

Testing an Educational Visual Aid to Increase Knowledge and Adherence to Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) among At-risk Youth during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

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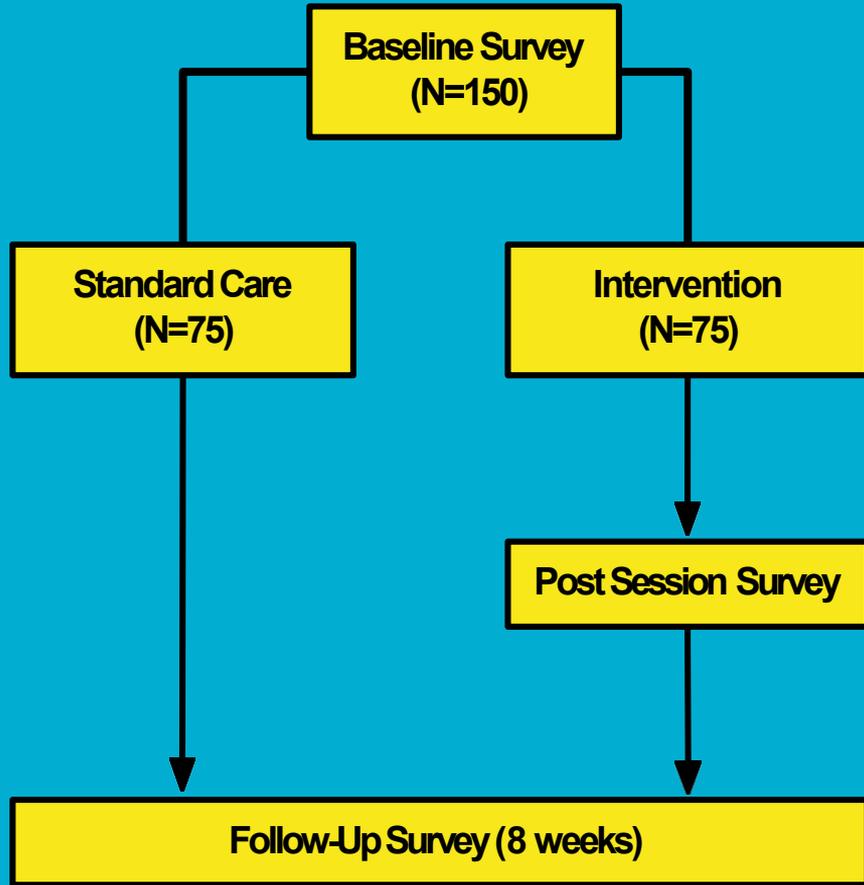
Co-authors: Anne E. Fehrenbacher, PhD, Jessica L. Saleska, PhD, Eleanor M. Vincent, & Ciara L. Field

Background

- 13-24 yr-olds: 21% of new HIV diagnoses in US (CDC, 2018)
- Adherence is difficult (Taggart et al., 2020)
- Misconceptions & stigma persist (Taggart et al., 2020)



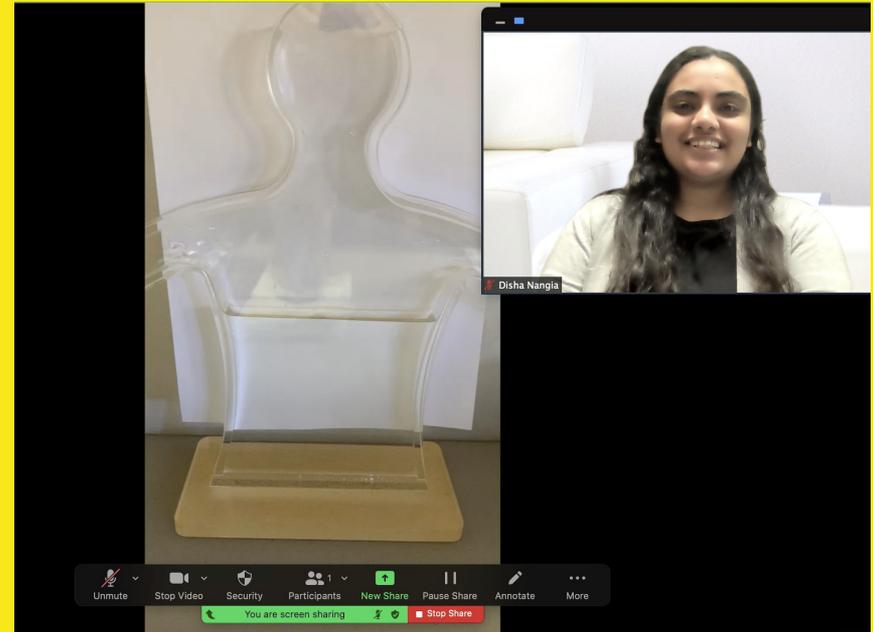
Eat. Sleep. PrEP. Repeat.



Method:

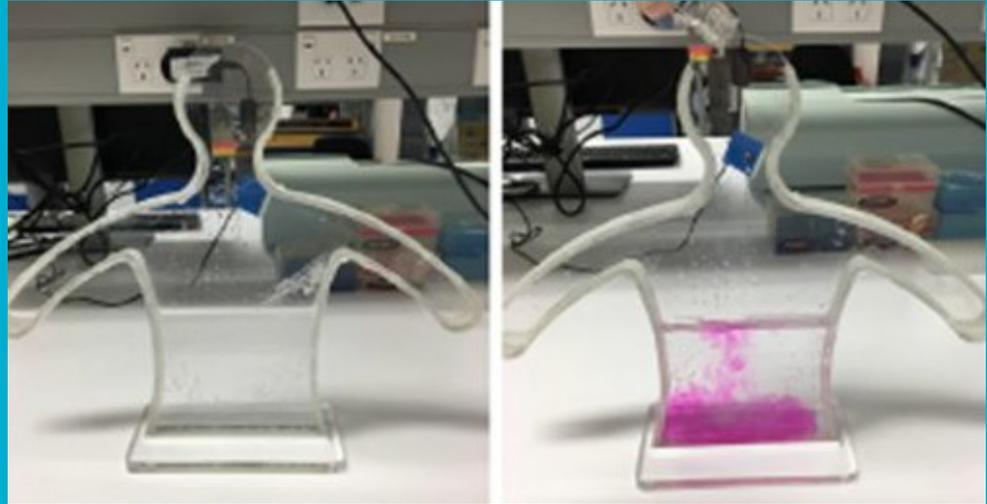
Demo goes virtual during COVID-19 Pandemic

COVID-19 Pandemic

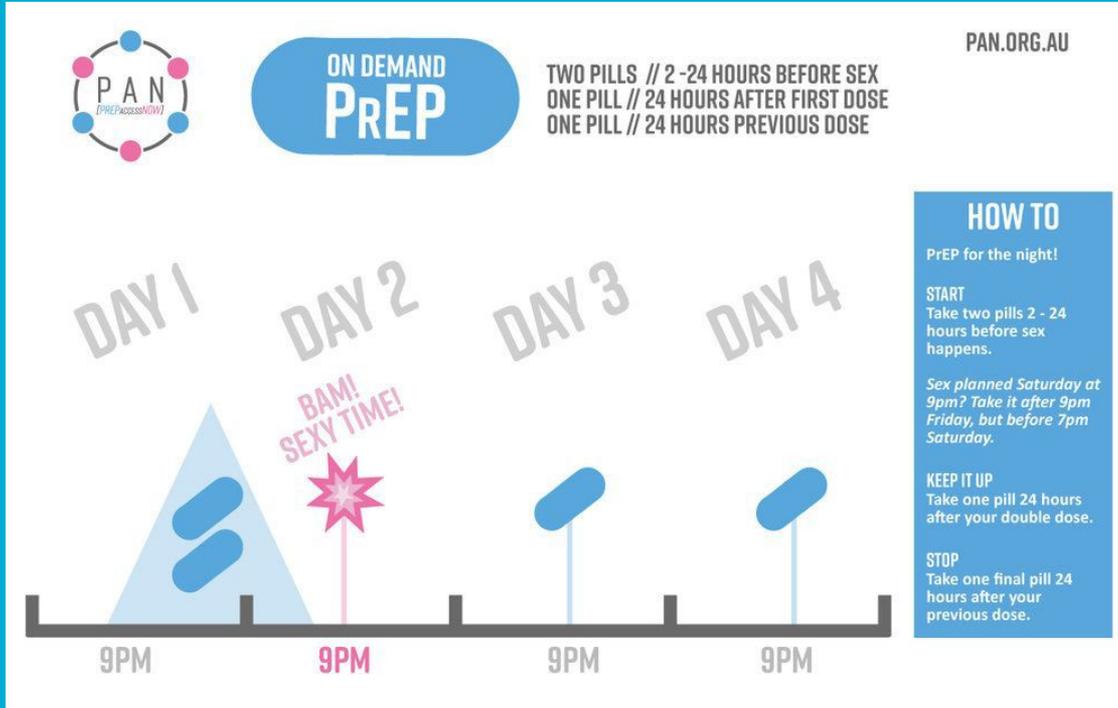


Results- Participants

- 150 youth self-identified:
 - Mean Age=22.5 (SD=2.3)
 - 51% Latino/a/Latinx
 - 81% Male
 - 60% Homosexual (gay or lesbian)



Results- Baseline



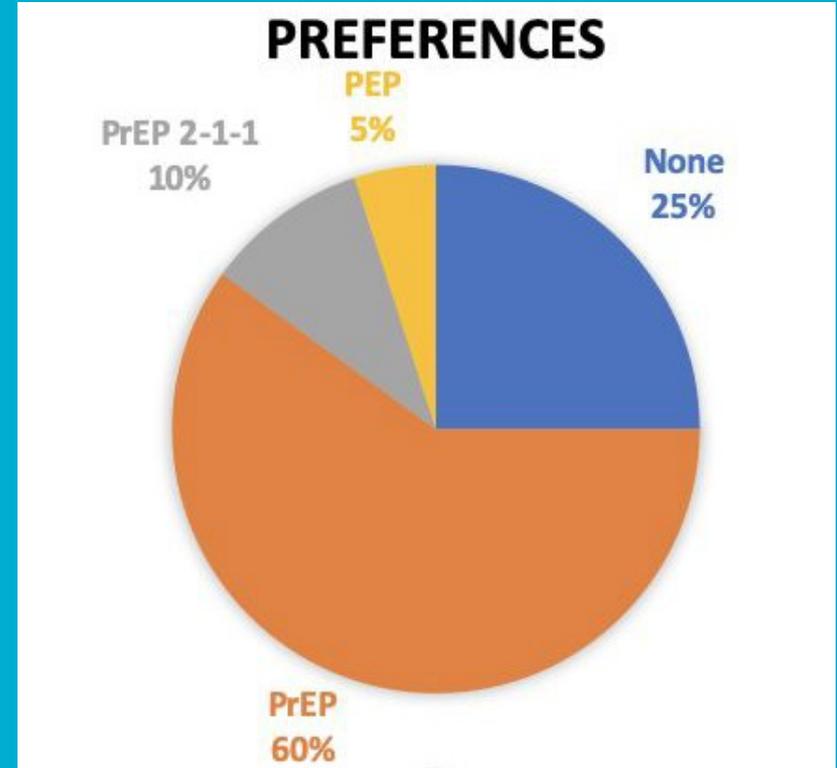
- **13% (20/150) taking PrEP**
- **Knowledge**
- **Preferences**
 - **74% chose daily PrEP**

Results- Post-session thoughts (n=75)

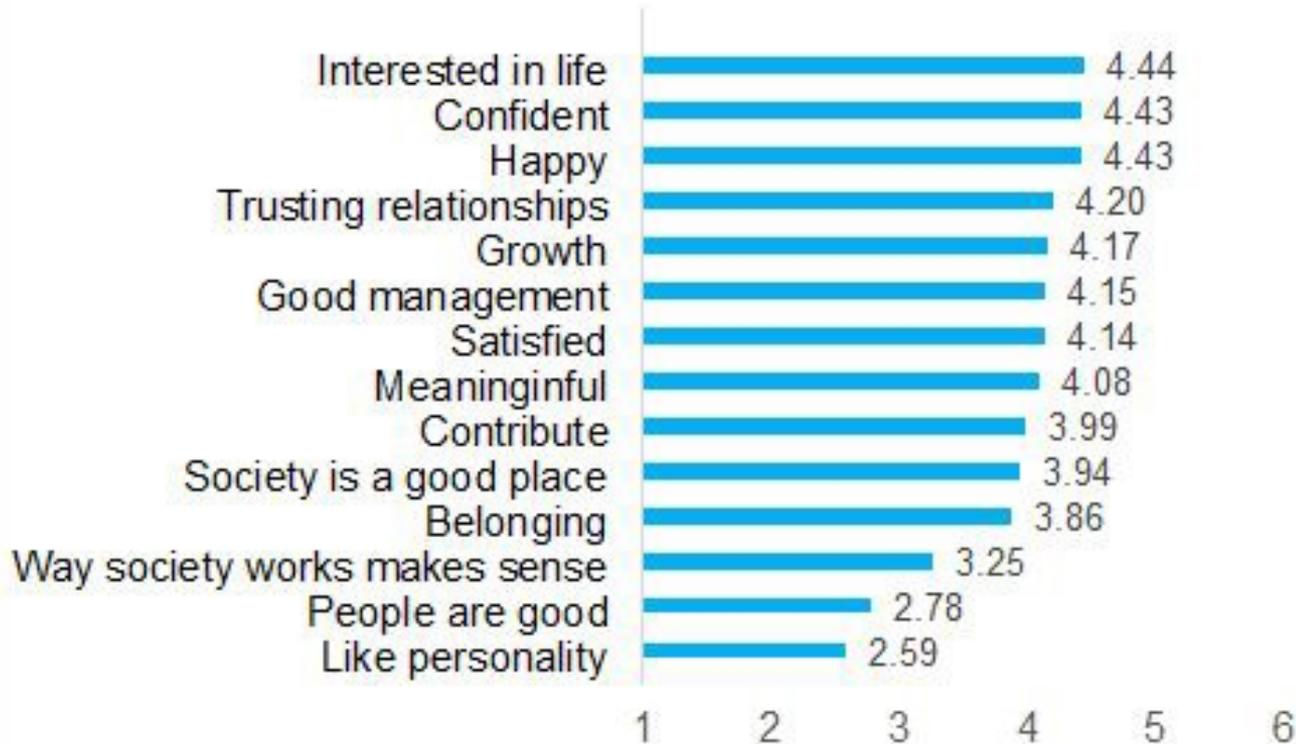
- **“Visual learning helps a lot more than statistics”**
- **I am a visual learner. Didn't really understand it the other times that people tried explaining it to me until now.**
- **“I thought it looked kind of funny but was a good visual. I think the script helped tremendously too.”**
- **“That it was a very effective analogy to explain PrEP, PrEP 2-1-1a nd PEP”**
- **“Interesting display. What are the side affects though”**
- **“I should start PrEP again”**
- **“Science is amazing. Medicine saves lives. I don't understand most chemistry but I can understand this perfectly. Gilead should have their patent stripped and PrEP should be manufactured and sold globally at-cost”**
- **“I feel more optimistic about combating the subject virus if I were to ever find myself in that situation”**
- **“f**k, i've definitely forgotten to take a dose every now and then and was under the impression it wasn't a big deal. it made me want to get an HIV test too.**

Results- Follow-up (n=101; 2.5 months later)

- **Some changes in PrEP usage/uptake**
 - **3 started prep**
 - **4 lost access**
 - **8 didn't need it anymore**
 - **2 stopped with no reason**
 - **1 reported taking 2-1-1 (as prescribed)**
- **More intervention youth answered knowledge questions correctly than control group, (χ^2 's > 4.73, $p < .05$).**

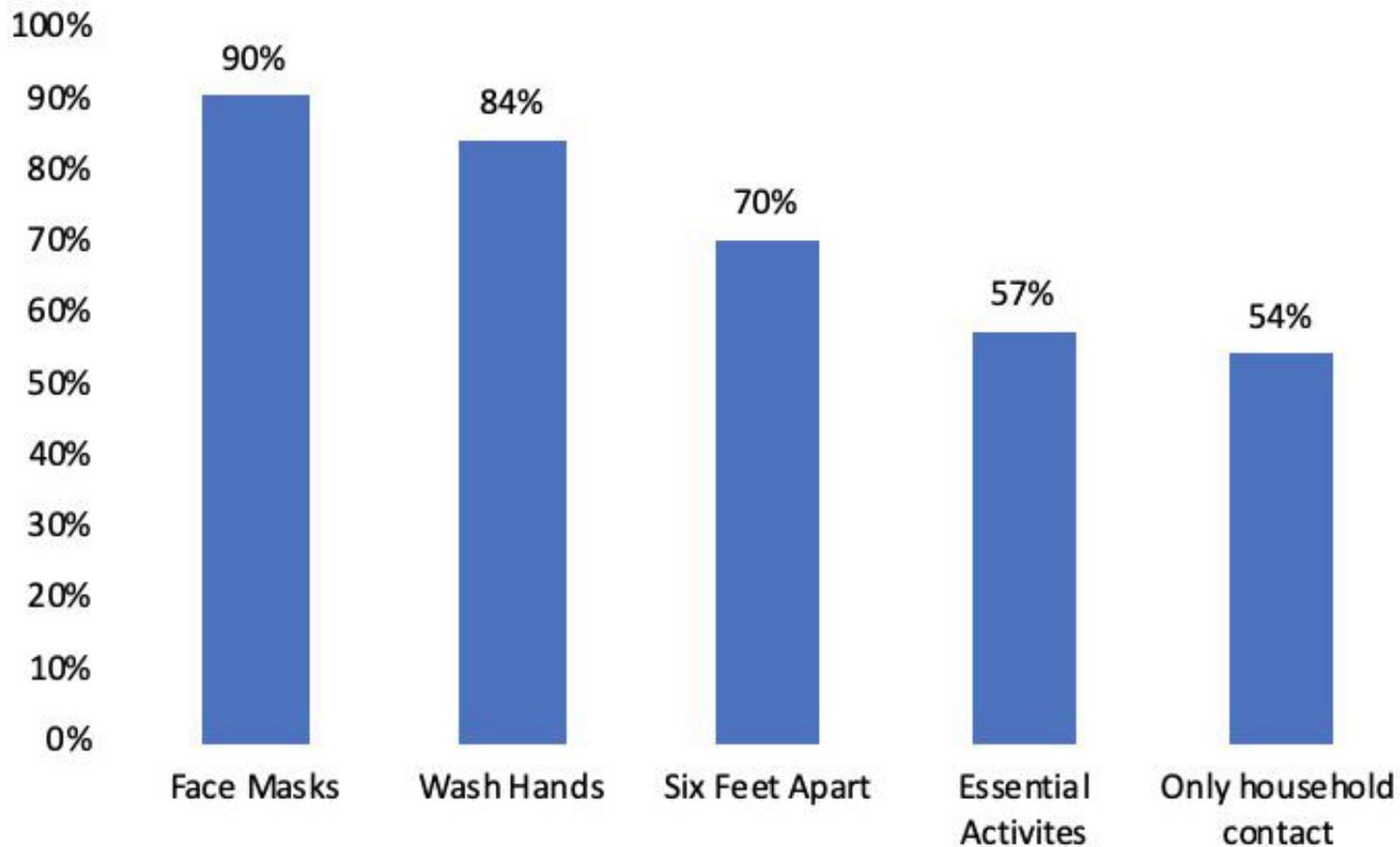


Results- Mean Mental Health (MHC-SF) at Follow-up (n=101)



6-every day
5-almost every day
4-about 2-3X a week
3-about once a week
2-once or twice
1-never

Percentage of Youth Engaging in Prevention Behaviors (n=83)



35%

**reported not intending
to get vaccinated**

(n=83)

Results-

Most Common

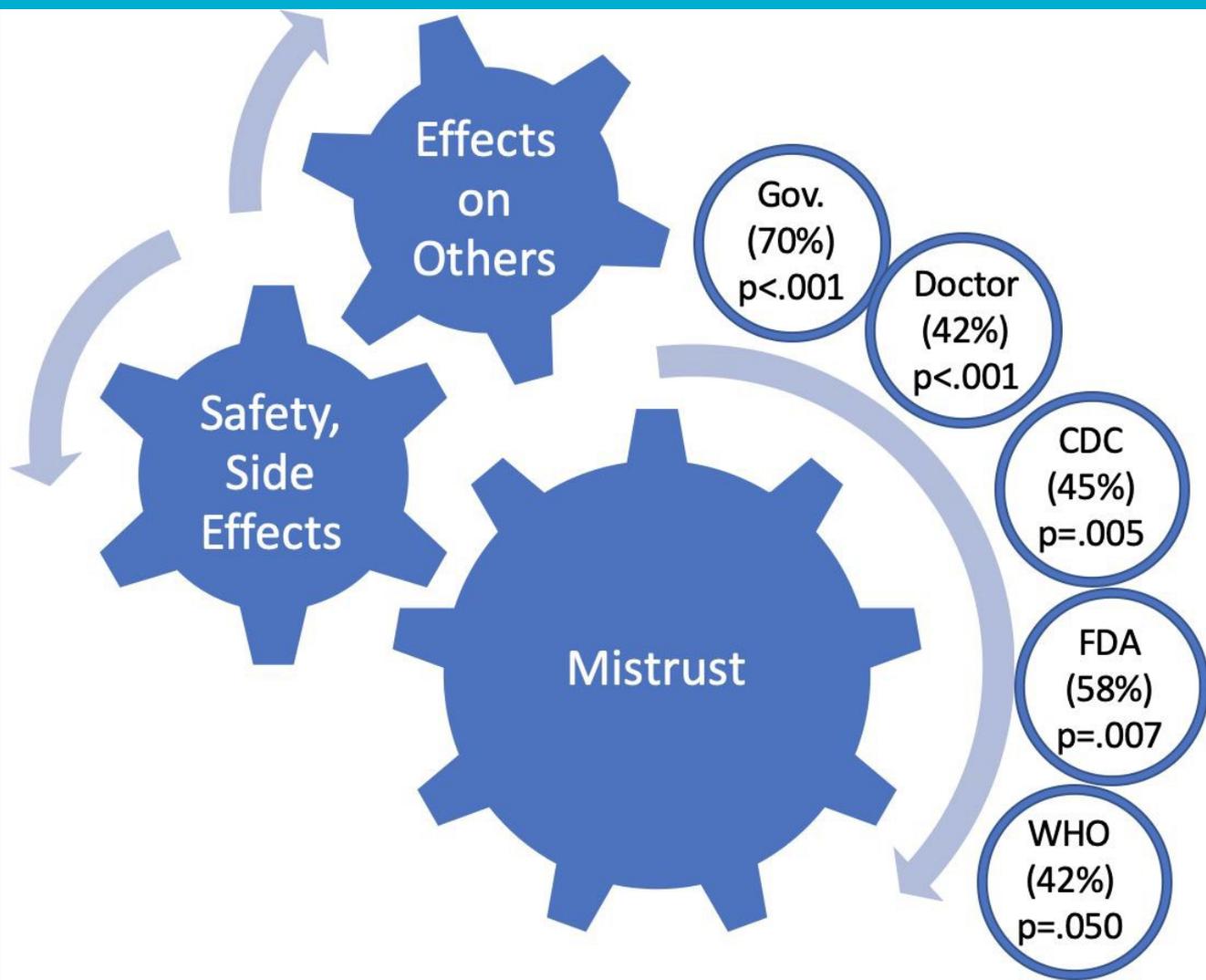
Reasons for

Not Planning

to Get the

Vaccine

(n=83)

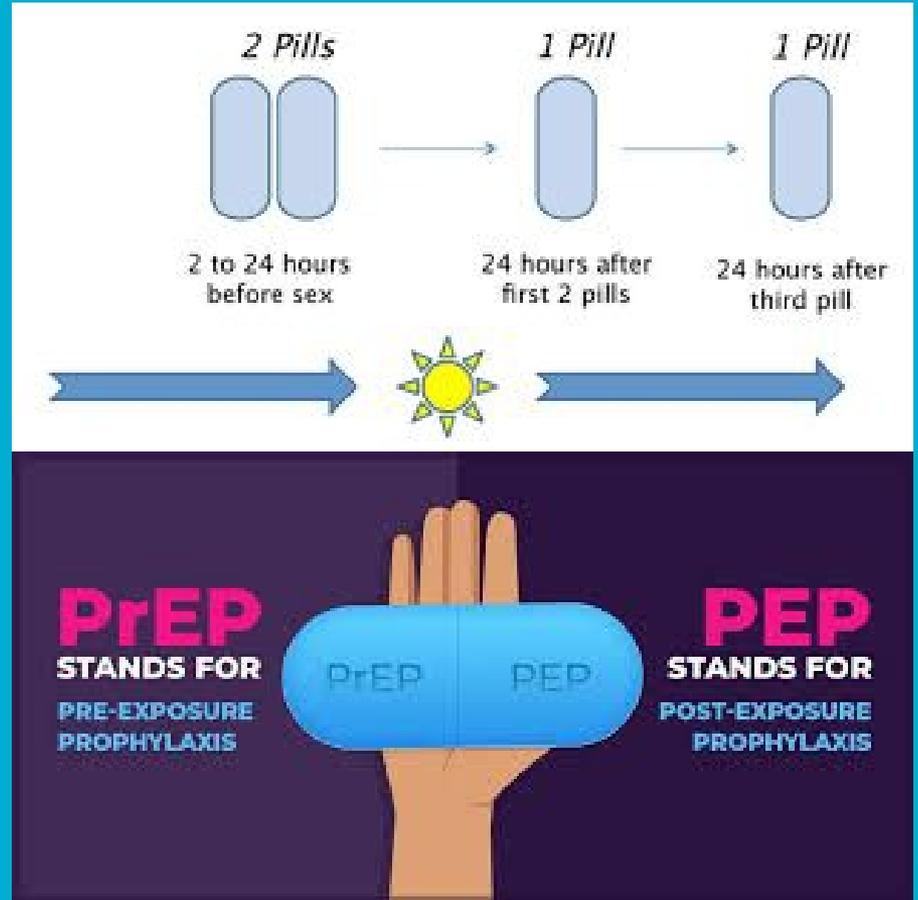


Limitations

- **Lower follow-up rates**
 - **Interactive nature of demo limited virtually**
 - **PrEP uptake/adherence difficult to measure during pandemic**
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Discussion

- **Active visualization (even virtual) may be effective**
- **PrEP 2-1-1 is not widely understood**
- **Youth may be a priority for COVID-19 vaccination**



Acknowledgements/

Thank you!



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 - **Our team**
 - **All participants**
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References

- **Azzari, C., Diez-Domingo, J., Eisenstein, E., Faust, S. N., Konstantopoulos, A., Marshall, G. S., ... & Weil-Olivier, C. (2020). Experts' opinion for improving global adolescent vaccination rates: a call to action. *European Journal of Pediatrics*, 1-7.**
- **CDC. (2018). HIV and youth. [https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/group/age/youth/index.html#:~:text=In%202018%2C%20youth%20aged%2013,\(US\)%20and%20dependent%20areas.&text=Youth%20with%20HIV%20are%20the,have%20a%20suppressed%20viral%20load](https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/group/age/youth/index.html#:~:text=In%202018%2C%20youth%20aged%2013,(US)%20and%20dependent%20areas.&text=Youth%20with%20HIV%20are%20the,have%20a%20suppressed%20viral%20load).**
- **Taggart, T., Liang, Y., Pina, P., & Albritton, T. (2020). Awareness of and willingness to use PrEP among Black and Latinx adolescents residing in higher prevalence areas in the United States. *Plos one*, 15(7), e0234821.**
- **Hart-Cooper, G. D., Allen, I., Irwin Jr, C. E., & Scott, H. (2018). Adolescent health providers' willingness to prescribe pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to youth at risk of HIV infection in the United States. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 63(2), 242-244.**
- **Petroll, A. E., Walsh, J. L., Owczarzak, J. L., McAuliffe, T. L., Bogart, L. M., & Kelly, J. A. (2017). PrEP awareness, familiarity, comfort, and prescribing experience among US primary care providers and HIV specialists. *AIDS and Behavior*, 21(5), 1256-1267.**