

# *WaySafe*: Improving decision-making around health risk behaviors for prisoners transitioning back to the community

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# TCU Disease Risk Reduction (DRR)

The **purpose** of the DRR-1 project was to develop and test an intervention that...

- ✓ **focused** on the critical high-risk transition time **between incarceration and return to the community**
- ✓ was designed to **increase positive decision-making** skills among offenders for healthy living
- ✓ included skills for making decisions for **reducing disease risk behaviors**, particularly those involving **HIV** and **Hepatitis B & C**

# TCU DRR-1 Intervention

## Two components –

- ✓ *WaySafe* – **six session**, manual-based interactive intervention focused on decision-making skills taught during **later stages of prison substance abuse programs**
- ✓ *Keep It Safe* – four-part toolkit given to offenders when they leave the correctional facility designed to **reinforce decision-making skills** during transition back to the community

# WaySafe

- ✓ 6 one-hour, **highly interactive** group sessions
- ✓ Focus on motivation, decision-making, overcoming cognitive roadblocks to change, and personal risk reduction planning
- ✓ Discussions about: sexual health, sexual decision making, behavioral intentions, and HIV and other viral infections
- ✓ Incorporates TCU Mapping-Enhanced counseling, an NREPP recognized approach

# WaySafe Sessions

<b>1. Introduction to Mapping</b>	Introduce TCU mapping, a problem solving tool helps people explore their beliefs and decisions.
<b>2. Risks and Reasons</b>	Thinking about why people take risks and examine own beliefs about risk-taking.
<b>3. The Game</b>	Reviewing what you know and don't know about HIV and other illnesses.
<b>4. The Should/Want Problem</b>	Distinguishing between WANTS and SHOULDs.
<b>5. Risk Scenes</b>	Learning about and identifying risky situations.
<b>6. Planning for Risks</b>	Planning to deal with risks in life. Learning how to think ahead and enjoy the benefits.

# Summary

- ✓ The *WaySafe* curriculum was **successfully implemented in eight different prison**-based substance abuse treatment programs in two different states, varying by gender, type of program and program length.
- ✓ *WaySafe* had **positive results for offenders with lower levels of treatment** engagement and improved treatment engagement for participating offenders
- ✓ Among women's programs, offenders in *WaySafe* showed improvement in all program lengths, although the **greatest improvement was in the shorter term** programs

## Summary (cont.)

- ✓ *WaySafe* Intervention group had a higher tendency to complete and return a workbook than the TAU group
- ✓ CDC Reading workbook (easier and quicker to complete) had a higher return rate than Keep it Safe toolkit
- ✓ Posttest endorsement of avoiding risky sex, knowledge about avoiding HIV and a history of previous treatment experiences significantly predict the likelihood of returning a workbook

# WAYS SAFE EFFECTIVENESS



The evidence supports the effectiveness of *WaySafe* in improving **knowledge, confidence and motivation** in avoiding risky sex and drug use activities; knowledge and confidence for getting tested for HIV and skills for preventing HIV and confidence and motivation to use those skills.