of attention and interest among the bar patrons.

We have found that dressing in costume while promoting an event generally attracts more attention and is more effective than just wearing plain Project t-shirts. In addition, it is usually more fun for the Outreach Team to wear costumes than to dress in either t-shirts or in their regular clothes. Mpowerment Detroit’s Core Group, Young Brothers United (YBU for short), regularly organizes outreach event promotional activities with themes that call attention to their group and their Social Outreach Events. These are often very simple themes that are easy to pull off but have great visual impact, such as everyone dressing from head to toe in black, or white, or pink and white, or everyone wearing a tie-dyed tank top. Sometimes the men all wear a simple Mardi Gras mask or a red tie. One year, MPower’s Outreach Team in Albuquerque advertised one of their large events by dressing as sexy bumblebees and handing out honeycomb-shaped invitations that said, “Come to Where the Honeys Are.” The Austin Men’s Project promoted their Military Ball by having Outreach Team volunteers dressed in an array of bedazzling Army/Navy surplus costumes. They passed out invitations in bars and coffee shops before the event. To promote their Haunted House event (described earlier), the Outreach Team dressed as vampires and went out in a group to the bars and clubs to pass out invitations. All the costume required was a pair of pasted-on vampire fangs, a tube of light make-up, and black clothing.

The timing of outreach performances is also important to consider. When scheduling publicity activities, it is important to hold them far enough in advance of the event so that people will be able to attend. Then you can return briefly to the various venues a day or two before the event as a reminder. In Austin, the Outreach Team always tried to conduct their event promotion at the bars as they were filling up, but not so late that the patrons would be too intoxicated or distracted. The fun, upbeat, positive energy that the Outreach Team expresses attracts interest, intrigue, and good will throughout the community.

**Addressing resistance to bar theatrics**

It’s not unusual to experience initial resistance from some Project Coordinators who are unwilling to conduct themed outreach. However, time after time we’ve heard that once Coordinators got over the hurdle of performing themed outreach, that became one of the most anticipated, team-building aspects of the Project.

**Advertise at community venues 1-2 weeks before the event.**
It is important that Project Supervisors are upfront with Coordinators about the expectation that they lead themed outreach events. Agencies need to hire someone who is well-suited to the Outreach Coordinator position. It requires someone with an outgoing, enthusiastic personality who is able to mobilize a diverse group of young men.

**Hints and tips for successful themed outreach**

**Foster a positive attitude.** Fostering a positive, can-do attitude is paramount. One phrase we’ve encouraged Coordinators to use is “fake it until you make it.” In other words, although this may not be your ideal way of doing outreach at the beginning, pretend that it is. You’ll be amazed at how much a negative attitude can stop the fun and creativity of this type of outreach. This form of outreach is a great way to meet other guys and invite them to the Project. Before going out, have Team members practice approaching each other. Have them invent cute opening lines that fit with the themed outreach.

**Make it short and engaging.** We don’t expect young men to be in themed costumes all night. We call these “Bar Zaps” for a reason. In Austin, the Project was able to cover two or three different bars in one night. They would spend 20-30 minutes in each location. Create a buzz and then leave. End the outreach by having guys change out of their costumes, so they can resume whatever they would normally be doing for the rest of the evening.

**Bring extra costumes with you.** In Albuquerque, Coordinators found that many young men who would normally do themed outreach may not be able to make it to Outreach Team meetings. It wasn’t unusual for the Outreach Team to arrive at a bar and have former outreach volunteers run up and want to help out, especially when the outreach theme was something sexy and fun. So, for instance, if the outreach theme is about sexy pirates, have some extra pirate hats and other props handy to give to volunteers who want to be sexy pirates at the last minute. This is an easy way to double the size of your Outreach Team on the spot.

**Don’t give up.** Have fun with this form of outreach. Remind yourself that the best form of recruitment is done in person in a friendly and positive manner. It will take time for an Outreach Team to learn how to support each other. Every themed outreach has lessons to be learned and improved upon.

**Send out e-mail, publicity, and reminders.** Sending out advance publicity about upcoming Social Outreach Events is very helpful if you have a listserv of men who have provided the Project with their contact information. E-mail is another effective advertising approach that has been used for Project events in Albuquerque and Austin. *(Figure 7.3 in the Appendix to this module for several sample email reminders.)* Each Project maintains a list of email addresses for all men who have attended a Project-sponsored event. The power of social networking sites like Facebook and MySpace are a definite boon to getting the word out about the Project and any upcoming
events. However, we do not recommend you rely solely on any of the above modes of communication. Simply receiving an e-mail or seeing a posting on a website doesn’t have the same impact as a personal, face-to-face invitation. Outreach in popular places where young gay/bisexual men tend to congregate is still very much needed in order to effectively market the Mpowerment Project. Before large Social Outreach Events, the Project needs to have a presence at local bars to increase the chance that people hear about the activity. Some bars also cater to different groups of men on certain nights, such as African American or Latino men. If you are trying to target these populations in particular, be sure to show up the nights when they are at the bar.

**Develop a calendar of events.** Developing calendars of events—and posting these at the Project space, including them in outreach publicity, and posting them on-line—helps to remind men of upcoming Social Outreach Events. (See Figure 7.2 in the Appendix to this module for examples of monthly calendars that illustrate the variety of events which are possible.) With so many Projects now using MySpace and Facebook, calendars are often being replaced by blog postings about upcoming events. However, a nice calendar, like the ones produced by the Guateke Project in San Juan, PR and the re:Vision Project in New Orleans, LA. are still useful resources. Such Project calendars quickly convey that a lot is happening in a given month, while promoting safer sex at the same time though attractive graphics. The Guateke Project in San Juan, PR posts these calendars on their MySpace page, where they automatically become archived.

**Use book and magazine flyers.** A creative approach to reach new men who have not yet attended a Project-sponsored event is to put fliers announcing upcoming events into gay-themed books and magazines at bookstores and libraries. This is an especially effective technique in communities that do not have many or any publicity outlets that cater to the gay community, such as gay bars and newspapers. (A more detailed discussion about how to go about doing this, and general recommendations for publicizing the Project and its activities can be found in Module 10: Publicity.)
Evaluating Social Outreach Events

**Learn from your experience**  
It is important to evaluate every Social Outreach Event, whether formally through the use of evaluation measures, or informally by observing who attended and how the event went. Each outreach event can be viewed as a learning process for both the Coordinators and the Core Group. At the next Core Group meeting following each Social Outreach Event, set aside time to share and process thoughts and feelings about the event. Congratulate each other on what went well, discuss what you learned, and decide how to improve future events. Here are a couple of key questions to ask:

- **Was publicity for the event effective?** (Did it reach enough men? Did it reach men who had never before attended any events? Did you reach all segments that you wanted to of the young gay/bisexual men’s community?)
- **Was the outreach performance carried out well?** (Did it keep the attention of the young men present? Was it interesting or funny? Did it effectively convey a message supportive of safer sex?)
- **Which segments of the young gay/bisexual men’s community did and did not attend the event?** (Did it attract the segments that you intended to reach? If not, how could you reach them in the future?)
- **Did the event foster community-building?** (Did the event create a welcoming atmosphere? Was it favorable to meeting new men?)

While Projects often put on Social Outreach Events that are wonderfully successful, all Projects have also put on some events that can hardly be classified as highly successful, although in fairness they may not have been failures either. Regardless of the outcome, keep a sense of humor about you and don’t get discouraged. Remember—even if an event does not live up to expectations, it may still have reached a number of men. New men may have been recruited to the Project or to M-groups, and may have formed new, supportive friendships. Regardless of how successful a Social Outreach Event may be, learn from what may not have worked so well and use that insight in future planning. Consider what went right and what was less successful, and learn from the experiences—and then move on. It is also important to find ways to support Team members when they experience disappointment. However, we have found that it is not helpful to dwell too long on failures, point fingers, or spend inordinate amounts of time complaining about a non-responsive community. In short, for all of the above reasons, it is critically important that the Coordinators and the Core Group evaluate together every medium and large outreach event (as well as occasionally evaluate the effectiveness of a Project’s smaller, ongoing events).

**Record each event**  
The Mpowerment Project Social Outreach Event Evaluation Form will be useful in guiding the Core Group discussion about each event (**See Module 12: Evaluation, Figure 12.8 for the Social Outreach Event Evaluation Form.**). Following the discussion, we suggest that the Project Coordinator complete a written copy of the form to serve as...
a record of the Project’s activities. In addition, with the form keep copies of all materials used for the event, including flyers, posters, ads, camera-ready art, photos, and so forth. Many Projects have found that making a scrapbook of all this material serves as an exciting and comprehensive visual history for new Project participants, implementing agency staff, funders, and future Coordinators. Many Projects also use their MySpace and Facebook profiles to upload photos of recent events, in effect maintaining an on-line scrapbook.

Keeping complete records is important in providing documentation of Project activities. It also prevents the duplication of efforts in case an event is repeated or any of the materials are needed for future events. In addition, records help Project volunteers learn from the experiences of past participants. For more information on Project evaluation, see Module 12: Evaluation.

The Outreach Team

In addition to Social Outreach Events, the other type of Formal Outreach in the Mpowerment Project is outreach performances. These involve Teams of young gay/bisexual men going to gay venues in the community—typically bars and gay community events—to promote safer sex or to publicize the Project and advertise upcoming events. In addition, the Team conducts performances and outreach at Project-sponsored events.

The Outreach Team is responsible for designing outreach performances, making costumes, rehearsing skits, and conducting the actual performances. An Outreach Team needs to be convened at the start of the Project, and maintained over time (See Module 5: Core Group for information about working with volunteers). It is the Outreach Coordinator’s responsibility to assemble the Outreach Team—which typically consists of between 10 to 15 volunteers—and to work with them. The Team should meet regularly to
brainstorm and refine their ideas. It is important for them to keep the Core Group informed of what they are doing and to present “dress rehearsals” to the Core Group for their review and input. Many Core Group members also join the Outreach Team since it is the most visibly active group of Mpowerment Project volunteers.

**Here are some tips for working with an Outreach Team**

**Know your people** In order to create a successful Outreach Team, the outreach Coordinator should take the initiative to seek out young men who would be good on the Team and invite them to join. The Outreach Team is an excellent place for men who are outgoing, not afraid of approaching new people, and have an interest or background in theater or performing. Some Team members will be willing to engage in performances only if they can remain anonymous, which is easily accomplished by using masks and costumes. Frequently just by wearing a costume, men who are shy will feel more comfortable taking on an outgoing role. Some may not yet be ready to participate in performances, but over time may gain enough self-confidence to take part. We have also found that volunteers who are uncomfortable performing in public can still be valuable additions to the Outreach Team. They can help make costumes, plan the skits, and design and assemble outreach materials. It is important to make all volunteers feel their contributions are valued, regardless of whether they participate in performances or not.

Since some volunteers—especially those who are less outgoing—may feel some anxiety before a performance, it is important for the Team to rehearse what they will say and do and to build morale among Team members before walking into the various venues. If several nights of bar outreach are planned within a short period of time, it is important to recruit different “casts” of volunteers to avoid burnout.

**It’s a team effort** To effectively assemble and maintain the Outreach Team, the Outreach Coordinator must be sensitive to the motivations and desires of the Team members. Working together as an Outreach Team is a very empowering experience for the volunteers when they are involved in all decisions, and feel that they are listened to and that their ideas are taken seriously. When it appears the Team may require guidance in selecting outreach approaches, the Outreach Coordinator should ask questions that get members to look at ideas critically and use their creativity to improve them. Presenting the Team’s ideas, as they evolve, to the Core Group is a valuable way to get additional feedback.

If the Coordinator still doubts that the best decisions are being made, he can suggest that the Team test their ideas by asking some friends what they think of them. Often waiting just a week can make a big difference. This gives Team members more time to reflect on the ideas they already have and on their friends’ opinions. The next time they meet they can share what they learned and use the ideas to improve the performance.
Have fun! The work that the Outreach Team does together should be enjoyable. (As a reminder, one of the Project’s Guiding Principles is that activities should have a social focus and be fun.) If the work becomes drudgery, volunteers will not want to participate. Each time the group meets, we recommend providing light refreshments (beverages and munchies).

Planning and producing Outreach Team performances

Outreach Team performances should be entertaining, fun, and contribute to the spirit of whatever is already occurring in the setting. For example, during an open mic/poetry/performance event sponsored by the Alpha Project in Philadelphia, the Outreach Team developed a choreographed dance based on the song “Cell Block Tango” from the musical Chicago. Safer sex messaging, in the form of props, script, and movement were woven into the performance. Similarly, the materials that are distributed by the Outreach Team should be eye-catching, positive, and varied, as described earlier, and should contain messages that go beyond simple “do’s” and “don’ts” of sexual conduct so that men read them and share them with friends.

Bar zaps intentionally create a scene in order to attract attention and distribute safer sex materials.

Classic outreach: The Bar Zap The “classic” approach to outreach performances is the bar zap. Here, a Team of about 10 costumed men enters the bar together as a group. They intentionally create a scene that attracts the attention of bar patrons, mingle with them, distribute safer sex promotional materials, and then leave. We call it a zap because the visit is unexpected and dramatic—it immediately gets people’s attention and ends almost as quickly as it begins.

Projects have held all types of zaps. For example, TANK in Harrisburg, PA used a cowboy theme to conduct a bar blitz. Team members handed out temporary tattoos of the Project logo and all wore tight jeans, boots, and cowboy hats to hand out materials and condoms. Adam and Steve in Anchorage conducted an outreach where the men all dressed up as camp counselors and boy scouts. At Pride Alive in Minneapolis, the Outreach Team conducted a bar zap around Valentines Day that had a cupid theme. One cupid was scantily clad, and bar patrons were encouraged to have their picture taken with him as he handed them Project materials and condoms. And at Exodus Mpowerment in Memphis, TN, the Project made arrangements with a local bar so that volunteers could come in, hang a piñata, and then patrons took turns attempting to break it open. Inside, of course, was information about Exodus Mpowerment, and condoms and lube.

In MPower in Albuquerque, Condomaniacs wore costumes representing the kinds of condoms they were distributing. For example, the young men distributing Sheik condoms dressed as sheiks, the men who distributed Rough Rider condoms wore leather, and the young man who distributed Kiss of Mint condoms dressed as a forest nymph. The Outreach Team sometimes went onto the stage that was usually reserved...
for go-go dancers and danced together as a group in costumes. For another outreach performance, the Team wore MPower sport muscle tees and dressed as lifeguards. As a take-off on the former TV show “Baywatch,” they handed out creative “Gaywatch” safer sex materials. They attracted attention by blowing their lifeguard whistles, carrying beach balls, and dancing together on the bar’s stage. In anticipation of the 2000 millennium, the Austin Outreach Team staged a “Y2Gay” (a take off on the phrase “Y2K” for the year 2000) bar zap in which they dressed up in futuristic costumes and silver makeup. They heralded the “future of safe sex,” distributing CD cases filled with safer sex ideas including condoms, lube, and Project promotional materials.

**Customize your cleverness**

Outreach Team performances and bar zaps can be customized for various holidays, seasons, and events. For example, at re:Vision in New Orleans, the Outreach Team dressed up as doctors and nurses for their outreach just before Halloween. “Doctor’s recommendations” were to have fun, use condoms and lube, come visit the Project, meet guys, and build a community. At the Genesis Project in Pocatello, ID, Team members created a summer theme for an outreach performance that took place just before Memorial Day. They wore Hawaiian costumes and handed out safer sex packs with individual packets of pineapple coconut Crystal Light. The Outreach Team in Albuquerque visited that city’s bars in August, shortly after the local university was back in session, and used a “Back to School” theme. Team members wore costumes to represent different types of students including a football jock, a PE coach, a nerd, a homecoming queen (in drag, of course!), a graduate in cap and gown, and a safer sex cheerleader. The safer sex promotional material they distributed looked like a student’s notebook with the front cover containing “Back to School Basics”). It discussed “electives” such as drama, physical education, and art, and offered safer sex activities appropriate to the subject. For example, the recommendation for theater arts students was to “dress him up, role play, and then strip him down.”

On other occasions, the Outreach Team may present a theatrical performance using music, dance, and/or comedy to promote safer sex. This can range from the simple to the elaborate. The Project in Eugene planned a simple, but effective performance. Since the local gay bar held karaoke nights each week, their Outreach Team prepared a song that highlighted safer sex and performed it one evening. At the Haunted House event in Austin, black plastic was stretched between two trees in the back yard, and a rented smoke machine and strobe light were placed behind the plastic. The Outreach Team positioned themselves behind the plastic sheets, and turned on the smoke machine and strobe light. They began
chanting a rhyme adapted from the “Nightmare on Elm Street” movie series to promote safer sex in a humorous fashion, they then cut through the black plastic with knives and distributed safer sex promotional materials to men at the event.

**Gear your approach to the event’s size**

**Large events**

For larger and sometimes medium-sized events like dance or house parties, we recommend preparing a “performance art piece.” These can take many forms. Eugene’s Club M (the name of several events) generally featured a stage show at the peak time of attendance at the event. For example, one evening at Club M, mysterious enshrouded figures emerged dancing amid the crowd on the dance floor. They slowly wound their way up onto the stage where they positioned themselves like statues with large bananas painted on the shrouds that covered them. The Master of Ceremonies then directed the crowd’s attention to the spotlight where the star performer appeared—Condom Miranda, a drag queen (and Core Group member) who was a cross between Carmen Miranda and Bette Midler. She performed a tropical stage show number dancing around the various banana figures on stage. One by one she pulled the shrouds off the figures, revealing seven Condom Men who were each dressed in costume to personify a brand of condom: Trojan (a Greek warrior), Ramses (a pharaoh), Kimono (a Geisha boy), Sheik (an Arab sheik), Gold Coin (a pirate), Kiss of Mint (a forest nymph), and Rough Rider (a leather man). As described earlier, they also conducted zaps at the bars in these costumes.

Next, Condom Miranda interviewed each Condom Man about the merits of his condom. The Master of Ceremonies then introduced the Mpowerment Project Coordinators who announced upcoming Project activities and invited audience members to become involved. Following these introductions, the Condom Men returned to the dance floor where they mingled with the crowd and handed out their brand of condoms. To distribute the condoms, each Condom Man had his own specially designed “cigarette tray.” For example, Trojan’s was a Trojan horse, Ramses’ a pyramid, Sheik’s a magic lamp, Gold Coin’s a treasure chest, and Kimono’s a pagoda. The trays and props were made by the Outreach Team using cardboard and papier-mâché. This performance, like all others, was completely designed and conducted by the Outreach Team members.

**Medium-sized events**

For medium-sized events such as house parties, one effective approach is for costumed Outreach Team members to dispense safer sex materials while mingling with the crowd. At Albuquerque’s Home for the Holidays Party, Team members who were dressed as elves and toy soldiers mixed with partygoers while distributing packets containing safer sex promotional materials, condoms, and candy canes. A Santa—who was sometimes dressed up to look “nice” and at other times “naughty”—had young men sit on his lap and discuss who they wanted for Christmas. Santa would then give them a safer sex suggestion to try that was both “naughty and nice.”
Check out what others are doing

Clearly, Projects other than Mpowerment have had great success with the Outreach Team strategy. You may find their ideas useful as well. Borrowing our Condom Miranda idea, the San Francisco AIDS Foundation developed a Team of 12 Condom Mirandas who visited the bars dispensing condoms. They have also used a Team of Zorro-like characters known as “Rubbermen” in black masks and capes who periodically zapped the bars. As an example of a more elaborate production, the San Francisco AIDS Foundation occasionally staged an erotic and comical theatrical revue called “Naked City Cocktails.” It featured comedy routines, and demonstrations of sex toys and other safer sex promotion in bars and adult cinemas.

Other communities have staged gay versions of game shows such as “The Dating Game” or “Singled Out” in which they were able to weave in safer sex messages. For example, the Boulder County AIDS Project sponsored games of “Family Feud.” First off, volunteers surveyed customers of the local gay bar, asking a variety of questions from favorite gay star to favorite lube or favorite HIV testing location. The next week, two teams played Family Feud and tried to guess how the bar patrons had answered the questions. Others have used contests or pageants to entertain the crowd and promote safer sex. All of these events can add a welcome variety and excitement to otherwise mundane nights at the bar and be fun and enjoyable for both bar patrons and the Outreach Team members.

Successful Outreach Performances

There are several key rules for staging a successful outreach performance, whether at a bar or at an outreach event.

Be engaging

Whatever the Outreach Team does should be entertaining and appealing. Ideally, bar patrons will consider it a treat that you are there to add excitement to the bar that night. Theatrical touches like costumes, music, and special lighting are extremely helpful. We have found that when Outreach Team members are in costume and perform roles quite different from their regular personality, it is easier for them to approach bar patrons and event participants. Dramatic productions generally fail since they often bog down in dialogues that do not seem realistic or just seem silly. As a result, we suggest avoiding serious, dramatic performances. Also avoid fear-inducing messages. First of all, bar owners tend to be very leery of activities that they fear will create a “downer” in the bar. Second, research has shown that scare tactics are usually unsuccessful in changing people’s behavior.

Be brief

Even the best performances are unlikely to hold the attention of bar patrons or men attending outreach events for more than a few minutes. Remember that they did not come to the bar or the outreach event to watch your performance, as entertaining as it may be.
Rehearse
Practice, practice, practice. A poorly prepared performance is embarrassing for everyone involved—the performers, the audience, and the Project. To assist Teams in planning performances, we have included a sample Outreach Team Planning Form (See Figure 7.4 in the Appendix to this module). Planning a performance should be approached in much the same way as planning an Social Outreach Event. This form addresses all the issues you need to consider and lists all the steps you should take. It also includes a timeline.

Once the performance is over, you will also want to evaluate it. The Mpowerment Project Outreach Team Evaluation Form will help you reflect on how effective it was and how it could be improved next time (See Figure 7.5 in the Appendix to this module for a sample Outreach Team Evaluation Form). It also serves as a record of Project activities.

Work cooperatively with local gay bars
It is critical—and not always easy—for the Outreach Team and the Project as a whole to maintain a congenial relationship with the gay bars in their community. The support of the bar owner or manager is necessary before the Team can perform in the bar. In many communities, obtaining the bar establishment’s cooperation has been very difficult for a number of reasons. Some bar owners argue that AIDS is too much of a “downer,” that Project events conflict with busy bar nights, or that they don’t want to ruin the atmosphere of the bar with HIV-prevention activities. Some complain that the materials and condoms given out to patrons end up creating a mess on the bar floor. Still others fear that warnings about the HIV risks of combining alcohol and sex hurt their business.

Advice for developing and maintaining cooperative relationships with key figures in the community is discussed in other sections of this manual (See Module 11: Community Advisory Board and Module 2: Community Assessment). In addition to working cooperatively with bar owners, you will benefit by cultivating a congenial relationship with doormen, bouncers, bar backs, bartenders, and club managers. These staff members often have the most direct control over what happens at the bar and can be invaluable allies.

These issues underscore the importance of the Outreach Team doing whatever it can to prevent these problems from arising. Producing performances that are entertaining can generate excitement at the bar and make being there more fun for patrons. Some activities such as a well-advertised “Dating Game” can increase bar attendance on an evening of the week that tends to be slow. When planning events, work closely with the bar staff to ensure that Team performances do not disrupt the bar’s business. After each performance, clean up any trash that has been generated by the performance inside the bar. Likewise, make sure that these materials are not left strewn on the sidewalk or street outside the bar. Some Projects have received angry calls from parents whose children found erotic safer sex promotional materials left on the sidewalk. It is very much in the best interests of the Project to avoid these sorts of problems.
Outreach Materials

As part of each Outreach Team performance, the Outreach Team distributes materials that promote safer sex and advertise the Project, along with condoms and lubes. Ideally, these materials will be stimulating and visually appealing so that the young men who receive them will be motivated to keep them. The materials can then serve as a reminder about safer sex, testing, and the Project.

The Mpowerment Project is not a condom promotion project; it does not simply implore young gay/bisexual men to use condoms. Instead, it encourages safer sex, which means that any sexual activities that reduce risk are encouraged. However, condoms and lubes are nearly always distributed as part of the materials, unless the materials are only about promoting an upcoming outreach event. Providing different types of condoms and lubes is important because then the men can try a different brand than they normally use, thereby determining if another type feels better. The same is true with lubes: it can be helpful to have an opportunity to try out different types.

Again, the goal in making these items available is to motivate men to use them as part of safer sex practices.

Size, shape, and content

There are many types of outreach materials that can be developed. As with other aspects of the Project, creativity is the key to producing successful outreach materials. The materials can take many different forms: a small card, a folded “matchbook,” a packet with condoms and lube, a ‘zine (small trendy looking magazine), a fotonovela (small booklet with cartoons, photographs, or illustrations that tell a story), a small toy or trinket with a message attached, and so forth.

Outreach materials should be small and light enough so they fit easily into a pocket. If the materials are too large or bulky, many young men will not keep...
them, especially while they are socializing. This is particularly true when the materials are distributed at a bar or in a place where the young men would prefer not being seen carrying safer sex materials, and also probably don’t want to be carrying around anything at all. At Austin’s Lava Luau event, they circumvented this “rule” by distributing a colorful lei with detachable safer sex promotional materials. Men kept the lei because it could be worn around their necks.

Rather than simply urging men to be safe sexually or to get tested, the messages contained in the materials can address a wide variety of factors that have been shown through research to be linked to unsafe sex. (Examples include beliefs that safer sex is boring, boyfriend issues, assumptions about each others’ HIV status, a willingness to have unsafe sex if a guy is particularly attractive, and being high.) The messages about testing can also address underlying reasons for getting tested or avoiding it (Examples include the advantages to getting tested rather than worrying about one’s HIV status; the fact that testing can be obtained free of charge at many places). Outreach materials can address these factors with targeted messages that can be erotic, humorous, factual, motivational, or a combination of these tones and styles. We recommend that the messages contain a positive tone and offer ideas that support safer sex, rather than admonishing men to avoid unsafe sex. Sometimes it can also be effective to provide referrals to other organizations or programs that can help young gay/bisexual men to deal with some of these issues.

Serious messages are fine, but take care not to preach or present a message that arouses fear since such messages are unlikely to be effective with young gay/bisexual men. Fear-based messages can actually be harmful since they can cause some people to feel overwhelmed and therefore, less capable of practicing safer sex. In addition, the materials should go beyond simply providing guidelines about safe and unsafe sexual practices, since research indicates a majority of young gay/bisexual men already know this information. Furthermore, a lack of knowledge about what is safe and unsafe is not a major predictor of why young gay/bisexual men have unsafe sex. However, we do know many of the reasons why young men have unsafe sex, and these are listed below.

Clearly, it is not feasible or appropriate to address all of these factors in one outreach piece. Rather, we recommend that Projects develop a wide range of materials that address a variety of factors. For example, the outreach materials for a rave-themed dance party could address the link between substance use and unsafe sex; the materials for a forum on relationships could include tips on how to talk about safer sex within the context of a love relationship; or the theme of outreach materials for a fashion show could relate to self-esteem and body image.
The following list includes factors that may be helpful to address in materials. They either contribute to unprotected sex among young gay/bisexual men, or are factors that contribute to being safer sexually, and are some of the issues that your Project may want to address in its outreach materials.

- erotization and enjoyment of safer sex
- alcohol and recreational drug use, and using them when having sex
- perceived risk of getting infected with HIV
- risks of contracting STDs and how this might increase risk for transmitting and contracting HIV
- risk of transmitting HIV to others
- depression, loneliness
- condom availability (including planning ahead to have them)
- treatment optimism (the belief that current treatments for HIV infection minimize the severity of contracting HIV/AIDS)
- ineffective sexual communication/negotiation skills (verbal and nonverbal)
- establishing a norm about safer sex and knowing your current HIV serostatus in the community
- encouraging friends to have safer sex (encouraging Informal Outreach)
- self-esteem
- negotiating or renegotiating safer sex with a boyfriend (including trust and intimacy issues)

Visually eye-catching and trendy materials seem to be most effective with young gay/bisexual men. Images of attractive young men go over well, but make sure that the images reflect the diverse ideas of what young men in your community view as being attractive. Depending on the setting where materials are distributed, sexually explicit words and images can be quite effective. Other images that have been well received in various communities include comics, photos, movie stills, pictures of food, and abstract graphics.

In addition to the safer sex message, all outreach materials should include something that ties them to the Mpowerment Project. At the minimum, the Project logo and phone number should be on everything that is distributed. A short description of what the Project is about may also be helpful. For example, Atlanta’s Da CRIBB is really an acronym for “Creating Rich Intelligent Black Bruthas.” Similarly, Fusion in Wilton Manors, FL uses the tagline “ creado para chicos,” which helps the Latino/Hispanic men that it targets understand that it’s a group just for them. Several Projects have added the tagline “By young men, for young men” to all their materials. Similarly, MPower in Albuquerque used the tagline, “Young gay/bisexual men working together to build our community.” MPower OC in Orange
County, CA uses the slogan “Orange County’s hottest social group for young gay/bi guys!” Outreach materials can also be distributed to coincide with publicity for an upcoming Project event such as a dance or picnic, in which case the material can also include information about the event.

To increase the likelihood that young men will open and read the safer sex materials, use gimmicks and include non-HIV related information as well. For example, at Mpower OC in Orange County, they handed out military dog tags with “I care” written in both English and Spanish. At M4M in Monroe, LA, they hosted an event at a local bar with a winter solstice theme. They had a sexy “Solstice Santa” and set up a photo printer at the bar so that participants could take home a picture of them sitting on Solstice Santa’s lap. And at the Genesis Project in Pocatello, ID, the Outreach Team went around with Easter baskets and passed out plastic Easter eggs filled with condoms, lube and candy. The outreach material distributed at Albuquerque’s “Home for the Holidays” included candy canes. Santa Barbara put on an event called “Silver Scream” near the end of October, which combined the themes of Hollywood movies and Halloween. Their outreach materials were distributed in small bags used to hold popcorn at movie theaters. Albuquerque volunteers handed out a safer sex brochure at a Mardi Gras party that included a recipe for beignets, and another safer sex packet contained tips for flirting. In Austin’s Haunted House event, the safer sex promotional material included a piece of candy wrapped in a piece of white cloth which was then tied off and decorated to look like a little scary ghost. A printed card was tied to the neck of the ghost, and the whole package was finished off with a little plastic ghost, bat, or spider ring clipped around the ghost’s neck. The printed material included the chant the Outreach Team performed, along with an invitation to the M-groups, and ideas about how to eroticize safer sex presented in an amusing way.

Who does what? The Outreach Team and Core Group volunteers are responsible for designing and producing the outreach materials. Usually there are Core Group members who are talented in graphic arts or computers and enjoy using their artistic skills to create the materials. If you do not already have men in your Core Group with these talents, you might make a concerted effort to locate some who do and encourage them to join.
Computers and desktop publishing now make it possible to produce high quality materials provided you have the appropriate software and hardware. Access to a scanner and the Internet can open up a vast world of images that can be used in your materials. Some local copy centers also offer nonprofit organizations discounts or free access to their equipment. There are also some safer sex materials on our website (www.mpowerment.org) which you are welcome to take ideas from or to download.

We have found that there is no need to use glossy paper or multiple ink colors on outreach materials, both of which are expensive. However, some Projects have had tremendous success in keeping costs down and still producing colorful materials by creating small-size full-color materials and distributing them selectively, while distributing black-and-white materials more widely. For example, the Austin Men’s Project often printed small invitations that fit four to a page. The original was printed in color, and then the Coordinators made approximately 25 color copies of the original. This resulted in 100 full-color invitations that were only selectively distributed. The rest of the invitations were copied in black-and-white onto colored paper. These invitations were distributed much more widely throughout the entire community.

The Outreach Coordinator is responsible for working closely with the volunteers during the materials design process to discuss ideas and review drafts. Drafts of all materials should also be presented to the Core Group for feedback and approval before the final version is produced. Project volunteers can assemble the materials as a group while they are hanging out in the Project space, thereby turning the work into a fun, social time.

**Keep your materials fresh**

Keep changing your outreach materials. Seasonal materials for occasions such as Halloween, Mardi Gras, Valentine’s Day, Independence Day, Cinco de Mayo, or New Year’s can add variety. Creating a series of materials can also be quite effective. For example, Eugene’s Project created a series of cards, each containing a description of a different erotic safer sex activity. San Francisco’s Rubbermen gave out cards with their individual pictures and brief role model testimonials about safer sex.

When you create only one version of a card or of other materials, this limits the amount of dialogue a volunteer can have with others. Having multiple versions gives volunteers new opportunities to engage other young men in conversations about safer sex topics. (“Did you see the newest version of the series about ______?”) Sometimes it is easier to generate new ideas by expanding on an existing series of materials rather than trying to develop something entirely new. In addition, men may be motivated to collect the whole series of materials. Examples of posters that are part of a series which promotes HIV testing can be found on our website; these were developed by the RecBoyz in Detroit.
Consider developing themes

Different materials can be developed that connect to the theme of an upcoming Project event, use promotional activities for the event, or are given out as a party favor at the event. For example, at Eugene’s “Industrial Evolution” dance party, the Outreach Team distributed materials that looked like screwdrivers and included a condom, lube, and information about the Project. These “tools for Mpowerment” went along with the industrial theme of the party and were handed out by guys in construction worker outfits decorated with the Mpowerment Project logo. Likewise, distributing eggs at spring events is in keeping with the Easter season, as is distributing candy canes in December along with safer sex behaviors as “nice” (vs. naughty) keeps the holiday theme.

Review of materials

Many materials may need to be reviewed by two separate entities: the Core Group, and a state or local Program Review Panel, if your Project receives Centers for Disease Control (CDC) funding. Therefore, planning ahead is crucial to ensure that there is enough time to involve the Core Group in the design and production of the materials and to ensure your compliance with federal requirements pertaining to the content of AIDS-related materials. These reviews can be time-consuming, so plan accordingly.

Any Project that is funded by the CDC must go through a review of written materials, pictorials, audiovisuals, questionnaires, survey instruments, and educational sessions. Different communities have different timelines and standards for their review process. While the materials review process has been challenging in many communities, others have found ways to work within these constraints and still produce exciting materials within an adequate amount of time. Although it is important not to spend extensive time and resources on materials that you are sure will never make it through the review process, we also believe that “pushing the envelope” can be a good thing as far as materials development goes. Review committees do have a good deal of latitude concerning what content they will approve or reject. Some communities have reported that their materials are rarely, if ever, rejected—in part, because they are carefully designed with the HIV prevention needs of their community in mind. It may also be important to meet with the Program Review Panel to express to them why it is important to develop particular kinds of materials. We have heard that such panels often appreciate understanding why eye-catching materials are used by the Project.
Create interactive outreach activities at Social Outreach Events

At medium or larger Social Outreach Events, we also suggest having interactive outreach activities, in addition to Outreach Team performances and distributing safer sex promotional materials. When people have to actively think about an issue, they learn more than if they are only passive recipients of information. Watching Outreach Team performances and receiving outreach materials are passive in nature. Therefore, we suggest trying to devise activities that are fun and engaging, but require the participants to think creatively about safer sex.

For example, both in Albuquerque and in Austin, the Projects’ Christmas holiday parties included interactive components. As guests showed up for the festivities, each received a cutout paper snowflake and was asked to write a hot, safer sex activity on the paper and hang it on the Christmas tree. The safer sex snowflakes became a playful topic of discussion during the party, as well as for the next several weeks at the Project space. In Albuquerque’s Mardi Gras party, participants had to engage in a few different activities in order to earn bead necklaces. These included writing their favorite safer sex activity on a festive board in the Project space and introducing themselves to someone new at the Project. At an Albuquerque event “Groove is in the Park,” there was a scavenger hunt to locate erotic items hidden in the park (blindfolds, rope, condoms, dildos, handkerchiefs, dental dams, handcuffs, candles...etc). After finding assorted items, the scavenger teams then described the most erotic safer sex things they might do with each item. The team with the most erotic answers won a prize. Austin hosted a Gay Games which included Olympic-style competitive events such as Tug of Love (tug of war), a water condom balloon toss, and relay races. One race had participants run to the end of a line, put on a blindfold, then place a condom and lube on a dildo.

In Mpowerment Detroit, there is a wall in the bathroom that they named “The Confessional.” The wall was painted in a jigsaw pattern and guys were encouraged to write whatever they wanted to inside each “puzzle” shape. Because it was located in a private space and each message was anonymous, guys felt comfortable writing very personal feelings on the wall. Over time,
the entire wall slowly filled up and became a source for discussion topics at Project related forums. Some comments on the wall included the following:

“Are you really free from the stigma of society?”

“I hate being alone, I am my own worst enemy.”

“I love how a man’s body feels against mine.”

“I wish everyone would stop being afraid and get tested. Knowledge is power.”

“I might be HIV positive. Help!”

“I wish that people could see how much of a beautiful person I could be, both inside and out. I know I can seem like a real bitch sometimes, but I know that inside of me, I have a really good heart and that I am a wonderful person to be around.”

The Austin Men’s Project also initiated a series of smaller outreach events in the community held at various coffee shops. The host of these events, assisted by Core Group volunteers and the Coordinators, would introduce men to one another and help get a conversation going. Core Group members who attended the event decided that their role could be to draw out men’s feelings on the subject of safer sex, couched in references to the Project’s goals and mission. Instead of being bombarded by questions about what they think of safe sex practices, they encounter a warm social group of men who want to build a stronger and supportive community and know that HIV prevention is a major part of that goal.
**Sample Timeline for Social Outreach Event Planning**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date to be done by</th>
<th>Check when completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discuss general ideas for event with Core Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form committees to work on each aspect of event</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of each committees initial plans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Core Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design publicity materials and approaches for event</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of publicity materials</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Core Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of ideas for safer sex promotion at event</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by Core Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of ideas for food/entertainment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decorations/costumes/props made</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party favors/safe sex promotional materials assembled</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rehearsal for entertainment/safer sex promotion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set-up for event</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean-up</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Download this form as a Word document at [www.mpowerment.org/downloads/figure7-1.doc](http://www.mpowerment.org/downloads/figure7-1.doc)
FIGURE 7.2

Sample Calendar of Events
Hi-ya folks...

the month of June is right around the corner, and with it comes a couple of really great opportunities to volunteer within the community...

On June 7th we will volunteer at Texas Swing, a great big event that benefits Project Transitions, and on the 27th we’re helping the folks at Viva Las Vegas, a casino night that benefits AIDS Services of Austin. To let us know that you’re interested in either event, just send a message to info@austinmensproject.com.

...and here’s what’s happening this week @ AMP:

Tonight (5/21) we will have our weekly Core Group meeting at 7. Come meet a few boys, and take part in the decision-making process here at AMP. Everyone is welcome. 7pm @ the AMPhouse

Thursday (5/23) Join us for Coffee Night, at the Sacred Cup. This is a very relaxed, very laid-back way night, where you can meet new faces, and chat in a really comfortable atmosphere. The Sacred Cup is located at the corner of Manor Rd and Chicon.

8pm Friday Night (5/24) we continue our boy movie month with “Lord of the Flies”. This is the classic tale of a group of boys getting stranded on an island, and letting their primal urges take over. Half nekkid, dirty, sweaty boys running around with spears and burning stuff.... hmmm

8pm @ the AMPhouse

Dates To Remember:

June 2nd - Texas Gay Pride Festival @ Fiesta Gardens
June 7th - Texas Swing
June 16th - Lava Luau IV @ the Metropolis
June 27th - Viva Las Vegas
Hello, hello, hello...It's great to be young, queer and proud! As always lots to tell you about.

April 29, Wednesday @ 5pm - MANHUNT rehearsals -- an open invitation to anyone who wants to help get involved in this public forum is invited to come and help us out! It also gives you the inside skinny on just what we are going to present to the public! Meet at the MPower House.

April 30, Thursday @ 6:30pm - MPower presents MANHUNT - a cool public forum for young gay and bi guys on how to find your man in the urban jungle. At the House of Bands 480 Central SE, Next to the Hiland Theater...FREE and open to everybody...bring all your friends for this unforgettable event.

DO NOT MISS THIS. NO WAY, ITS MAY! May 1, Friday @ 7-10pm - TGIF - Sabrina the teenage witch and the movie of the night “Welcome to the Doll House.” I just asked Matt what the movie is about and he says, “If you have ever been an outcast, you will be touched by this film.” Hosted by Matt.

May 2, Saturday @ 2pm - Saturday OUTings. The word is that the Zoo might be invaded by MPower boys this weekend. Meet at MPower House @ 2pm, then leave by 2:30pm (the zoo might be around $5.00) Hosted by Dave.

May 2, Saturday (continued) @ 6pm - 8pm Poetry night. Come and share either your work, or your favorite poems or short stories. MPower is proud to host this wonderful event. We welcome all in the spirit of sharing and caring. Hosted by Nathan.

May 3, Sunday @ 2pm Volleyball - Play hard, get wet, and have a blast! Hosted by Daryl.

May 3, Sunday @ 3:30pm - Connections - Building Community, sharing dating and relationship tips, finding out what's safe and what's not. Invite your friends NOW. Sign up with John at 232-2990.

May 3, Sunday (continued) @ 7pm - Sci-Fi Sunday - Sci-fi movie of the week, OK, so Star Trek is in hiatus for a while, in it's place we are now showing Sci-fi movies: this week: "Tank Girl". Hosted by Nathan.

May 4, Monday @ 8pm - Coffee Talk - Come share free coffee and tea, and get in on the dish on what really goes on around here and the world. Hosted by Craig and Lorenzo.

May 5, Tuesday @ 7-9pm - Core Group - These guys run the program, reflect, and help us change our community for the better! Come and share your ideas on what the ideal community looks like. Give us ideas on what you would want to see MPower become and do. Every Tuesday at 7pm.

May 7, Thursday @ 7pm - Outreach Team meeting. Help us plan our next big OUTreach to the UNM campus, AMC, the Pulse and Double Rainbow. The best way to meet new guys and have your cover covered.‘ Every Thursday at 7pm.

MPoWeR: GaY aNd Bi GUys 18-29 wORkInG tOGetHer tO BUilD oUR coMmUnITy.

See you guys here,

Chris, Steven & John :-}
Outreach Team Planning Form

Goals of this form

• To make sure that all aspects of the outreach are planned with enough advance notice so that changes can be made.

• To make sure that all aspects of the outreach are thought through carefully

Overview

What are the dates, times and location for the outreach? Be specific.

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

What is the theme/approach for outreach? Describe in detail.

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

If it will be done at bars, do you have/need approval from bar managers/ owners? List each bar and describe.

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

What plans are being made to ensure communication and coordination among Mpowerment Project members in planning the outreach approach, materials development, and performance (if there is one)?

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

Distribution of Safer Sex Written Materials

What approach will be used? (i.e., a group together, doing a fast “zap”, engaging in conversation with bar patrons, etc.):

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________

Download this form as a Word document at www.mpowerment.org/downloads/figure7-5.doc
Who will be on the Outreach Team?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Will costumes/props be used? If so, describe them and state who will make them?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

Have all of the Outreach Team members attended an M-group before?

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

**Performance**

Will there be a performance? If so, describe it:

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

**Safer sex promotion within performance:**

How will safer sex promotion be included in it?

___________________________________________________________________________

What issues related to safer sex will be addressed?

___________________________________________________________________________

Who will design/plan the performance?

___________________________________________________________________________

Who will do the performance?

___________________________________________________________________________

Will costumes/props be used? If so, who will make them?

___________________________________________________________________________
Outreach Materials

Who will design the outreach materials?
____________________________________________________________________________

Describe safer sex materials:
____________________________________________________________________________

What issues related to safer sex will be addressed?
____________________________________________________________________________

Who is assembling the outreach materials?
____________________________________________________________________________

Will anything else be included in packets (e.g., invitations to M-groups, invitations to events, etc.)?
____________________________________________________________________________

Budget

What is the budget for the outreach? Describe in detail:
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Download this form as a Word document at www.mpowerment.org/downloads/figure7-5.doc
Outreach Team Evaluation Form
(to be completed after each outreach activity)

Location(s) where activity took place (be specific):
____________________________________________________________________________

Briefly describe activity:
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Number (and names) of Mpowerment volunteers who participated in distribution activities:
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Number (and names) of Mpowerment volunteers who participated in performance (if there was one):
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

How many people observed the outreach activity:
____________________________________________________________________________

What segments of men were reached? About how many men from each segment?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

What safer sex promotional materials were distributed? How many?
____________________________________________________________________________

How many condoms were distributed: __________________________

How many Lubes were distributed: __________________________
Was anything else included in with materials? (e.g., invitations to M-groups, invitations to other events, etc.)

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Comments/feelings about this outreach activity:

____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Download this form as a Word document at www.mpowerment.org/downloads/figure7-6.doc