

Young people need to be aware of PrEP to seek your services. The tools below can help your organization in planning outreach efforts to increase awareness of PrEP, as well as ensuring a welcoming environment where youth will want to seek PrEP and sexual healthcare.

EQUITY-FOCUSED APPROACH TO ENGAGING YOUTH

By considering these commonly identified barriers to care and addressing the guiding questions in the worksheet, your organization can develop a well-informed and equity-focused approach to engage and support youth in accessing PrEP and healthcare services, particularly youth of color and LGBTQIA+ youth. This comprehensive approach may help reduce barriers and promote positive sexual health outcomes for all young individuals.

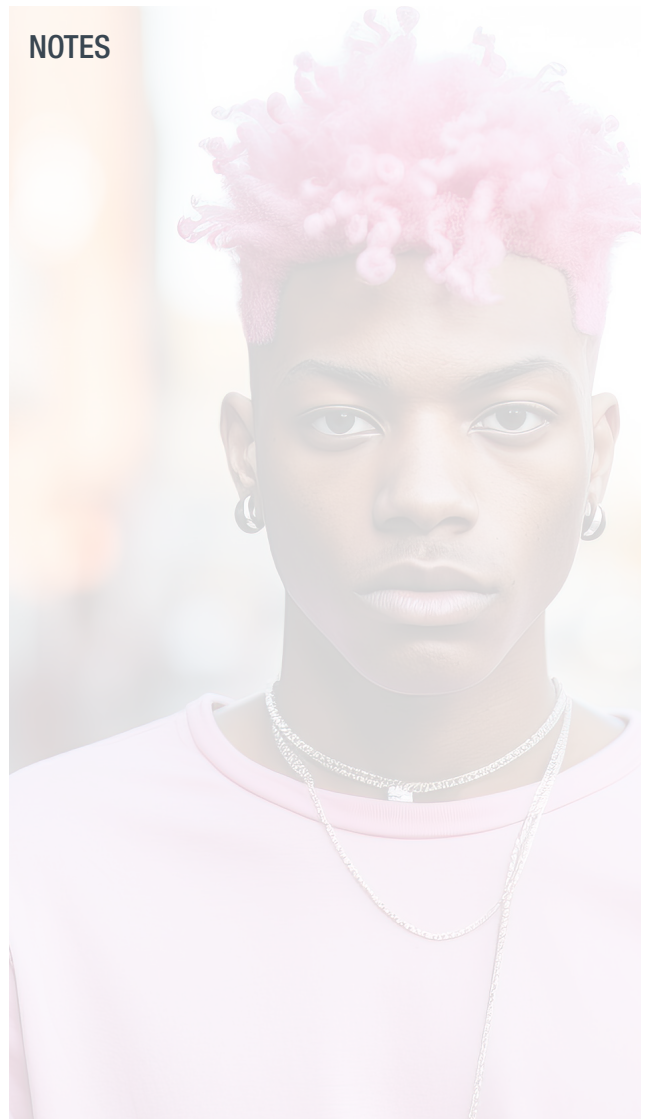
WORKSHEET

I. STIGMA

The stigma surrounding HIV and sexual health can create significant barriers for youth seeking PrEP services.¹⁸ This includes both general HIV-related stigma and stigma specific to youth of color and/or LGBTQIA+ youth due to the intersection of race, sexual or gender minority identity, and HIV status.¹⁹⁻²² It is crucial to create an inclusive and non-judgmental environment where youth feel comfortable discussing their sexual health and PrEP needs, while also implementing strategies to address and challenge HIV-related stigma.³⁶⁻³⁸

- How can we create a safe and non-judgmental environment for youth to discuss their sexual health and PrEP needs?
- What strategies can be implemented to address HIV-related stigma specifically experienced by youth of color and/or LGBTQIA+ youth?
- What steps can be taken to rebuild trust between healthcare institutions and communities of color, ensuring youth feel confident in accessing PrEP services without historical distrust influencing their decisions?
- Are there culturally sensitive approaches to engage youth from different backgrounds to ensure they feel supported and understood when seeking PrEP services?

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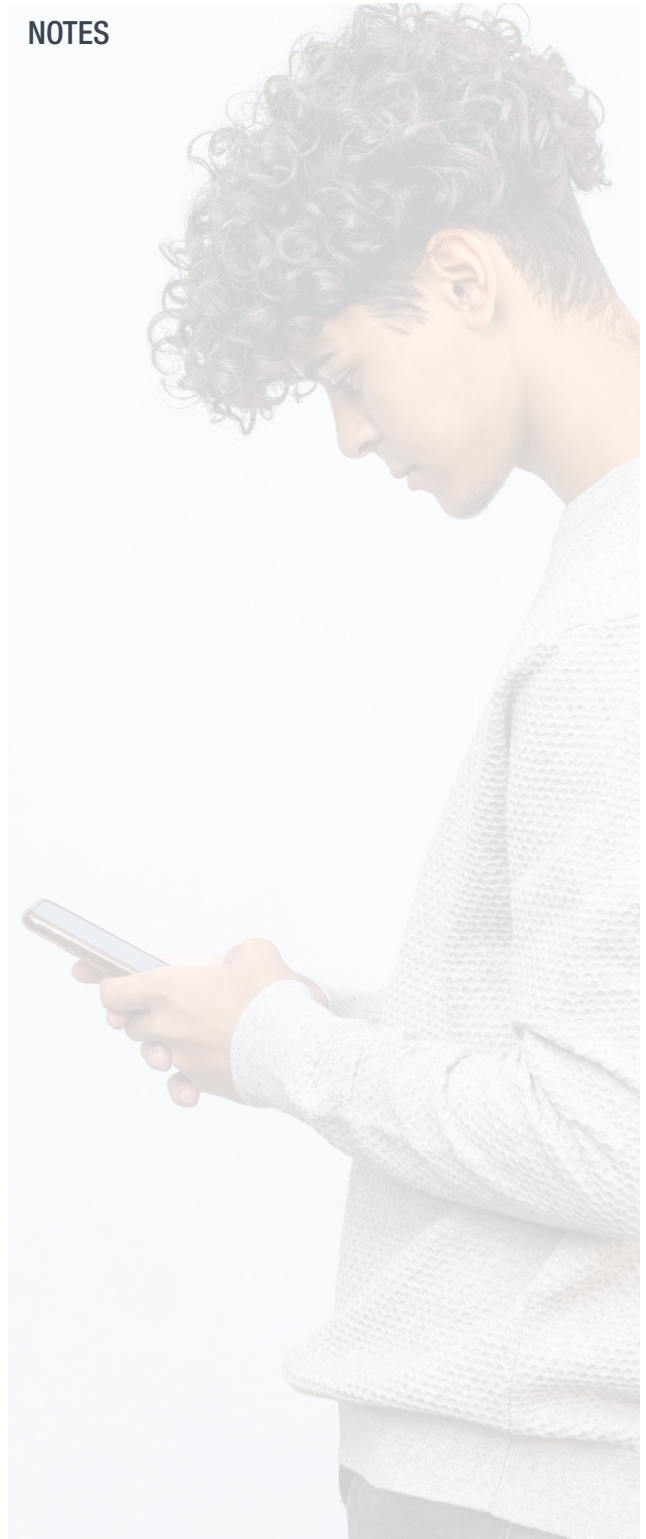


WORKSHEET

II. TELEHEALTH ACCESS

Telehealth services offer a convenient and accessible way for youth to access PrEP consultations and follow-ups.⁴¹ However, disparities in technology access and language barriers can limit equitable telehealth access, especially for youth of color and/or those experiencing poverty.^{24,25} Ensuring that youth, particularly those from underserved communities, have equal access to telehealth services for PrEP, and addressing any technological or language barriers, are essential steps in promoting equitable healthcare.⁴²

- How can we ensure that youth, especially those from underserved communities, have equitable access to telehealth services for PrEP?
- How can we prioritize confidentiality and privacy concerns for youth to create a safe space for them to seek PrEP services without fear of stigma or discrimination?
- Are there any technological or language barriers that need to be addressed to facilitate telehealth access for youth of color?
- Can we collaborate with community organizations to provide support and/or drop-in space for navigating telehealth services, especially for youth who may not have consistent access to technology?

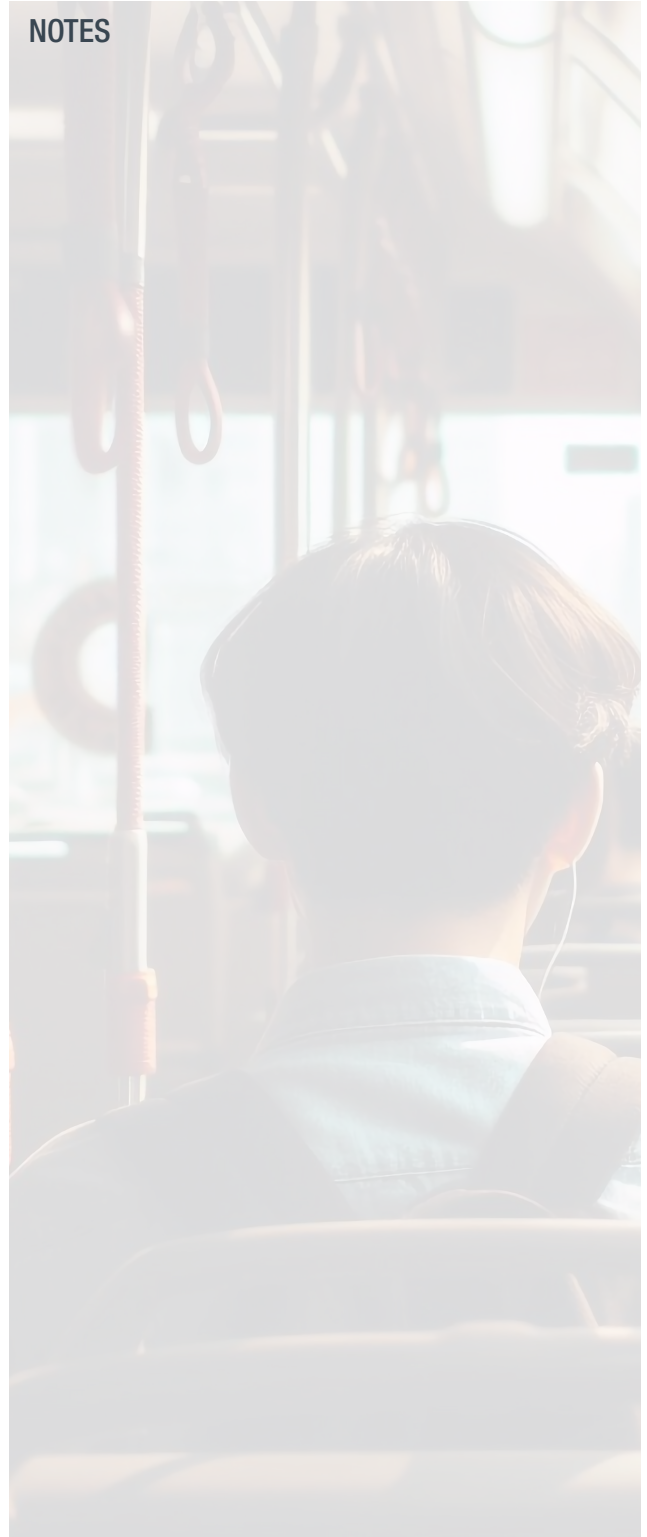
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III. CLINIC TRANSPORTATION ACCESS

Limited access to transportation can present a significant obstacle for youth, particularly those from marginalized communities, in reaching healthcare facilities offering PrEP services.¹⁶ While many telehealth PrEP services may not anticipate transportation needs, some clinic access may be important for those with limited or inconsistent technology, as well as for necessary ongoing lab work. Lack of transportation options can result in missed appointments and reduced PrEP adherence.⁴³ Addressing transportation barriers through partnerships with local organizations or providing free or low-cost transportation options can enhance access to PrEP for youth.⁴⁴

- What transportation barriers do youth face in accessing PrEP, including telehealth PrEP services, and how can we address them?
- Can we explore partnerships with transportation services or local organizations to provide free or low-cost transportation options for youth, especially those from marginalized communities?
- Are there targeted outreach efforts to inform youth of color and LGBTQIA+ youth about available transportation options for PrEP appointments and ensure they can access these services without barriers?

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IV. COST

The financial cost of PrEP medications and related healthcare services can be a major deterrent for some youth, including youth of color who may be more likely to experience economic disparities.^{45,46} Affordability barriers can lead to decreased PrEP uptake and adherence.⁴⁷ Exploring ways to make PrEP medications and related services more affordable or providing access to financial assistance programs can help remove financial barriers and improve access for all youth.

- How can we make PrEP medications and related healthcare services affordable or free for youth, particularly those with financial constraints?
- Are there grants, funding opportunities, or assistance programs available to support PrEP affordability for all youth?
- Can we collaborate with community organizations to raise awareness about available financial support for PrEP among all youth?

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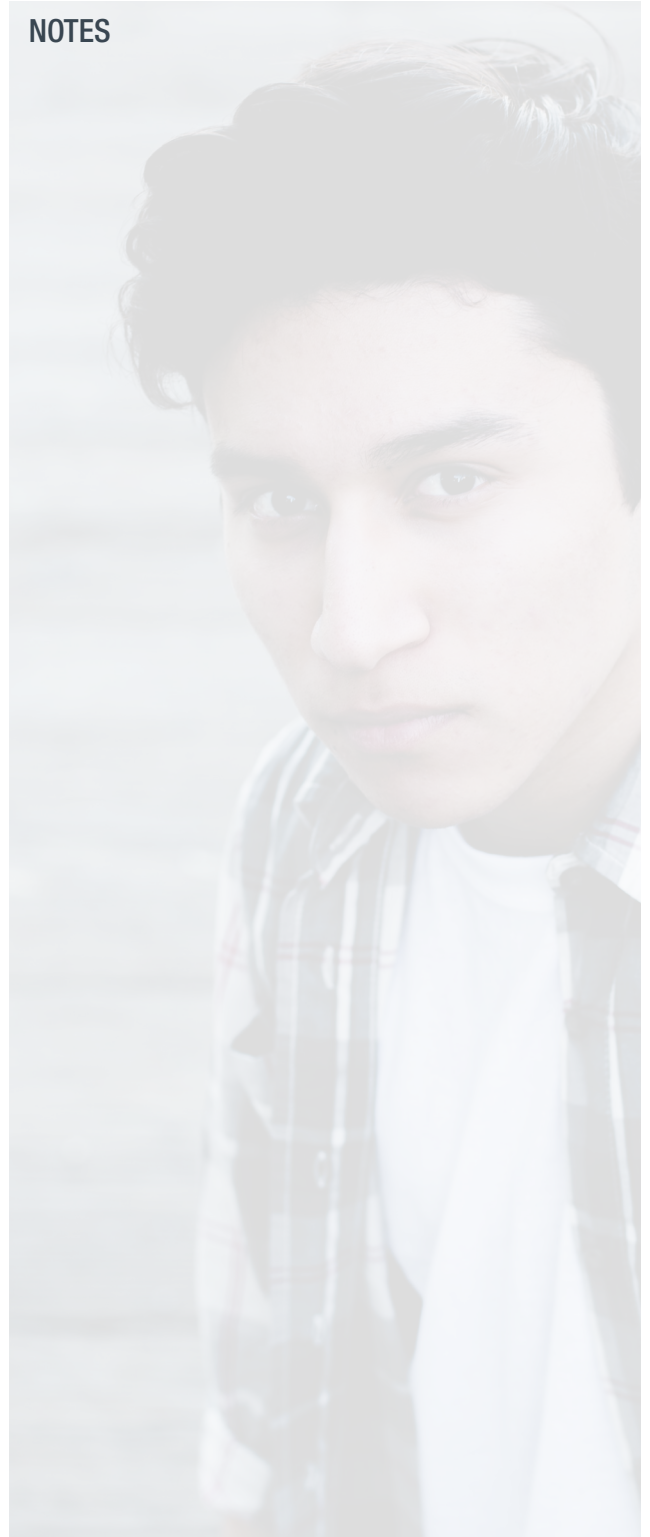
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V. PERCEIVED HIV RISK

Accurately assessing HIV risk is essential for appropriate PrEP use. Some youth, including youth of color, may underestimate their risk or lack access to information about their risk factors.^{48,49}

Providing targeted and culturally sensitive education about HIV risk, emphasizing the benefits of PrEP, and offering risk assessment tools can help youth make informed decisions about their sexual health.⁵⁰

- How can we effectively communicate and educate youth about their risk of HIV acquisition, considering the unique needs and experiences of youth of color and LGBTQIA+ youth?
- What approaches can we use to help youth accurately assess their risk and understand the benefits of PrEP?
- Are there community-based programs or outreach initiatives to increase awareness about HIV risk and prevention, especially tailored to youth at the highest risk for HIV?

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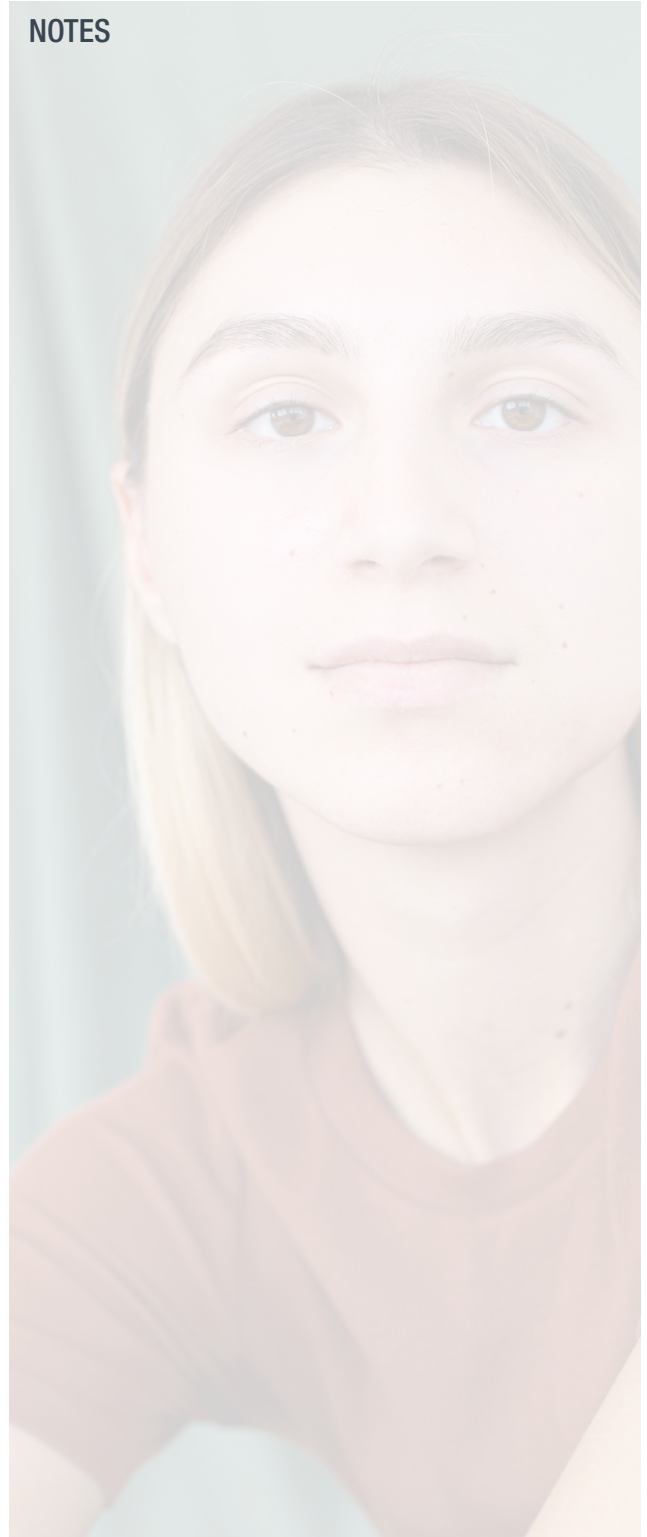
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VI. SOCIAL NORMS AROUND PrEP AND SEEKING CLINICAL CARE

Social norms and cultural beliefs can influence youth's decisions about seeking PrEP and clinical care. Stigma and misconceptions surrounding HIV and PrEP may be prevalent within certain communities, affecting help-seeking behaviors.¹¹ Promoting open dialogue within communities of color and LGBTQIA+ communities about sexual health, PrEP, and HIV prevention can help challenge negative social norms and foster more supportive attitudes toward sexual health care.^{51,52}

- What cultural and social norms influence youth's decisions about seeking PrEP and clinical care?
- How can we promote open dialogue within communities about sexual health and PrEP to challenge any negative social norms?
- Can we collaborate with local leaders and influencers from diverse backgrounds to advocate for open conversations about sexual health and HIV prevention, including PrEP?
- What steps can be taken to provide PrEP-related information in languages spoken by youth to address language and communication barriers effectively?
- Can we use peer navigators as PrEP coordinators?

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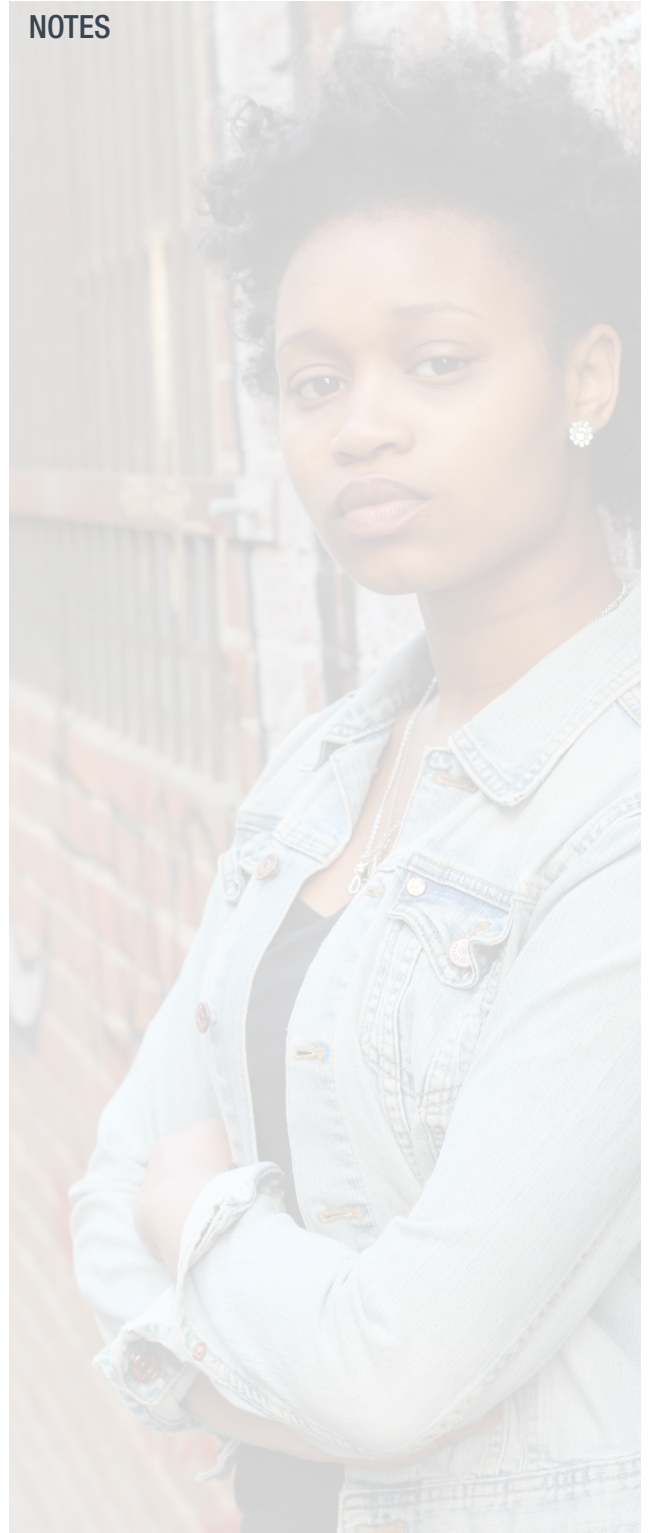
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VII. PRIORITIZATION OF HIV PREVENTION AMONG OTHER SOCIAL NEEDS

Youth may have multiple social needs, such as housing, education, and employment, which can compete with prioritizing HIV prevention, including PrEP.³¹ This can be especially challenging for youth facing intersecting disparities.⁴⁴ Adopting an integrated approach to address the multiple needs of youth, alongside offering comprehensive sexual health services, can help ensure equitable access to PrEP and needed support.^{47,53}

- How can we prioritize HIV prevention, including PrEP, while considering other social needs that youth may be facing, such as housing, education, and employment?
- Are there opportunities for cross-sector collaborations to address multiple needs simultaneously, ensuring youth in need receive comprehensive support? Examples may include services for reproductive health, mental health, and gender affirming care for transgender youth.
- Can we implement programs that address broader social determinants of health to enhance overall well-being while promoting PrEP uptake among youth at the highest risk for HIV?

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VIII. RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS/FAMILY MEMBERS

The support and understanding of parents and family members can significantly impact youth's decisions to access PrEP.⁵⁴ However, cultural norms and communication barriers may affect family support, especially for youth of color and LGBTQIA+ youth.⁵⁵ If the youth is open to it, engaging parents and/or chosen family members in the conversation about sexual health, providing culturally sensitive resources, and promoting positive family dialogue may help foster supportive relationships and empower youth to seek PrEP services confidently.^{56,57}

- How do we discuss family acceptance and/or family rejection with the youth we are serving?
- If a young person is on their parent's health insurance plan, will this create barriers to their access to PrEP?
- Are we able to involve parents and family members in supporting youth's decisions to access PrEP and promote positive conversations about sexual health?
- Are there culturally sensitive approaches to engaging parents/family members from diverse backgrounds to ensure they are supportive allies in the process?
- Can we collaborate with community-based organizations to provide workshops or resources that promote open communication and family support for youth seeking PrEP services?

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