

# Listening to the Voices of Women in the Criminal Justice System: Structural Considerations for HIV Prevention

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# HIV among CJ-Involved Women

- **Impact and importance** (Frost et. al, 2006; Maruschak, 2005; CDC, 2011)
  - HIV prevalence
  - Multiple disparities
- **Unique HIV risk context** (Epperson et al, 2009; Kim et al, 2002)
  - Drug Use
  - Sexual Risk Behaviors
  - Social and economic disadvantage
- **Need for targeted HIV prevention** (El-Bassel et al, 1997; Flanigan et al, 1996; Vigilante et al, 1999; Havens et al, 2009)

# Multimedia WORTH (PI: Nabila El-Bassel)

- Group-based HIV prevention intervention
  - Rikers Island (El-Bassel, Ivanoff, Schilling, Gilbert, Borne, Chen, 1995)
  - NIDA CTN (Tross, Campbell, Cohen et al, 2008)
- NIDA-funded RCT
- Sample: 337 *Community-located, CJ-involved* women
- Adapt into computer-based multimedia format



# Intervention Development

- Goal: Incorporate quantitative and qualitative findings
  - Criminal Justice Involvement
  - Norms and attitudes
- Two approaches:
  - Qualitative Study
    - Midtown Community Court (N=10)
  - Applying CBPR Principles
    - Community Consultants (N=8)

# 1- Factors associated with CJ Involvement

- Relationships
  - CJ-involved partner
  - Drug Use, IPV, availability of partners

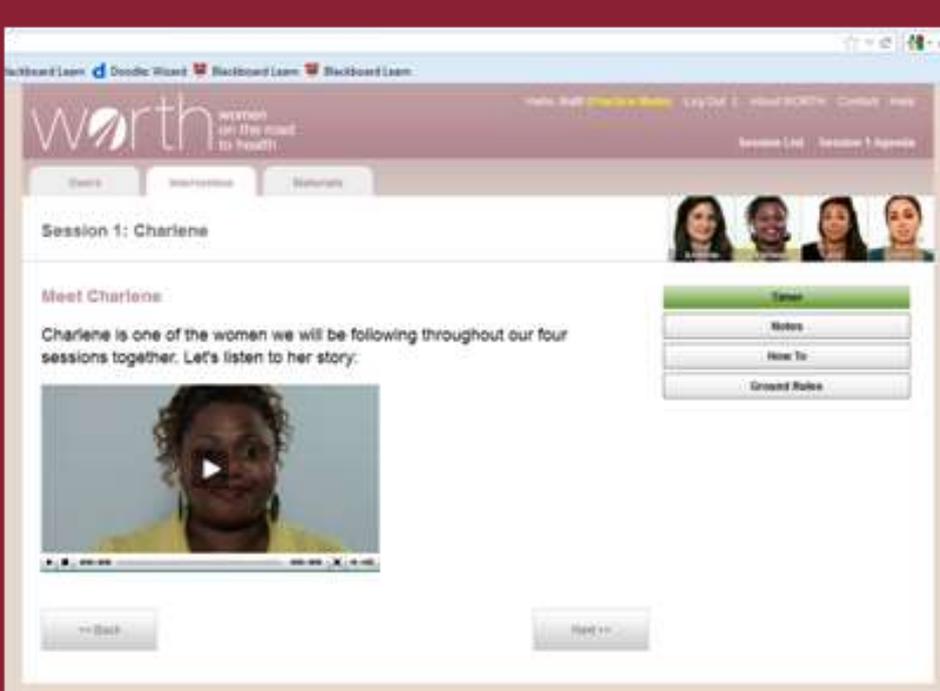
*My baby's father, he got arrested, and I was talking with somebody else and we had unprotected sex. That was risky because I could have got something from the other male and . . . my baby's father [would not know] that I had it. See, in my community, the only time when somebody really messes with somebody else is when their boyfriends go to jail. (ID: 014)*

# Relationships, cont.

- Negotiating safer sex
  - Financial instabilities, sex trading, norms

# Findings Shaping Interventions

- Relationship factors



The screenshot displays a web browser window with the 'worth' website. The browser's address bar shows 'http://www.worth.org'. The website header includes the 'worth' logo and the tagline 'action on the road to health'. Below the header, there are navigation tabs for 'Home', 'Introduction', and 'Materials'. The main content area is titled 'Session 1: Charlene' and features a row of four small profile pictures. Below this, a section titled 'Meet Charlene' contains the text: 'Charlene is one of the women we will be following throughout our four sessions together. Let's listen to her story:'. A video player is embedded below the text, showing a woman with curly hair wearing a yellow top. To the right of the video player, there is a vertical stack of four buttons: 'Timer', 'Notes', 'How To', and 'Ground Rules'. At the bottom of the page, there are two buttons: '← Back' and 'Next →'.

## 2- Multiple Service Needs

- Mandated and needed services
  - Mandated: Supervision, child custody, employment, avoiding jail, drug treatment
  - Needed: Housing, food assistance, transportation, trauma, IPV-related services
- Norms / attitudes:
  - Perceived necessity of HIV prevention
  - Mistrust, fear, disempowerment

*You are talking about women who have a lot going on. Everyone is telling them what to do, and when to do it. They aren't encouraged to think or act for themselves. And now you're talking with them about being healthy....they may not be ready to hear that.*

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# Findings Shaping Intervention

- Service needs assessment
  - Mandated vs. desired
- Problem solving – goal setting
- Engagement and empowerment focus
- Peer-led recruitment

# Recommendations

- Peer-driven interventions
- CBPR approaches
- CJ system as venue for HIV prevention?
- Norms/attitudes: gender, mistrust, disempowerment
- Social and economic disadvantage

Project WORTH is supported by:  
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For more information on WORTH:

[http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/portfolio/social\\_work/multimedia\\_worth.html](http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/portfolio/social_work/multimedia_worth.html)

The logo for Project WORTH, featuring the word "worth" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The letter "o" is replaced by a stylized graphic of a circle with a diagonal line through it, suggesting a globe or a lens. The logo is set against a light gray rectangular background.

Thank you

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