Testing the Effectiveness of Internet/Smartphone Based Interventions on Survivor Safety and Health

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What is Decisional Conflict for Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence?
What is a Safety Decision Aid?
Safety Decision Aids: Internet (IRIS) and Smartphone (MyPlan) platforms
Systematic Approach to Development and Evaluation of Safety Decision Aids

1. Reviewed the existing evidence IPV and safety
2. Developed evidence-based safety decision aid
3. Evaluate with IPV survivors and advocates
4. Revise and adapt safety decision aid based on evaluation

Effectiveness evaluation to determine safety decision aid impact on survivor safety and health
A safety decision aid can help a survivor learn about her risk for severe/lethal violence in an abusive relationship.
Consider her priorities for safety.
Personalize an action plan for safety and connect to local/national advocacy resources
MyPlan App is a safety decision aid for both survivors and their friends to assess danger in relationship, consider priorities for safety and personalize an action plan for safety.
The Technology

Content Management System
- Web Interface
- Content Server

Safety Decision Aid Framework
- Database
- Source
- Web Services
  - Scoring
  - AHP
  - Audio
  - Tailoring

Content Team

Development Team

Delivery
- Web
- iOS
- Android
Impact Evaluation: IRIS Project

A 5-year randomized trial to evaluate effectiveness of the internet based safety decision aid on the following outcomes:

- Reducing survivor decisional conflict about safety
- Increasing survivor safety seeking behaviors
- Reducing survivor IPV exposure
- Improving survivor mental health

• Funding provided by NIH/NIMH (R01 MH08564, 05/2010-02/2015)
The IRIS Project

720 women in Arizona, Maryland, Missouri, Oregon

- Currently in an abusive relationship
- Comfortable using a computer/internet
- Access to safe computer/email

Randomized to Intervention (safety decision aid) or control (usual safety planning) website

Outcomes measured in both groups at baseline, 3, 6, and 12 months post-baseline
The IRIS Project

720 women in Arizona, Maryland, Missouri, Oregon

- 77% of survivors report that they found out about IRIS project on Craigslist
- 40% of survivors self-identified as racial/ethnic minorities
- 11% of survivors identified abusive partner as a woman

Replica trials of safety decision aid currently being conducted in New Zealand, Canada and Australia – planned for Hong Kong
Where Do Survivors Access Internet-based Safety Decision Aid?

- Home: 53.1%
- Friend/Family: 17.1%
- Workplace: 12.3%
- Library: 11.3%
- Other: 6.2%
Accessibility Challenges

- Keeping up with changing technology
- Troubleshooting with survivors remotely
- Management of resource links in the safety decision aid
- Difficulty reaching rural, Spanish speaking survivors by internet
Safety Consideration

- Assessing access to/use of safe computers/smartphones
- Reducing possibility of abusers finding out purpose of IRIS project website
- How to handle survivor disclosure of safety issues: suicidality
Survivor feedback enhances safety for internet and smartphone use: Suicide Protocol

Original Suicide Protocol
If survivor reported suicidality during use of safety decision aid, trained staff immediately contacted survivor to assess for suicidality, provided local/national Suicide Hotline resources

Enhanced Suicide Protocol
- If survivor report suicidality during use of safety decision aid a pop-up window with additional questions appears
- Asks how she would like to seek help, giving choice to be contacted by staff
- All provided with Local/National Suicide Hotline resources
Promising Findings

• After only one use of the internet-based safety decision aid (average 45-50 minutes), survivors reported less decisional conflict about safety, specifically less uncertainty, more clarity and more support about safety in an abusive intimate relationship.

Table: Regressions examining the effect of the intervention (safety decision aid) on baseline change in decisional conflict controlling for pre-test score and length of intimate relationship.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Decisional conflict: total</th>
<th>Decisional conflict: informed</th>
<th>Decisional conflict: uncertainty</th>
<th>Decisional conflict: values clarity</th>
<th>Decisional conflict: support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>β</td>
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<td>.03</td>
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<td>Pre-test score</td>
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<td>.002</td>
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<td>.292</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Interpretations for Table:
• Total Score: Survivors in the intervention group (safety decision aid) had a greater reduction in total decisional conflict controlling for their pre-test score compared to survivors in control group.
• Informed: Difference in change was not statistically significant.
• Uncertainty: Survivor in the intervention group had a greater reduction in uncertainty decisional conflict controlling for their pre-test score compared to survivors in control group.
• Values Clarity: Survivors in the intervention group had a greater reduction in values clarity decisional conflict controlling for their pre-test score compared to survivors in the control group.
• Support: Survivors in the intervention group had a greater reduction in support decisional conflict controlling for their pre-test score compared to survivors in control group.
“The info from the survey has giving the courage, will, and resources I needed to get out of that abusive relationship with my husband.”

“The website may have saved my life, I never thought of putting together a safety plan before”

“I used a lot of the resources from the site”

“Once I finally understood exactly how deadly the situation actually was; I left. Had I not gotten the info from your study we would likely still be living in fear at the house”

“Very empowering questions that raise awareness - did for me”
Adapting safety decision aids to LMIC

• Trained community health workers, advocates, protection officers and health care providers can use as tool/resource with survivor to develop a personalize/tailored action plan for safety

• Engaging survivors in low-resource settings in defining action plans for safety – safety strategies with informal resources may be different than what we traditional define as safety resources (shelters, hotlines, counseling, law enforcement) but just as effective in the context.

• Engaging survivors and experts from LMIC in development with appropriate technology to reduce unintended consequences

• Testing of safety decisions aids and other technology based interventions - we must conduct impact evaluations