

RESEARCH ARTICLE

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# Barriers and facilitators to scaling up *Healthy Choices*, a motivational interviewing intervention for youth living with HIV

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## Abstract

**Background:** This study included Community Health Workers and their supervisors from HIV clinical care teams who participated in the *Healthy Choices* intervention program. *Healthy Choices* is a Motivational Interviewing-based intervention aimed at improving medication adherence and reducing alcohol use for adolescents and emerging adults ages 16–24 living with HIV. In this study, the intervention was “scaled up” for delivery by local HIV care providers in real-world clinic settings.

**Methods:** Providers ( $N = 21$ ) completed semi-structured interviews ( $N = 29$ ) about their experiences with intervention scale-up. Rigorous thematic analyses were conducted within discussions of barriers and facilitators of intervention implementation.

**Results:** Three dominant thematic areas emerged from the data: (1) perceptions of the *Healthy Choices* intervention, (2) engaging high risk YLH in in-person behavior interventions, and (3) perspectives on implementation of the intervention using local staff. Results offer insights into implementation of MI-based interventions for adolescents and emerging adults in clinic settings using local clinical staff instead of dedicated research staff.

**Conclusions:** Overall, scaled-up intervention programs for youth are challenged to maintain scientific rigor, provide rigorous training and supports, and offer an attractive and engaging program.

**Keywords:** Adolescents and emerging adults, HIV/AIDS, Implementation science, Community health workers, Thematic analysis, Motivational interviewing, Medication adherence, Alcohol use

## Background

Adolescents and young adults (hereafter called “youth”) represent 21% of new HIV diagnoses in the United States [1]. Youth living with HIV (YLH) are the least likely of any age group to have suppressed viral load [2]. This may be because YLH tend to have poor adherence to antiretroviral therapy and engage in risky behaviors such as

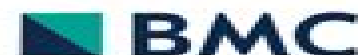
alcohol use [3, 4]. Adequate adherence is critical to control disease progression, and alcohol use may worsen health problems and accelerate disease progression [5]. Despite these risks, few behavioral interventions have targeted YLH.

Motivational interviewing (MI) has been shown to improve self-management for YLH, and is the only evidence-based behavioral intervention that has demonstrated success across the HIV prevention and care cascades [6, 7]. In previous work, we tested *Healthy Choices*, a 4-session, 10-week MI intervention for YLH ages 16–24. To our knowledge, it is the only intervention to demonstrate improvements in viral load and alcohol

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# Barriers Facilitators In Scaling 323555

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## **Barriers Facilitators In Scaling 323555:**

## **Barriers Facilitators In Scaling 323555** Book Review: Unveiling the Magic of Language

In a digital era where connections and knowledge reign supreme, the enchanting power of language has been apparent than ever. Its power to stir emotions, provoke thought, and instigate transformation is really remarkable. This extraordinary book, aptly titled "**Barriers Facilitators In Scaling 323555**," published by a very acclaimed author, immerses readers in a captivating exploration of the significance of language and its profound affect on our existence. Throughout this critique, we shall delve into the book's central themes, evaluate its unique writing style, and assess its overall influence on its readership.

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