

A Pleasure-Inclusive Multilevel Strategy to Address Anal Sex Stigma

Findings from a Mixed Methods
Study in the Southern United States

Continuum 2025

June 11, 2025

Bryan Kutner, PhD, MPH

bryan.kutner@einsteinmed.edu

Albert Einstein College of Medicine & Montefiore Medical Center
Bronx, New York



It takes a team!

(K23 MH124569, PI: Kutner)

Research Participants

Surveys & Interviews: across the US

Workshop Participants

(Tennessee, Mississippi & Alabama)

Research Team

Yvonne Hou, MPH, MA

LJ Huang, MS

Charlotte Rinnooy Kan, MD

Edgar Quintero, MPH

Rebecca Giguere, MPH

Javier Lopez-Rios, PhD, MPH

Research Mentorship

Theo Sandfort, PhD

Alwyn T Cohall, MD

Shannon Dorsey, PhD

Lisa Hightow-Weidman, MD, MPH

Janet Turan, PhD

Daria Boccher-Lattimore, DrPH

John Pachankis, PhD

Tim Menza, MD, PhD

Implementation Partners

Southeast AETC

Northeast & Caribbean AETC

End HIV 901

The Choice Agenda

Advisory Board

Daniel R. del Vecchio BA, BS

Latesha Elope, MD, MS

Jim Pickett

Sara Bowen-Lasisi, PhD(c), MPH

Jonathan Baker, PA-C

Mitchell J. Wharton, PhD, RN, FNP-BC,

CNS, ACRN, AAHIVE, FAAN

Anonymous

Anonymous

Funding

National Institute of Mental Health

Agenda

1. Background
2. Methods
3. Results
4. Limitations

Take Home
Message

Environmental changes
drive stigma reduction

Background

Anal sex stigma impedes access to HIV services

↑ Stigma
toward
Anal Sex

↑ Stigma
toward
Anal Sex



↓ Comfort

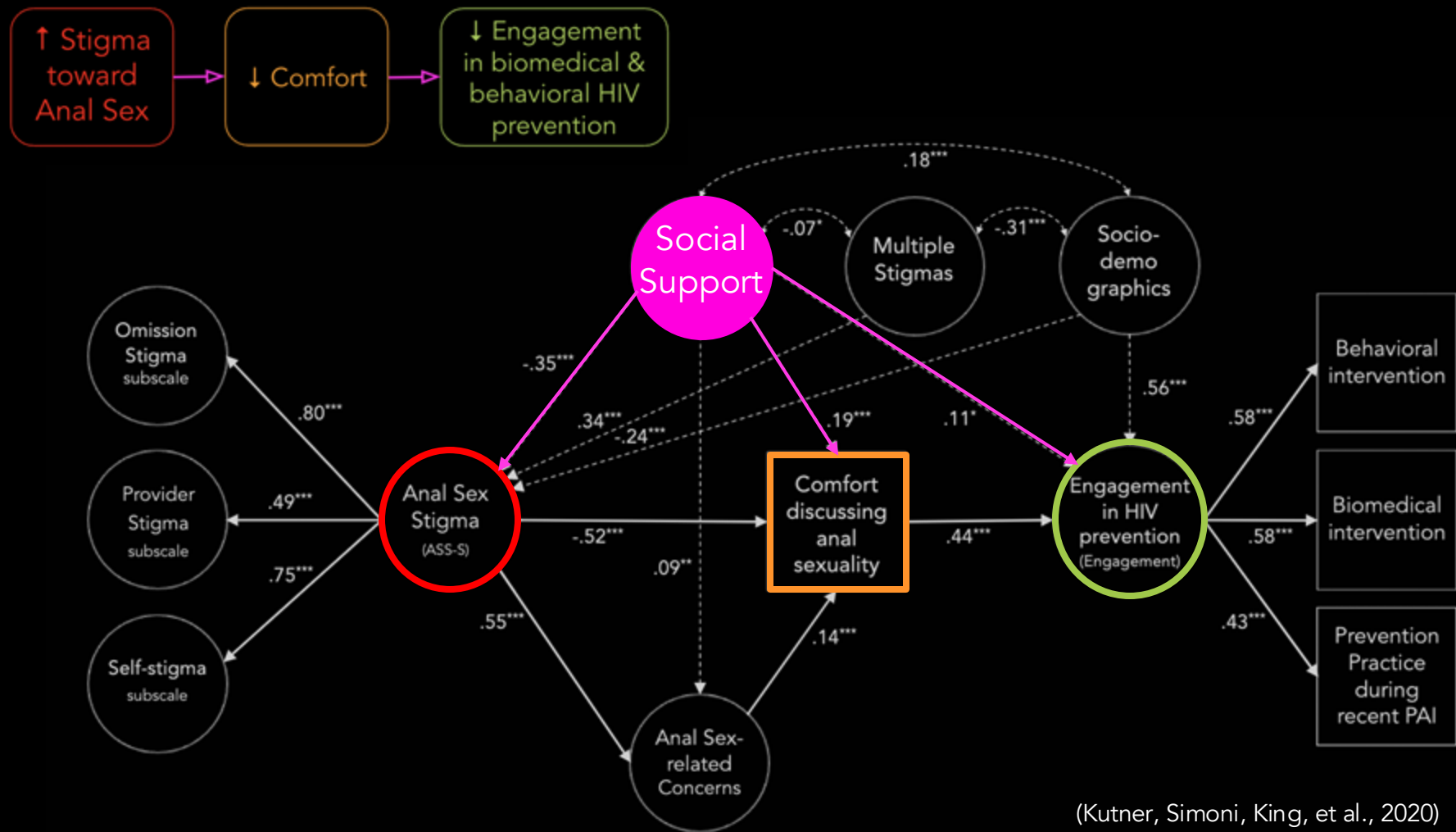
↑ Stigma
toward
Anal Sex



↓ Comfort



↓ Engagement
in biomedical &
behavioral HIV
prevention



(Kutner, Simoni, King, et al., 2020)

Background

Anal sex stigma impedes access to HIV services

Provider-initiated discussion may reduce stigma and increase engagement in HIV services

Agenda

1. Background
2. Methods
3. Results
4. Limitations

Mitigating anal sex stigma

(K23 MH124569, PI: Kutner)

Aim 1 Explore drivers & mitigators

40 in-depth interviews across the U.S.

Approach: Behavior Change Wheel

Theory: COM-B Model

For practitioners to
mitigate anal sex
stigma, we need to...

(1) increase their knowledge and comfort

(2) restructure their social & physical environment

Mitigating anal sex stigma

(K23 MH124569, PI: Kutner)

Aim 1 Explore drivers & mitigators

Aim 2 Develop anti-stigma strategies

Community Advisory Board

Strategies

2 days to enhance knowledge, comfort, skills, responsibility

Workshop

3 months to reinforce learning + initiate and sustain restructuring the clinic environment to enable discussion

Patient-Facing Materials

Coaching Calls

Quality Improvement Meetings

Mitigating anal sex stigma

(K23 MH124569, PI: Kutner)

Aim 1 Explore drivers & mitigators

Aim 2 Develop anti-stigma strategies

Aim 3 Pilot and evaluate strategies

Partnership with the Southeast AIDS Education & Training Center
Explanatory sequential mixed method pilot among 65 HCWs
Surveys and interviews before, during, after intervention

Agenda

1. Background
2. Methods
3. Results
4. Limitations

Sample

N = 65 HCWs

Alabama
Mississippi
Tennessee

38 years old ($SD = 11.4$)

65% Black or African American

95% Cisgender (73% female)

57% High school, GED, College

Mechanisms of Action

Proximal outcomes on the path to behavior change



Mechanisms of Action

Proximal outcomes on the
path to behavior change



% change in scale range from baseline

Mechanisms of Action

Knowledge^a

Skills^b

Professional Role & Responsibility^b

Organizational Context & Resources^b

Positive Emotions^b

Negative Emotions^b

Self-efficacy^b

Ease providing social support^c

Comfort advising about feces/pain/pleasure^d

^aInventory of Anal Sex Knowledge (% correct); ^bDeterminants of Implementation Behavior Questionnaire (1-6 Likert); ^cMedical Outcomes Survey Social Support Scale (Likert 1-5); ^dComfort scale developed for this project (Likert 1-4).

Mechanisms of Action

Knowledge^a

Skills^b

Professional Role & Responsibility^b

Organizational Context & Resources^b

Positive Emotions^b

Negative Emotions^b

Self-efficacy^b

Ease providing social support^c

Comfort advising about feces/pain/pleasure^d

% change in scale range from baseline

Baseline		Post-Workshop		
Mean	SD	Mean	% Δ	p value
51.3	22.7	89.5	+38%	< .01
2.8	1.4	5.2	+48%	< .001
4.7	1.4	5.3	+12%	< .001
4.2	1.0	4.7	+10%	< .001
4.1	1.3	4.9	+16%	< .001
2.3	1.4	2.1	-5%	< .05
4.0	1.4	5.2	+24%	< .001
4.0	0.9	4.4	+8%	< .01
~2.2	~1.4	~3.2	~+27%	< .001

^aInventory of Anal Sex Knowledge (% correct); ^bDeterminants of Implementation Behavior Questionnaire (1-6 Likert); ^cMedical Outcomes Survey Social Support Scale (Likert 1-5); ^dComfort scale developed for this project (Likert 1-4).

Mechanisms of Action

	% change in scale range from baseline							
	Baseline		Post-Workshop			Post-Intervention		
	Mean	SD	Mean	% Δ	p value	Mean	% Δ	p value
Knowledge ^a	51.3	22.7	89.5	+38%	< .01	79.0	+28%	< .01
Skills ^b	2.8	1.4	5.2	+48%	< .001	5.2	+48%	< .001
Professional Role & Responsibility ^b	4.7	1.4	5.3	+12%	< .001	5.3	+12%	< .001
Organizational Context & Resources ^b	4.2	1.0	4.7	+10%	< .001	4.7	+10%	< .01
Positive Emotions ^b	4.1	1.3	4.9	+16%	< .001	4.9	+16%	< .001
Negative Emotions ^b	2.3	1.4	2.1	-5%	< .05	2.1	-5%	< .05
Self-efficacy ^b	4.0	1.4	5.2	+24%	< .001	4.9	+18%	< .001
Ease providing social support ^c	4.0	0.9	4.4	+8%	< .01	4.3	+10%	< .01
Comfort advising about feces/pain/pleasure ^d	~2.2	~1.4	~3.2	~+27%	< .001	~3.1	~+24%	< .001

^aInventory of Anal Sex Knowledge (% correct); ^bDeterminants of Implementation Behavior Questionnaire (1-6 Likert); ^cMedical Outcomes Survey Social Support Scale (Likert 1-5); ^dComfort scale developed for this project (Likert 1-4).

Behavior Change: Frequency of Sexual Health Assessment

Asking about sexual orientation

Asking about concerns related to HIV/STIs

Asking about anal sex practices

Asking about anal sex concerns apart from HIV/STIs

% change in scale range

Baseline	
Mean	SD
2.4	1.5
2.8	1.5
1.1	1.3
1.1	1.5

^aFrequency items developed for this project (higher scores indicate greater frequency: 0 Not at all, 1 Sometimes, 2 Often, 3 Very Often, 4 Always)

Behavior Change: Frequency of Sexual Health Assessment

Asking about sexual orientation

Asking about concerns related to HIV/STIs

Asking about anal sex practices

Asking about anal sex concerns apart from HIV/STIs

Baseline		% change in scale range		
Mean	SD	Mean	% Δ	p value
2.4	1.5	2.6	NS	NS
2.8	1.5	3.0	NS	NS
1.1	1.3	1.8	+16%	< .001
1.1	1.5	1.8	+15%	< .05

^aFrequency items developed for this project (higher scores indicate greater frequency: 0 Not at all, 1 Sometimes, 2 Often, 3 Very Often, 4 Always)

Behavior Change: Frequency of Sexual Health Assessment

Asking about sexual orientation

Asking about concerns related to HIV/STIs

Asking about anal sex practices

Asking about anal sex concerns apart from HIV/STIs

Social Support specific to anal pleasure and health

Started a conversation about anal health, apart from HIV/STIs

Responded to anal health concerns, apart from HIV/STIs

Advised how to lessen contact with feces during anal sex

Advised how to make anal sex less painful

Advised how to make anal sex more pleasurable

% change in scale range

	Baseline		Post-Intervention		
	Mean	SD	Mean	% Δ	p value
Asking about sexual orientation	2.4	1.5	2.6	NS	NS
Asking about concerns related to HIV/STIs	2.8	1.5	3.0	NS	NS
Asking about anal sex practices	1.1	1.3	1.8	+16%	< .001
Asking about anal sex concerns apart from HIV/STIs	1.1	1.5	1.8	+15%	< .05
Started a conversation about anal health, apart from HIV/STIs	0.8	1.3			
Responded to anal health concerns, apart from HIV/STIs	1.1	1.5			
Advised how to lessen contact with feces during anal sex	0.3	0.9			
Advised how to make anal sex less painful	0.5	1.0			
Advised how to make anal sex more pleasurable	0.4	1.0			

^aFrequency items developed for this project (higher scores indicate greater frequency: 0 Not at all, 1 Sometimes, 2 Often, 3 Very Often, 4 Always)

Behavior Change: Frequency of Sexual Health Assessment

Asking about sexual orientation

Asking about concerns related to HIV/STIs

Asking about anal sex practices

Asking about anal sex concerns apart from HIV/STIs

Social Support specific to anal pleasure and health

Started a conversation about anal health, apart from HIV/STIs

Responded to anal health concerns, apart from HIV/STIs

Advised how to lessen contact with feces during anal sex

Advised how to make anal sex less painful

Advised how to make anal sex more pleasurable

% change in scale range

	Baseline		Post-Intervention		
	Mean	SD	Mean	% Δ	p value
Asking about sexual orientation	2.4	1.5	2.6	NS	NS
Asking about concerns related to HIV/STIs	2.8	1.5	3.0	NS	NS
Asking about anal sex practices	1.1	1.3	1.8	+16%	< .001
Asking about anal sex concerns apart from HIV/STIs	1.1	1.5	1.8	+15%	< .05
Social Support specific to anal pleasure and health					
Started a conversation about anal health, apart from HIV/STIs	0.8	1.3			
Responded to anal health concerns, apart from HIV/STIs	1.1	1.5			
Advised how to lessen contact with feces during anal sex	0.3	0.9			
Advised how to make anal sex less painful	0.5	1.0			
Advised how to make anal sex more pleasurable	0.4	1.0			

^aFrequency items developed for this project (higher scores indicate greater frequency: 0 Not at all, 1 Sometimes, 2 Often, 3 Very Often, 4 Always)

Behavior Change: Frequency of Sexual Health Assessment

Asking about sexual orientation

Asking about concerns related to HIV/STIs

Asking about anal sex practices

Asking about anal sex concerns apart from HIV/STIs

Social Support specific to anal pleasure and health

Started a conversation about anal health, apart from HIV/STIs

Responded to anal health concerns, apart from HIV/STIs

Advised how to lessen contact with feces during anal sex

Advised how to make anal sex less painful

Advised how to make anal sex more pleasurable

% change in scale range

Baseline		Post-Intervention		
Mean	SD	Mean	% Δ	p value
2.4	1.5	2.6	NS	NS
2.8	1.5	3.0	NS	NS
1.1	1.3	1.8	+16%	< .001
1.1	1.5	1.8	+15%	< .05
0.8	1.3	1.6	+19%	< .001
1.1	1.5	1.8	+16%	< .005
0.3	0.9	1.2	+20%	< .0001
0.5	1.0	1.4	+23%	< .0001
0.4	1.0	1.5	+25%	< .0001

^aFrequency items developed for this project (higher scores indicate greater frequency: 0 Not at all, 1 Sometimes, 2 Often, 3 Very Often, 4 Always)

Behavior Change:

Patient Uptake of STI Screening by Anatomical Site

Behavior Change: Patient Uptake of STI Screening by Anatomical Site

Urethral

Oropharyngeal

Anorectal

Behavior Change: Patient Uptake of STI Screening by Anatomical Site

Pre-Intervention
N = 33 patients

During Intervention
N = 31 patients

Post-Intervention
N = 55 patients

Urethral

Oropharyngeal

Anorectal

Behavior Change:

Patient Uptake of STI Screening by Anatomical Site

	Pre-Intervention N = 33 patients	During Intervention N = 31 patients	Post-Intervention N = 55 patients
	% by Site	% Δ from baseline	% Δ from baseline
Urethral	69.7%	+20.4%	+12.2%

Behavior Change: Patient Uptake of STI Screening by Anatomical Site

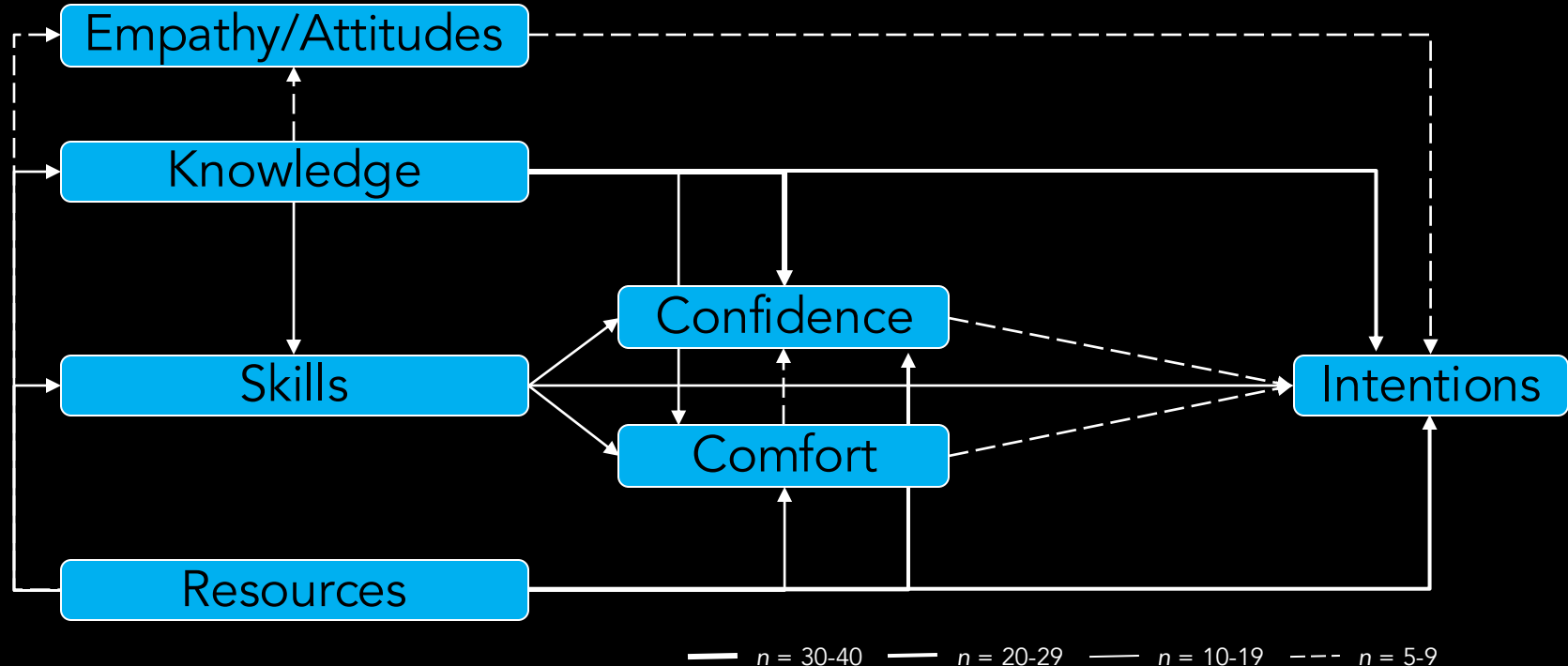
	Pre-Intervention N = 33 patients	During Intervention N = 31 patients	Post-Intervention N = 55 patients
	% by Site	% Δ from baseline	% Δ from baseline
Urethral	69.7%	+20.4%	+12.2%
Oropharyngeal	90.9%	+6.5%	0.0%

Behavior Change:

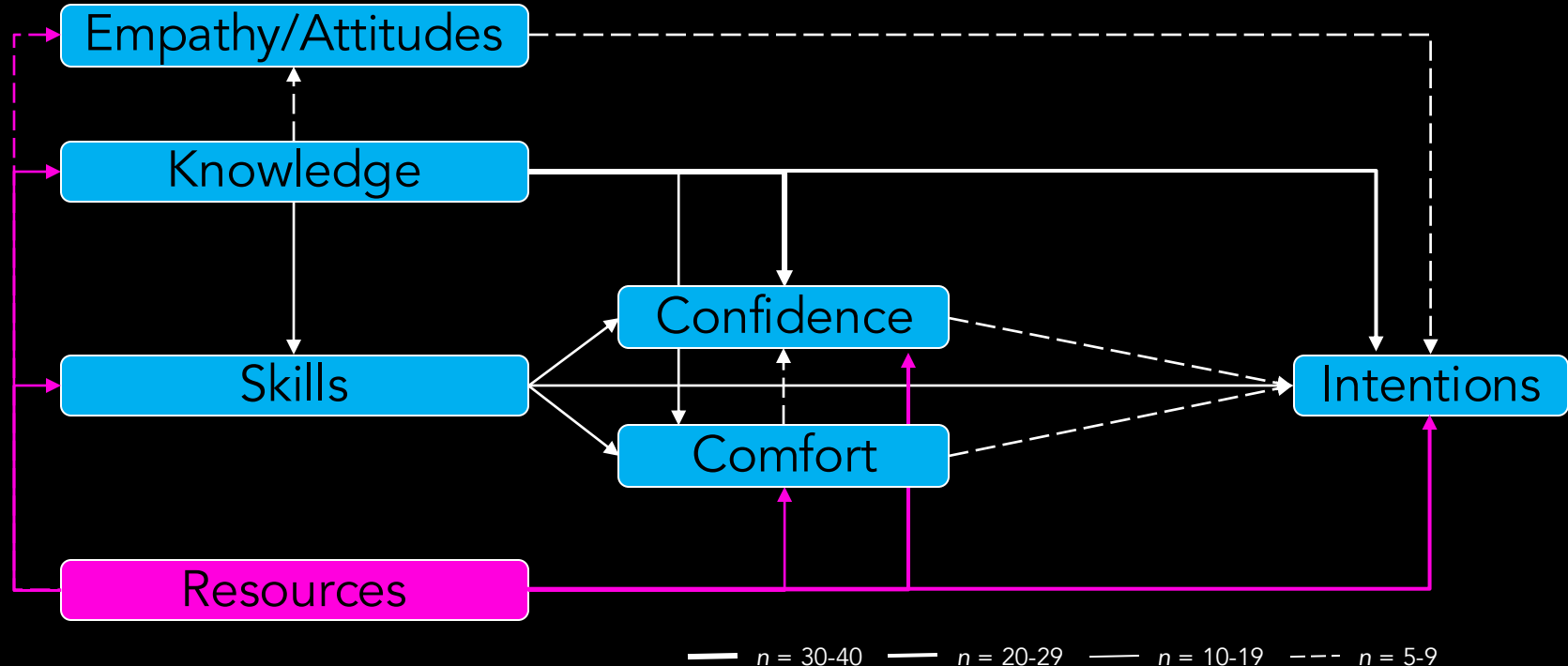
Patient Uptake of STI Screening by Anatomical Site

	Pre-Intervention N = 33 patients	During Intervention N = 31 patients	Post-Intervention N = 55 patients
	% by Site	% Δ from baseline	% Δ from baseline
Urethral	69.7%	+20.4%	+12.2%
Oropharyngeal	90.9%	+6.5%	0.0%
Anorectal	24.2%	+60.0%	+50.4%

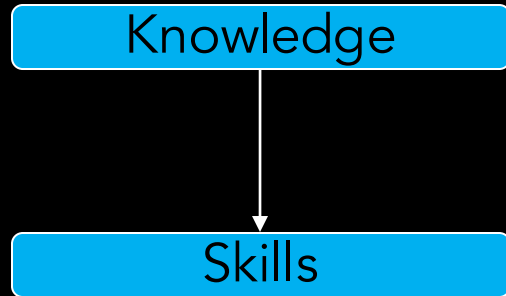
Connecting Mechanisms and Behavior Change: Participants reporting a link between mechanisms



Connecting Mechanisms and Behavior Change: Participants reporting a link between mechanisms

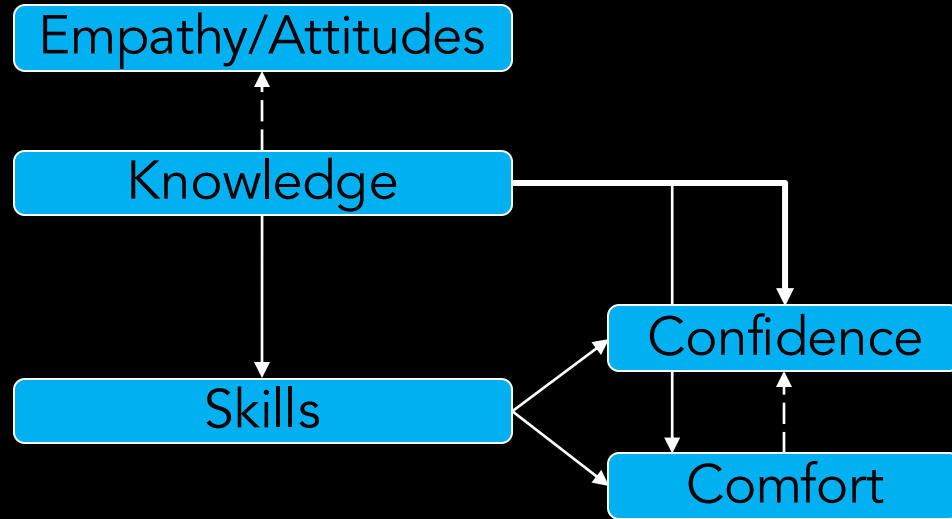


Connecting Mechanisms and Behavior Change: Participants reporting a link between mechanisms



"I can tell you prior to that workshop I didn't ask somebody, 'Is your anal sex enjoyable?' I didn't really honestly want to know...I have a lot more knowledge to open up that conversation...to ask them and be able to share information if I say, 'Is your sex pleasurable?'"

Connecting Mechanisms and Behavior Change: Participants reporting a link between mechanisms

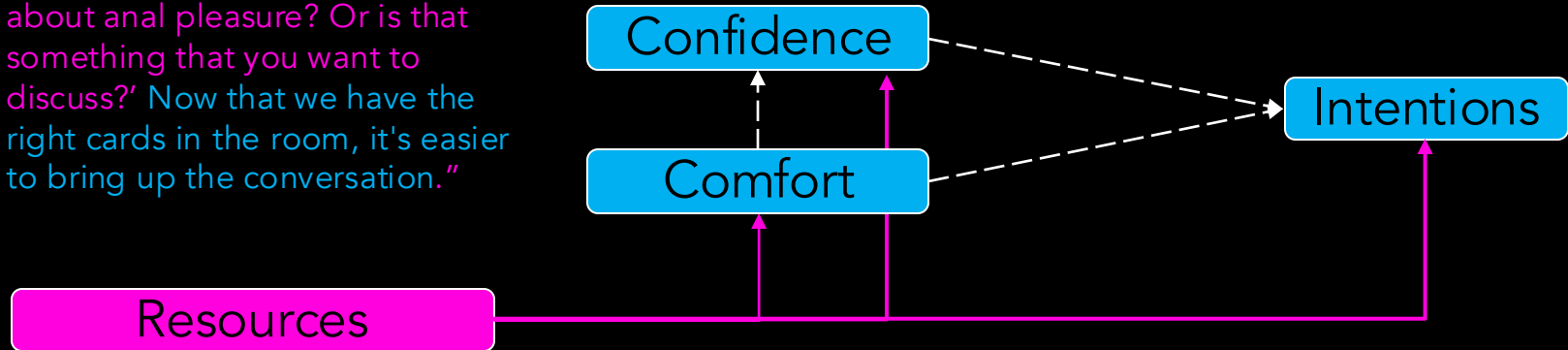


"It gave me the confidence and the comfortability to be able to talk about these things rather than completely ignoring them and putting up a wall to them, which is what I would have done before when I felt uneducated. Now I feel like I can plant some seeds, and as I work with my patients more when they come back, I can ask these questions and talk to them about these things without a lot of fear and anxiety."

Connecting Mechanisms and Behavior Change: Participants reporting a link between mechanisms

"The button. I have it up in my office. When I'm on a Zoom call or something, it's right in the background so people can see it... I have had some people in the office come around and ask me about it. So, it does bring attention and make people open to talk about anal sex and anal pleasure."

"We always ask about anal sex, but we never really asked about, 'How do you as the patient feel about anal pleasure? Or is that something that you want to discuss?' Now that we have the right cards in the room, it's easier to bring up the conversation."

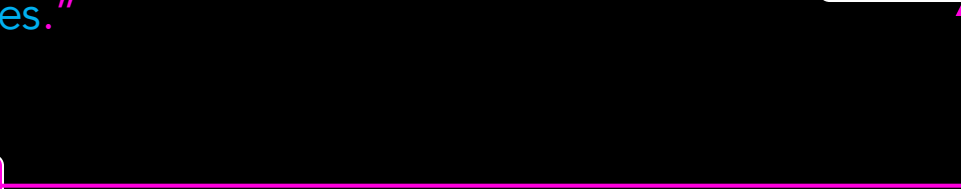


Connecting Mechanisms and Behavior Change: Participants reporting a link between mechanisms

"I think that the two-day workshop was like an amazing first step. And it definitely got everyone in my practice's wheels thinking about it. But the whole three and a half months where we've had support, working out some of these processes that we started thinking about at the workshop, that's really solidified for our organization how we do it, why we're doing it and the best practices that we can take for these changes."

Resources

Intentions



Take Home
Message

Environmental changes
drive stigma reduction

Limitations

- Selection bias
- Reporting bias
- Causality

Future Directions

- Refinement
- Scalability
- Effectiveness

pleasureandhealth.org

Our Website of Resources



The screenshot shows the homepage of the website pleasureandhealth.org. The header features the 'The Anal Pleasure & Health Project' logo, the 'PRIME' logo (Psychiatry Research Institute at Monash University), and a navigation menu with links: '+ Resources for Anal Pleasure & Health', '+ For Clinics', '+ Selection Criteria', '+ Science Library', '+ About Us', and '+ Contact Us'. The main heading is 'Explore Resources' in large white letters, followed by 'for anal pleasure & health' in a yellow cursive font. Below this, a paragraph states: 'We combed the Internet for accurate, reliable, sex-positive, welcoming and unbiased information about anal pleasure and health.' Another paragraph says: 'Scroll down to take a peek behind the cheek — and have fun sharing with others!'. At the bottom, a note reads: 'See something that's missing or doesn't belong? Please let us know! Inclusion of resources is not an endorsement of any individual or organization.' A language selector at the bottom left shows 'English' with a flag icon and a right arrow.

The Anal Pleasure & Health Project

PRIME Psychiatry Research Institute at Monash University

+ Resources for Anal Pleasure & Health + For Clinics
+ Selection Criteria + Science Library + About Us + Contact Us

Explore Resources

for anal pleasure & health

We combed the Internet for accurate, reliable, sex-positive, welcoming and unbiased information about anal pleasure and health.

Scroll down to take a peek behind the cheek — and have fun sharing with others!

See something that's missing or doesn't belong? Please let us know! Inclusion of resources is not an endorsement of any individual or organization.

English >

pleasureandhealth.org



The screenshot shows the homepage of the website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the 'The Anal Pleasure & Health Project' logo, the 'PRIME' logo (Psychiatry Research Institute at Mount Sinai), and a user icon. Below the navigation bar, there are links: '+ Resources for Anal Pleasure & Health', '+ For Clinics', '+ Selection Criteria', '+ Science Library', '+ About Us', and '+ Contact Us'. The main heading is 'Explore Resources' in large white font, followed by 'for anal pleasure & health' in a cursive script. Below this, there is a paragraph: 'We combed the Internet for accurate, reliable, sex-positive, welcoming and unbiased information about anal pleasure and health.' and another paragraph: 'Scroll down to take a peek behind the cheek — and have fun sharing with others!'. At the bottom, there is a small text: 'See something that's missing or doesn't belong? Please let us know! Inclusion of resources is not an endorsement of any resource.' and a language selector showing 'English'.

The Anal Pleasure & Health Project

PRIME Psychiatry Research Institute at Mount Sinai

+ Resources for Anal Pleasure & Health + For Clinics
+ Selection Criteria + Science Library + About Us + Contact Us

Explore Resources

for anal pleasure & health

We combed the Internet for accurate, reliable, sex-positive, welcoming and unbiased information about anal pleasure and health.

Scroll down to take a peek behind the cheek — and have fun sharing with others!

See something that's missing or doesn't belong? Please let us know! Inclusion of resources is not an endorsement of any resource.

English >

Explore Resources

for anal pleasure & health

We combed the Internet for accurate, reliable, sex-positive and unbiased information about anal pleasure and health.

Scroll down for a peek behind the cheek!

(Translation is available on the bottom left)



Click a resource below to learn more!

(We packed in a lot, so filter to find what suits you.)

Click a resource below to learn more!
(We packed in a lot, so filter to find what suits you.)



CONTENT: All



FORMAT: All



POPULATION: All



SORT



SEARCH

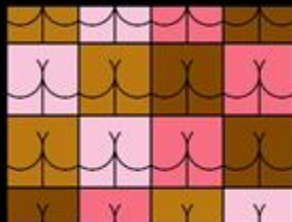


Anal Pleasure & Health

This is the go-to book to increase knowledge and comfort with anal play, the "Bible" on the topic!

(Reviewed August 2023)

[Learn More](#)



Anal Self-Examination

A brief physician-guided article on how to conduct an anal self-examination.

(Reviewed August 2023)

[Learn More](#)



Anal Sex and Your Health

Brief answers from medical providers about anal sex and health, including in Spanish.

(Reviewed November 2023)

[Learn More](#)



b-Vibe Anal Academy



The Bottom's Digest Recipes



How To Clean Your Ass Before Sex

(We packed in a lot, so filter to find what suits you.)



CONTENT: how-to guide x ^ FORMAT: All v POPULATION: - x ^ SORT: v SEARCH

anal health conditions
bottoming
certified sex educator
FAQs
how-to guide
lube
medically reviewed
resources



Anal Pleasure & Health

This is the go-to book to increase knowledge and comfort with anal play, the "Bible" on the topic!

(Reviewed August 2023)

[Learn More](#)

gender inclusive

heterosexual inclusive
HIV inclusive
racially inclusive



b-Vibe Anal Academy

Comprehensive, celebratory and inclusive workshops, videos, podcasts and answers to FAQs.

(Reviewed August 2023)

[Learn More](#)

Trans Sex

Trans Sex: A Guide for Adults

A book for transgender and genderqueer people about sexuality, including anal sex.

(Reviewed January 2025)

[Learn More](#)

Pegging Book



The Pegging Book

A complete guide to anal sex with a strap-on dildo

Anal SEX

Anal Sex Basics

A beginner's guide to maximizing anal pleasure for every body

Resources For Clinics

Looking to promote accurate, reliable, sex-positive discussions in your clinic about anal pleasure and health?

Check out these resources!

Check out the new webinar!



Client-Facing Print
Materials



Editable
Intake Forms



Anal Pleasure & Health
for Medical Clinicians

Algunos consejos sobre el sexo anal

Información correcta, confiable, y positiva sobre el sexo, el placer y la salud anal



El sexo anal no es doloroso si se hace correctamente. (Aún durante el coito.)

La creencia de que el estímulo anal, sobre todo durante el coito, tiene que doler es un mito persistente y peligroso. El máximo placer anal requiere la eliminación de todo el dolor o el trauma físico de la experiencia anal.

Se puede disfrutar del sexo anal aún si en el pasado haya sido incómodo.

La tensión anal crónica es la causa más común de la incomodidad anal durante el sexo. La tensión se puede aliviar al tocar el ano y volverse más familiar con la zona. Respirar hondo también afecta los músculos del ano. Tensar y relajar el ano intencionalmente puede ser otra manera de aprender a relajarlo.

La gente practica muchas formas del sexo anal, y el coito es lo menos común.

Hay muchas formas de disfrutar del ano eróticamente. Las técnicas populares incluyen tocar la apertura anal con un dedo mientras se masturba o estimular el ano de una pareja durante el coito o el sexo oral.

La dieta contribuye al placer durante el jugueteo anal.

Tiene que haber suficiente fibra en la dieta de una persona para que las heces sean suaves, grandes y bien formados. Las frutas y verduras frescas, los granos integrales, o el salvado no procesado son fuentes importantes de fibras. Agregar suplementos de fibra, como la cáscara de psyllium, también puede disminuir la presencia de materia fecal en el recto.

Check the questions you'd like answered – and you can also fill in bubbles with anything else you'd like to ask or discuss today. Visit pleasureandhealth.org for resources!

"I'm not going to stop douching. Is there anything I need to know?"

Write Your Own!

Write Your Own!

**Anal
Pleasure &
Health
Project**

"Sometimes I tense up while bottoming, even though I enjoy anal sex - that's really annoying me."

"I don't want to leave shit on someone's dick. What can I do about it?"

"Bleeding is normal, right?"

"Can I tighten things up down there? I'm a little afraid I'll get loose if I have too much anal."

Learn more at pleasureandhealth.org

SCAN ME 

Questions Clients May Have about Anal Pleasure and Health

Topics	Example Questions from Clients
Anatomy	What are the sources of pleasure during anal play? What is the prostate? What are the legs of the clitoris? What are anal sphincters? What is the <u>pubo-rectal sling</u> ? Is there such a thing as anal ejaculation (creaming)?
Pleasure	What sexual positions are best for pleasure? How is the prostate related to anal pleasure? How are the legs of the clitoris related to anal pleasure? Why does anal play feel different when I have an emotional connection? How can I enhance pleasure or orgasm during anal play? Is it possible to orgasm during anal play?
Pain	Is pain normal during anal play? What can I do to reduce pain during anal sex? Is bleeding normal during anal penetration?
Lubricants	Should I use a lubricant? Which ones should I use?
Anal & vaginal play	Is it okay to move from anal play to vaginal play? What do I need to know about preventing vaginal infections?
Hygiene	How can I prevent contact with feces/poop/shit during anal play? Is douching okay? Are there recommended guidelines for douching?
Fiber	How can I use fiber to feel more prepared and relaxed during anal play? What kind of fiber should I use? How much fiber should I add? Are there side effects to using fiber supplements?
Effects of anal sex on my body	Why do I feel like I have to pee during anal sex? Are there any long term effects of anal sex on my body? Are there health benefits to anal sex? Will having anal sex cause my anus to loosen over time? Is fisting okay? Is there anything I can do to strengthen my muscles?
Substance use	How do drugs and alcohol influence anal sex? What should I know about specific substances (like poppers/aml nitrite, methamphetamine, marijuana, or other substances)?
Psychology	Is it okay that I enjoy or want to explore anal play? Does anal play mean something about my sexual orientation? Is it normal to have anal sex? Is it normal to lose my erection during anal sex? How can I relax during anal sex?
Bowel movements	How can I treat constipation? How can I manage irritable bowel syndrome during anal play? How can I prevent farting during anal sex?
STIs	What kinds of infections can happen during anal sex? Can infections cause diarrhea? Is it possible to have an infection without any symptoms? What tests should I take? Should I have an anal swab?
Anal cancer	What causes anal cancer? What is the process for anal cancer screening? Is it different than having a colonoscopy? Should I be screened? Where can I get screened?
Hemorrhoids	Does anal sex cause hemorrhoids? If I have hemorrhoids, how can I prevent bleeding during anal sex? How can I treat hemorrhoids? What is a sitz bath? How can I prevent hemorrhoids?

Tip #1 on Anal Play

See our website for additional accurate, reliable, sex-positive information!

The Anal
Pleasure &
Health
Project

PleasureandHealth.org

Anal sex is not painful if done properly. (Even during intercourse.)

The belief that anal sex, especially intercourse, has to hurt is a dangerous myth. To improve pleasure, never tolerate pain or physical trauma during anal play.



Tip #2 on Anal Play

See our website for additional accurate, reliable, sex-positive information!

The Anal
Pleasure &
Health
Project

PleasureandHealth.org

People experience many forms of

Our Selection Criteria

Our Research Team and Advisory Board developed a set of inclusion criteria for the resources you see on our website. Each resource should match these criteria — if not, [please let us know!](#)

1. Accuracy & Reliability

Guiding Question: Is this resource trustworthy, as far as we could judge, based on these criteria?

A. Credible	+
B. Conflict of Interest	+
C. Verifiable	+
D. Confidence	+

2. Justice, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion

Guiding Question: Does this resource reflect human diversity in a sex-positive, welcoming and non-biased way that avoids stereotypes, based on these criteria?

A. Diverse & Inclusive	+
B. Sex-Positive	+
C. Stereotype-Busting	+
D. Accessible	+

Science Library

Build your expertise!

We've collected hundreds of science articles — a wide range of research knowledge about anal pleasure and health to further your understanding.

These are academic articles. The writing often contains jargon and may not be what you want. If you're seeking "how-to" information about anal sex, flip over to [Resources for Anal Pleasure & Health](#) — and enjoy!

[See an article missing?](#) This science library is a work in progress — so [let us know what to add!](#)

- 1. Anal Anatomy & Pleasure +
- 2. Anal Health Conditions +
- 3. Anal Sex Psychology/Sociology/Stigma +
- 4. Condoms & Anal Sex +
- 5. Douching & Anal Sex +
- 6. Health Communication & Anal Sex +
- 7. Lubricants & Anal Sex +
- 8. Prevalence of Anal Sex +
- 9. Substance Use & Anal Sex +
- Or search the entire Science Library! +