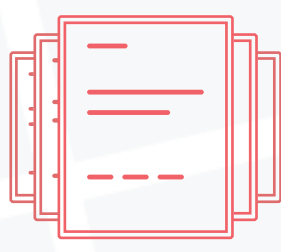


## Relevant sex education materials for Black gay and bisexual men

The SWAG Toolkit’s name was inspired by the men who helped us build it. “Swag” is a word used to describe how a person presents themselves to the world, with confidence and sophistication and in a way that earns respect and credibility. From the start, we wanted to provide Black gay and bisexual men with tools and resources that empower them to be confident when it comes to their sexual health and relationships.

The toolkit includes materials for community-oriented holistic sexuality education programming and materials for training healthcare providers who serve Black men. As we designed the toolkit, we engaged the community and their voices guided us in listening sessions, focus groups, interviews, and pilot sessions. We hope you enjoy the tools even more than we enjoyed developing them!

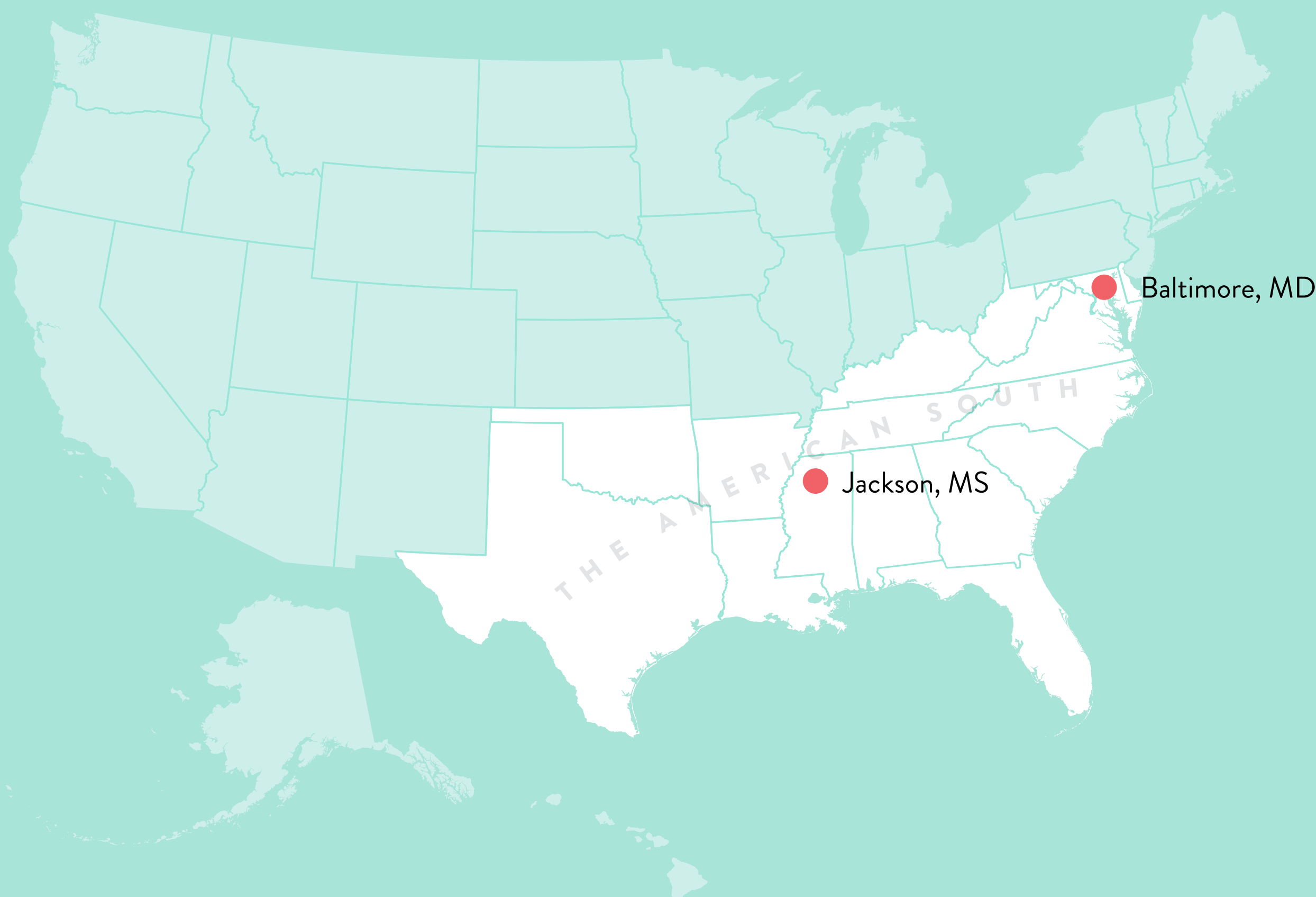


GO TO THE TOOLKIT

LEARN MORE

### PROJECT SUMMARY

Baltimore, MD and Jackson, MS are two cities where Black men have a particularly high risk of acquiring HIV, and are disproportionately impacted by social determinants when living with HIV.



### SPATIAL & SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has recognized that Black men who have sex with men (MSM) living in the American South experience compounding burdens to their wellness. This includes a lack of access to adequate medical care, homophobia, racism, and social support. These matters are exacerbated when the man lives with HIV.

The CDC found rates of HIV diagnosis are the highest in the South (2015). Furthermore, of any region and population in the country, people of color in the South experience the worst clinical outcomes following a positive HIV diagnosis (2016). Baltimore, MD and Jackson, MS are two cities where Black men have a particularly high risk of acquiring HIV (Oster et al., 2011; Mena & Crosby, 2017).

For these reasons, there is an urgent need to understand the various prevention and education needs that impact the sexual well-being and decision-making of Black men in Baltimore, MD and Jackson, MS, in order to reduce HIV rates among Black men.



1 in 6

GAY & BISEXUAL MEN



1 in 2

AFRICAN AMERICAN  
GAY & BISEXUAL MEN

may be diagnosed with  
HIV in their lifetime,  
if current rates persist.



### EDUCATION & INTERVENTION

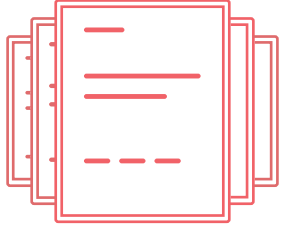
While HIV-prevention interventions may include information about how to use a condom most effectively, they often fail to address the web of systemic and relational issues, such as stigma, discrimination, social inequities, interpersonal violence, and trauma, that underlie not only condom use behavior but overall sexual health behavior. They regularly are so focused on preventing initial HIV infection that they fail to include Black men who are living with HIV. Failing to meet the programming needs of people living with HIV serves to further isolate and stigmatize them, ultimately putting men at risk for poor health outcomes.



### ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

ViiV Healthcare, Inc. created the *ACCELERATE!* Initiative to address these gaps. ViiV recognized that in order to meet the needs of the communities most impacted by HIV, we all must look beyond an HIV diagnosis and consider people holistically.

The voices from the communities most impacted by HIV, specifically Black MSM, are at the core of this project. The SWAG Toolkit was created by centering the needs of community members with the aim of enhancing their sexual well-being and overall quality of life.



GO TO THE TOOLKIT



Contact [info@swagtoolkit.com](mailto:info@swagtoolkit.com) to learn how to bring SWAG to your community.



# THE TOOLKIT

## LESSON PLANS

### New Around Here?

Learn about the lessons and the curriculum.



TOUR A LESSON

Take a quick look at what's in a lesson plan.



READ THE OVERVIEW

Learn more about who and what inspires this work.

### My Toolkit

Manage your saved lessons and stay in touch.



LOG IN

See your saved lessons and leave feedback.



CREATE AN ACCOUNT

View and download lessons.

STANDARD LESSONS // JUMP TO CEC LESSONS

## DISCRIMINATION & BIAS

Lessons about issues of prejudice and discrimination and ways to address them

SWAG

Navigating Healthcare Systems as a Black Gay Man

SWAG

Stigma 101

SWAG

Trauma and Stigma Among Black Gay and Bisexual Men

## FAMILY & RELATIONSHIPS

Lessons about social supports, and developing and maintaining relationships

SWAG

“Can We Chill?” Identifying and Establishing Boundaries in Relationships

SWAG

Families of Origin: Constructing a Genogram

SWAG

Future Families and Families of Choice

SWAG

Healthy Communication in Casual and Romantic Relationships

SWAG

How Will I Know? Interpersonal Disclosures

## IDENTITY & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Lessons about developing an understanding of oneself, and learning ways to process ones thoughts and feelings

Emotional Intelligence Exercise

SWAG

Emotional Intelligence: A Deeper Look

### Emotional Intelligence: A Deeper Look

This lesson focuses on the experience of Black Men who have Sex with Men (BMSM) and the role that Families of Choice play in their own health and wellness.

LEARN MORE

ADD TO FAVORITES

#### KEYWORDS

Emotional Intelligence  
Emotions  
Masculinity  
Mental Health  
Sexual Health  
Stress Management

#### INCLUDES

Lesson Plan

#### GROUP SIZE

10–15 participants  
1–2 facilitators

#### TIME

75 minutes

## SEXUAL HEALTH & HIV

Lessons about living a happy and healthy sex life with and without HIV

SWAG

Gay Sex 102: But Wait, There's More!

SWAG

Healthy Sexuality After a Positive Diagnosis: My Relationship with Others

SWAG

Healthy Sexuality After a Positive Diagnosis: My Relationship with Self

SWAG

Substances, Socializing, and Sex

## SOCIETY & CULTURE

Lessons about identifying community and developing support systems

SWAG

Black, Gay, Church, and My Mental Health

SWAG

Gay Sex 101...and Other Things!

SWAG

Gender 101: Myself in the World

SWAG

Gender 201: Understanding & Coping with Gender Role Strain

SWAG

When You're In Need of a Friend: Supportive Resources

CEC LESSONS // JUMP TO STANDARD LESSONS

## LESSONS FOR CLIENT EXPERIENCE CONTRIBUTORS (CECS)

Lessons focusing on knowledge and skills to help CECs better serve black gay and bisexual men

SWAG  
CEC

Bystander Intervention for CECs working with Black MSM clients

SWAG  
CEC

The Culturally Humble Client Experience Contributor: A Primer

SWAG  
CEC

Decreasing Healthcare Stigma and Medical Mistrust Among Black MSM

SWAG  
CEC

Procedures and Policies and People, Oh My!

SWAG  
CEC

Supporting Health Literacy Among Black MSM



Interdisciplinary  
Sexuality Research  
Collaborative

THEME: SOCIETY & CULTURE

🔗 SHARE 🗣️ REVIEW ❤️ SAVE

CEC LESSON

# Gender 101: Myself in the World

by Brooke Wells

This 2-hour lesson encourages participants to explore various facets of their own and others’ identities and how these impact the way they interact in and with the world. Using interactive activities, group discussion, and personal reflection, this lesson offers participants the opportunity to learn distinctions between gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation and how these intersect with race; to examine their own and others’ assumptions and biases around these; and to explore how each of these facets of identity influence sexual identity and behavior.

## OBJECTIVES

- By the end of this lesson, participants will be able to:
- Define race, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation.
  - Identify internal and external perceptions and biases around race, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation.
  - Discuss how societal influences regarding race, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation may impact their own sexual decision making.

## GROUP SIZE

This lesson is written for groups of 10–15 with two co-facilitators. However, it can be adapted for smaller groups. For groups of five or less participants, all activities can be completed as a full group and with a single facilitator.

## TIME

110 minutes

## INCLUDED IN THIS LESSON

- 📄 [Lesson Plan \(PDF\)](#)
- 📽️ [Slides \(PDF\)](#)

## DOWNLOAD COMPLETE LESSON RESOURCES

Get all the documents you need for this lesson as a compressed (.zip) file.

DOWNLOAD

## MATERIALS

Computer  
Projector  
Newsprint  
Easel (or tape)  
Markers  
Printed handouts

## REVIEWS

### FACILITATOR FEEDBACK

“The lesson presents the story in all its complicated and grotesque glory, through a surrealistic approach that allows its aesthetics to bloom in full.”

-Darrell Young, facilitator

### WRITE A REVIEW

Did you facilitate this lesson? Share your thoughts with other facilitators.

REVIEW A LESSON

## RELATED LESSONS

SWAG

Black, Gay, Church, and My Mental Health

SWAG

Gay Sex 101...and Other Things!

SWAG

Gender 101: Myself in the World

SWAG

Gender 201: Understanding & Coping With Gender Role Strain

SWAG

When You’re In Need of a Friend: Supportive Resources



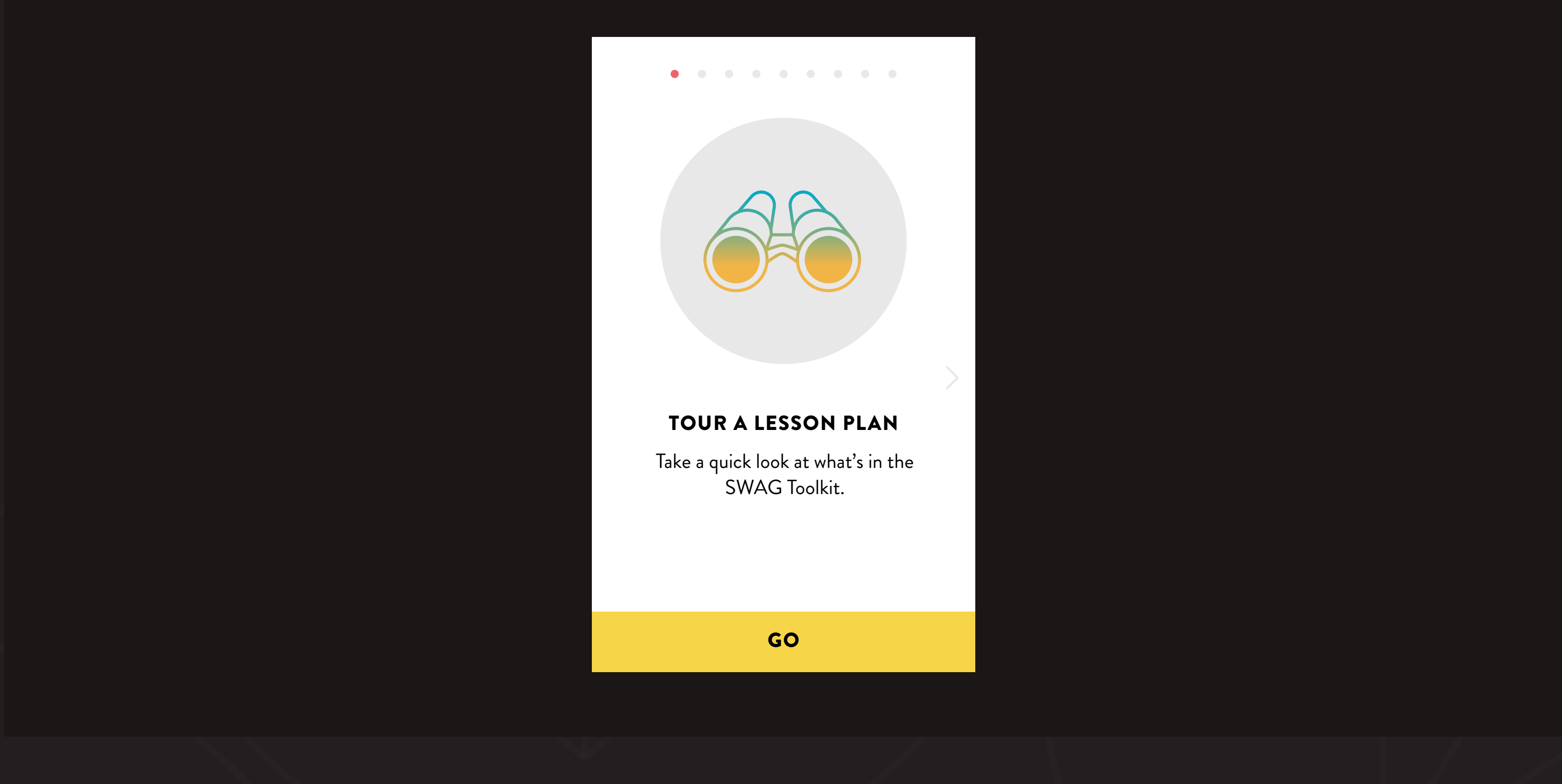
ISRC is a research organization within the Center for Human Sexuality Studies at Widener University. Learn more at [widenerisrc.com](#)

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# THE TOOLKIT

## USING THE TOOLKIT



## CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The SWAG Toolkit is a two-fold curriculum that:

- 1 addresses the unique and complex identities and experiences of Black men.
- 2 addresses the gap in culturally competent training for social service/healthcare providers that interact with Black men.

The lesson plans are divided into two sections, each devoted to a distinct, but related, audience:

### ADULT BLACK MEN

*Black MSM-oriented holistic sexuality education*

Most lesson plans in the SWAG Toolkit contain activities meant to be delivered directly to Black men. To be clear, we are aware that Black men do not exist in social vacuums, which is to say that facilitators may be working with groups consisting of other people besides Black men, including both cisgender and transgender women. Some of the activities in the toolkit can be adjusted to facilitate the involvement of all genders. In those cases, however, we encourage facilitators to remain intentional in centering the issues and concerns of Black men, followed by LGBTQ+ Black people more broadly, as is useful to the group.

Lessons are divided into six topics:

- HIV Information
- Sexual Health
- Family & Relationships
- Society & Culture
- Identity & Personal Development
- Discrimination & Bias

[VIEW STANDARD LESSONS](#)

### CLIENT EXPERIENCE CONTRIBUTORS

*provider-oriented competency training*

The SWAG Toolkit also contains activities for Client Experience Contributors (CECs) encountering, engaging, and supporting Black men in their work. This includes those supporting Black men in both community resource and healthcare settings who may be in the following roles:

- Medical providers
- Reception staff serving in medical or social service facilities
- Social service providers such as Clinic Resource Counselors and Educators, Patient Peer Counselors and Educators, Community Educators, and Peer Navigators
- Mental health providers and support staff
- Continuing Educators or Trainers for reception staff, Peer Navigators, Medical Providers, and/or other Care Providers

Lessons specifically intended for CECs are identified with small, red labels at the top of the lesson cover page.

[VIEW CEC LESSONS](#)

### NOTE REGARDING LANGUAGE

We strive to use the term **“Black men”** as often as possible to refer to the entire diverse community of Black men—that is, anyone who identifies as a Black man who also has sex with men, regardless of his sexual orientation identity. We are not always consistent, however, because we have also aimed for the toolkit to sound natural and reflect the author and community’s language. It is important to us that professionals who work in the community reflect the language of the people they are serving and do not want them to use language that might turn people away from the toolkit. So, we encourage toolkit users to be aware of their audience and adapt to stay focused on an inclusive and community-centered approach.

## OVERALL APPROACH

The SWAG Toolkit is first and foremost a resource for people in the community to use and apply as part of the broader work they are doing to meet the needs of Black gay and bisexual men. We built it with a comprehensive approach to sexuality in mind. As such, it is multi-layered and crosses disciplines that are often siloed in community programming. We sought to include biological, psychological, and social components. Accordingly, our goals extend beyond biological and behavioral outcomes typical of traditional HIV prevention interventions (e.g., increasing condom use and medication adherence) to psychological and social outcomes that support sexual health and well-being from a broader perspective (e.g., decreasing sexual identity stigma, increasing self-efficacy in care navigation, increasing connection with meaningful communities). Across each layer, this toolkit aims to increase the overall quality of life among Black men.

Using this biopsychosocial perspective, we drew on two primary models to inform the development of this toolkit: the salutogenic model of health and the social-ecological model.

### SALUTOGENIC MODEL OF HEALTH

The Salutogenic Model approaches health with a primary focus on maximizing wellness rather than minimizing disease.

Black men have described being tired of being targeted to talk about HIV risk, prevention, and treatment. They are rich, complex individuals with a diversity of needs that are going unmet by traditional sexuality education interventions. Rather than narrowing the scope of attention to risk and risk-relevant factors, the Salutogenic Model encompasses any and all health-promoting factors, extending new opportunities for interventions to take a more holistic approach to work with this community.

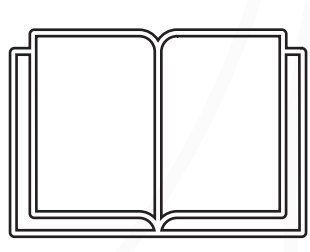
### SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL MODEL

Theoretically speaking, the social-ecological model describes these intersections, interactions, and the impact of their interconnectedness, hence our choice to use this framework to guide our work on this toolkit (*Hickson, Truong, Smith-Bankhead, et.al, 2015*).

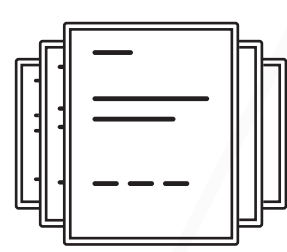
In order to address system-level barriers to care, we aimed to focus as much space, time, and energy on lessons geared toward CECs as community members. The onus of change toward more health-enhancing behavior cannot fall solely on individuals from the very communities that are most impacted by oppressive forces such as racism, homophobia, classism, ageism, etc. It is the responsibility of individuals at all levels of care — CECs, in particular — to work to dissolve the numerous obstacles to wellness that Black men face.

## APPROACH TO LEARNING

The SWAG Toolkit was designed with its audiences in mind from the beginning. Accordingly, we utilized three theories of learning to guide the development of the lessons: Andragogy, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, and Transformative Learning. Learn more about these theories and how we applied them in the SWAG Toolkit Overview.



[READ THE OVERVIEW](#)



[GO TO THE TOOLKIT](#)

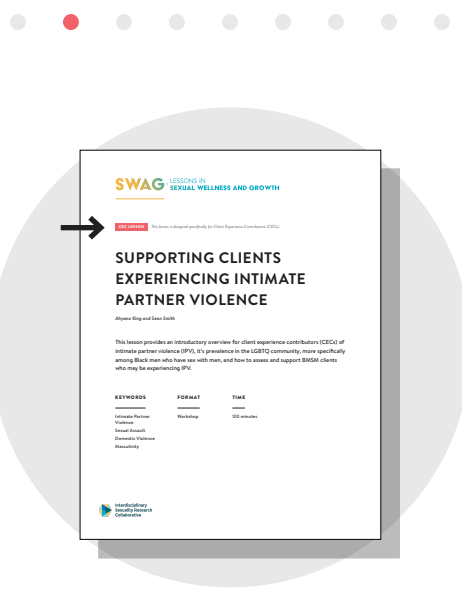
# Tour a Lesson Plan



## BASIC ORGANIZATION

Lessons are divided into six topical themes and are designed for two audiences: adult black men, and Client Experience Contributors (CECs) — traditionally referred to as providers.

NEXT



## LESSON COVER PAGE

The cover identifies the theme and lists keywords to lead you to lessons of interest. If you are looking for lessons specifically intended for CECs, look for small, red labels at the top of this page.

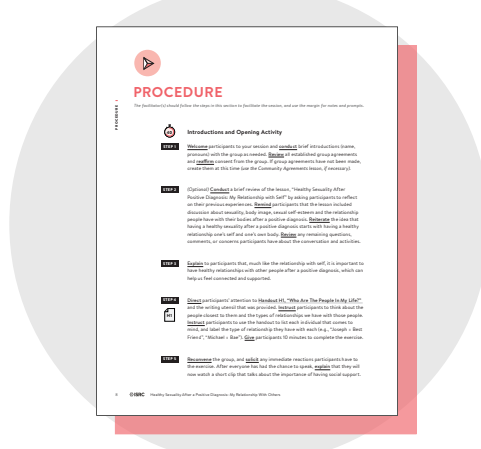
NEXT



## PREPARATION SECTION

This section provides practical information such as timetables, key terms, required background knowledge for facilitators, and material checklists.

NEXT



## PROCEDURE SECTION

This section is a step-by-step guide for your session. Icons provide prompts for time limits, relevant handouts, slides, and facilitator resources. Wide margins allow you to make your own notes.

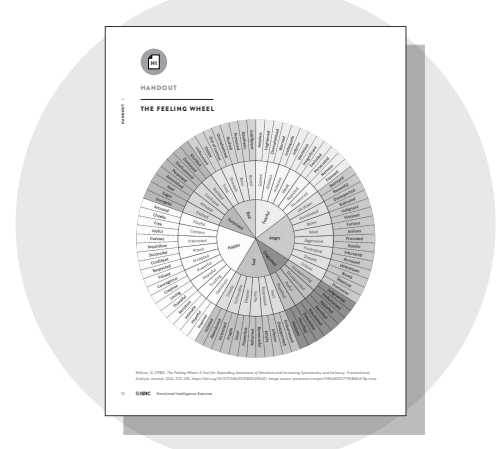
NEXT



## FACILITATOR RESOURCES

Some lessons include a Facilitator Resource section to guide activities or provide more reference.

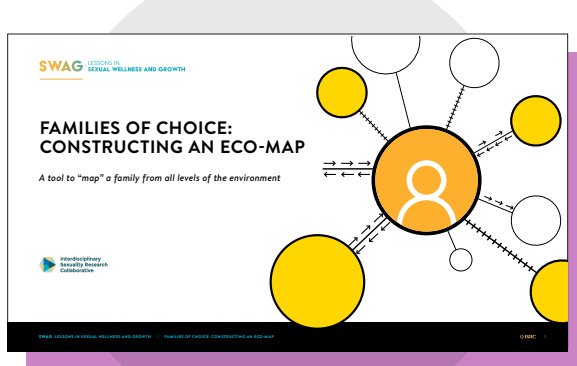
NEXT



## HANDOUTS

Some lessons include handouts designed to be printed and distributed to your participants for use during the session.

NEXT



## SLIDE PRESENTATIONS

Some sessions utilize a PDF slide presentation, which can be projected or printed.

NEXT



## FEEDBACK

Share your experience and see what others are saying about the lessons. Your feedback helps us build a better toolkit.

NEXT



## PROFILE

Update your profile, manage your favorite lessons, and review a lesson all under your profile settings.

FINISH

GO TO TOOLKIT

CREATE AN ACCOUNT



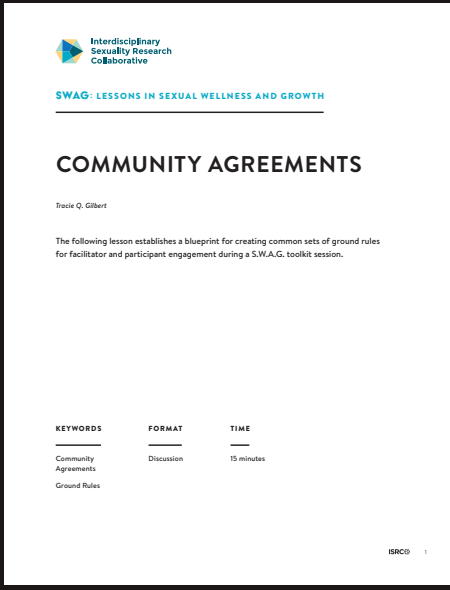
# THE TOOLKIT

## FACILITATING LESSONS

### Top Facilitator Resources



SWAG Toolkit Overview



Community Agreements



End-of-Session Evaluation

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### I just found the SWAG Toolkit. Where should I start?

There are several different places you can start with the SWAG Toolkit. If you are pressed for time, we recommend finding a lesson plan that addresses topics your group is interested in, review the lesson plan, and run the lesson to your group. If you have more time, we recommend visiting the [Using the Toolkit](#) section of this site. If you are interested in the nuts and bolts of the toolkit, our downloadable [SWAG Toolkit Overview](#) has details regarding our development process of the lesson plans.

### My group isn't engaged with the lessons. How can I get more discussion?

There can be many reasons why a group isn't engaged with lessons.

Firstly, is the meeting taking place in a good environment? Is there enough space, is there a/c, is the space easy to get to for your group members? Discomfort with a space can hold people back from feeling safe enough to be open and share.

Secondly, were you able to prepare and review the lessons beforehand? Group members will notice unprepared facilitators and may decide not to engage. Take some time and go over the material and plan questions or discussions the group could have.

Finally, is there something going on in the world or the community that is more pressing? If there is something big going on your group might benefit from talking about that than the lesson plan.

### I'm worried about not being able to answer my group's questions. How do I prepare for knowledge focused lessons?

You do not need to have all the answers when you run your session. However, if a question comes up about something you do not know, it is important to acknowledge that you do not know and offer to find out and report back. The lesson plans do have trainings on some basic topics for CECs and the SWAG website has resources, but you may need to use your network to find more detailed answers.

### Since I am a part of the community how do I balance that with my role as a facilitator?

It can be challenging to both serve and be a part of a community, but solid boundaries can help reduce some of that stress. Do not run groups with people you are friends with or dating as those relationships can unbalance group dynamics. Do not talk about group work when in the community. Avoid community drama, and if you feel like you need to step away for your own wellbeing, talk to your supervisor to switch out facilitators or come to a solution.

### What makes a good facilitator?

The SWAG Toolkit is less rigid than other lesson plans you may have run. While there are still knowledge and skills trainings in the lesson plans, our goal is for the lessons to facilitate connections and foster support among Black MSM. This means that you will be discussing sensitive issues for individuals and the community. It is important to be empathic and reflectively listen to your group, both what they say and what they mean. You should seek clarification when you have a question and be willing to share power with group members. You should be flexible in the lessons. If you do not cover all of the material in a lesson or if the group begins discussing another topic, that is okay. As long as the group is discussing issues related to Black MSM, members can continue to develop.

Finally, be sure to take care of yourself. If you are too tired, too stressed, or unprepared the meetings may not be as beneficial. It is just as important to look after yourself as it is to support others.



Interdisciplinary  
Sexuality Research  
Collaborative

# THE TOOLKIT

## MY TOOLKIT

Hi, John!



VIEW FAVORITES



REVIEW A LESSON




EDIT PROFILE


## FAVORITES




### MY STANDARD LESSONS



Black, Gay, Church, and My Mental Health




Gay Sex 102: But Wait, There's More!




Gay Sex 101...and Other Things!


GO TO LESSON




Gender 101: Myself in the World




Gender 201: Understanding & Coping With Gender Role Strain



Healthy Sexuality After A Positive Diagnosis: My Relationship With Others



Healthy Sexuality After A Positive Diagnosis: My Relationship With Self



When You're In Need of a Friend: Supportive Resources

### MY CEC LESSONS




Bystander Intervention for CECs working with Black MSM clients

## REVIEW A LESSON




Did you facilitate a lesson? Please share your experience! Your feedback helps us build a better toolkit. Contact [info@swagtoolkit.com](mailto:info@swagtoolkit.com) for any questions you may have.

WRITE A REVIEW

## EDIT PROFILE



Want to stay up to date with what's new in the toolkit? Keep you profile up to date and will reach out to you about lesson additions, facilitator resources, and online and in-person training.

First Name:*	<input type="text" value="Enter..."/>	Last Name:*	<input type="text" value="Enter..."/>
Email Address:*	<input type="text" value="Enter..."/>	Alt. Email:	<input type="text" value="Enter..."/>
Organization:*	<input type="text" value="Enter..."/>	Role(s):	<input type="text" value="Enter..."/>
Organizational Focus:	<input type="text" value="Select..."/> 	Location:	<input type="text" value="Zip Code"/>

UPDATE

**DELETE PROFILE:** Want to delete your profile? Email [info@swagtoolkit.com](mailto:info@swagtoolkit.com) and we'll remove you .....



# RESOURCES & PARTNERS

## RESOURCES

National	+
Baltimore, MD	+
Jackson, MS	—
<div>Jackson State University <a href="https://jsums.edu">jsums.edu</a></div> <div>MS in Action</div> <div>Mississippi Center for Justice <a href="https://mscenterforjustice.org">mscenterforjustice.org</a></div> <div>My Brother's Keeper <a href="https://mbkinc.org">mbkinc.org</a></div>	



Want to bring SWAG to your community?

Email us to learn how you can help SWAG reach more communities by becoming a partner.

CONTACT US

## PARTNERS

### INTERDISCIPLINARY SEXUALITY RESEARCH COLLABORATIVE AT WIDENER (ISRC)

At the Interdisciplinary Sexuality Research Collaborative (ISRC) at Widener University, we are devoted to supporting, enabling, and producing a rich and comprehensive body of scientific research in human sexuality at the intersection of varied theoretical approaches. Our focus is on the application of research to shape innovation in sexuality education and sex therapy, with an eye on the effectiveness of cutting-edge approaches and their cultural-responsiveness.

ISRC’s unique interdisciplinary approach to investigation looks to Dennis Dailey’s (1981) Circles of Sexuality Model as its source of inspiration and the conceptual framework to guide our inquiry. The five areas of focus are: Sensuality, Intimacy, Sexual Health and Reproduction, Gender Identity, and Sexual Agency, with Culture and Spirituality incorporated across all of the five areas.

Learn more about the ISRC at [widenerisrc.com](https://widenerisrc.com).

### VIIV ACCELERATE! INITIATIVE

Launched on National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NBHAAD) in 2015, *ACCELERATE!* is ViV Healthcare’s four-year, \$10M commitment to fund innovative and promising projects that support the health and wellbeing of Black gay and bisexual men in two cities hardest hit by HIV – Baltimore, Maryland, and Jackson, Mississippi.

Learn more about ViV Healthcare and the *ACCELERATE!* Initiative at [viivhealthcare.com/en-us/accelerate-initiative](https://viivhealthcare.com/en-us/accelerate-initiative).

### JRNI

JRNI Coaching is an evidence based, ICF (International Coaching Federation) Accredited coach training program and coaching collective. JRNI Coaches hail from all over the world and all walks of life. JRNI offers turn-key coaching solutions and coach education to organizations that are solving some of society’s most pressing problems in the space of healthcare, corporate wellness, health promotion and research. Our coaching products and virtual support groups are designed to reach isolated and vulnerable populations who face barriers to support and community.

In addition to coaching education and services, JRNI has developed an application to host virtual support groups, provide content and offer a safe, private space where people can share their stories. The goal of the JRNI app is to provide marginalized populations with a safe and private environment to access information and support. Through this app, people can host support groups, remain engaged in topics that are meaningful for them and create networks of support.

ISRC partnered with JRNI for use of the app to provide another resource for community organizations to support and connect with their community.

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