



OPINION LEADER TRAINING



BROTHERS KEEPING BROTHERS SAFE

Welcome to Session 1

Why Do We Need to Do This?

d-up: Defend Yourself!

- Takes prevention to a different level, where you play a very important role
- Changes the way our community thinks about protecting its members

d-up: Defend Yourself! (cont.)

- Creates an environment where all can be comfortable saying “no” to unprotected sex
- Helps you create an environment that supports protected sex

Expectations of Opinion Leaders

- Attend all four 2- to 2½-hour training sessions
- Have conversations with people you know and are part of your circle of friends and acquaintances
- Continue the conversations after the training
- Invite 2 friends to the last session
- Keep in touch after the training

Over the Next 4 Weeks

- We will discuss the following:
 - What *d-up!* is and how it works
 - Some of the factors that contribute to high rates of HIV in our communities
 - Risk reduction strategies
 - Myths and misconceptions about HIV
 - Use of social norms to change behavior

Over the Next 4 Weeks (cont.)

- We will discuss the following (cont.):
 - How to conduct risk reduction conversations
 - Elements of risk reduction messages
- We will do the following:
 - Practice risk reduction conversations
 - Plan future conversations
 - Use *d-up!* logo materials

Session 1 Topics

- Understanding *d-up!* and how it works
- Factors that contribute to HIV risk
- Basic information on HIV and progression to AIDS
- Levels of behavioral risk
- Risk reduction strategies

Factors That Contribute to Risk

- Homophobia and family rejection
 - Homophobia creates varying levels of stress and distress, as well as an increase in reported risky sex behaviors
 - Negative messages about same-gender sexual behaviors are heard in worship services
 - Family member rejection is seen as loss of expected assurance, support, and protection

Factors That Contribute to Risk (cont.)

- Homophobia and family rejection (cont.)
 - Bisexual men who believe their same-gender relationships are not as legitimate as heterosexual activities often experience internalized homophobia and stress
- Racism
 - Experiences with racial discrimination can create stress

Factors That Contribute to Risk (cont.)

- Incarceration
 - Black men who have sex with men (MSM) who have experienced family or community rejection are more likely to be incarcerated
 - Men who have been incarcerated more likely to report engaging in unprotected insertive and receptive anal sex

Factors That Contribute to Risk (cont.)

- Poverty
 - Men with limited financial resources may engage in survival sex
 - They also may be more likely to take sexual risks to meet basic needs of food and shelter

Social Norms

- Are unwritten rules of behavior
- Define which behaviors are acceptable and which are not (e.g., addressing others, going to worship service, going drinking, having wine with dinner)

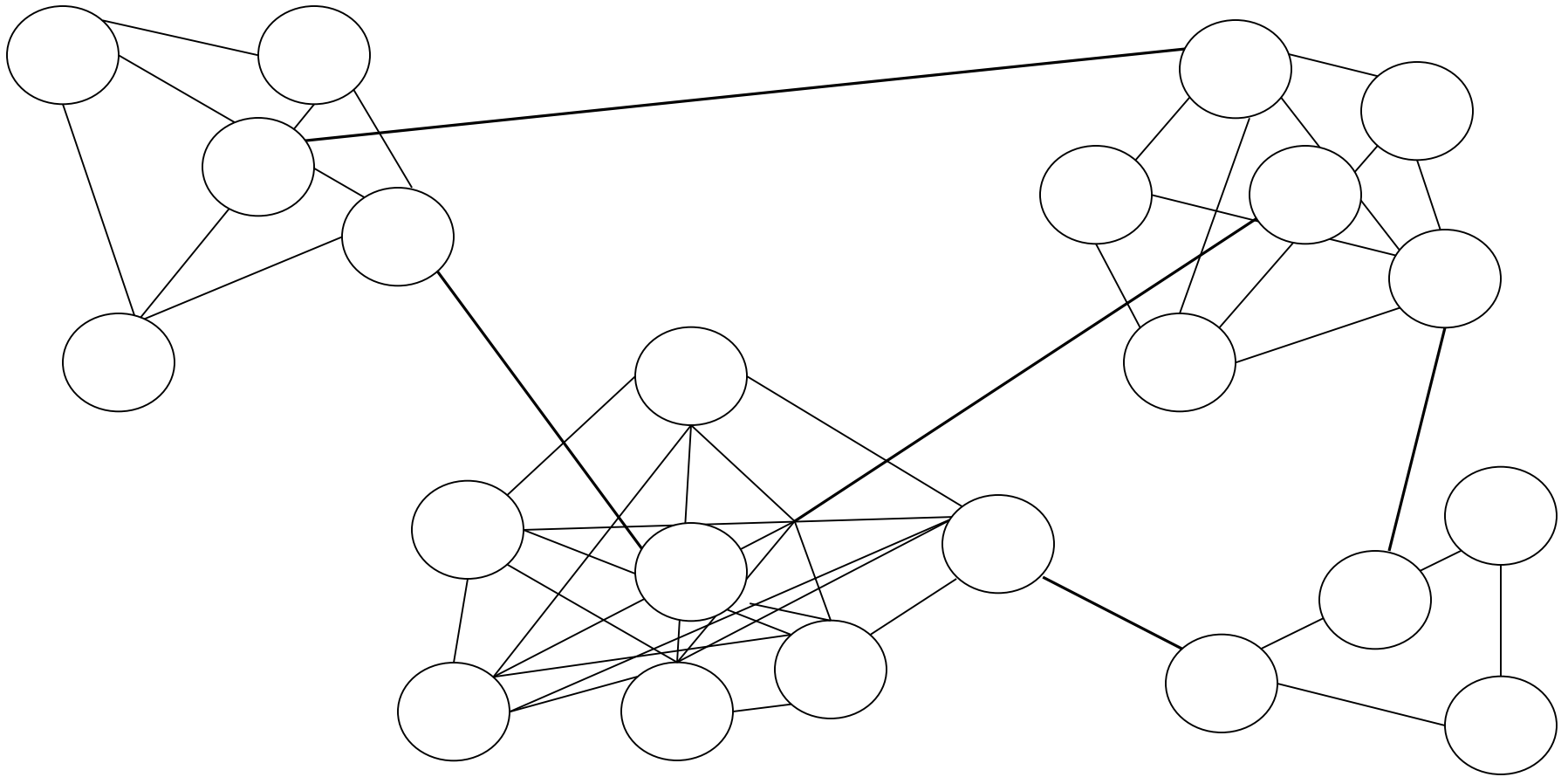
Changing Social Norms

- Credible, trustworthy people within a group of friends and acquaintances support a different norm
- Opinion leaders communicate that using condoms consistently is a desirable norm
 - Friends and acquaintances begin to change how they think about safer sex

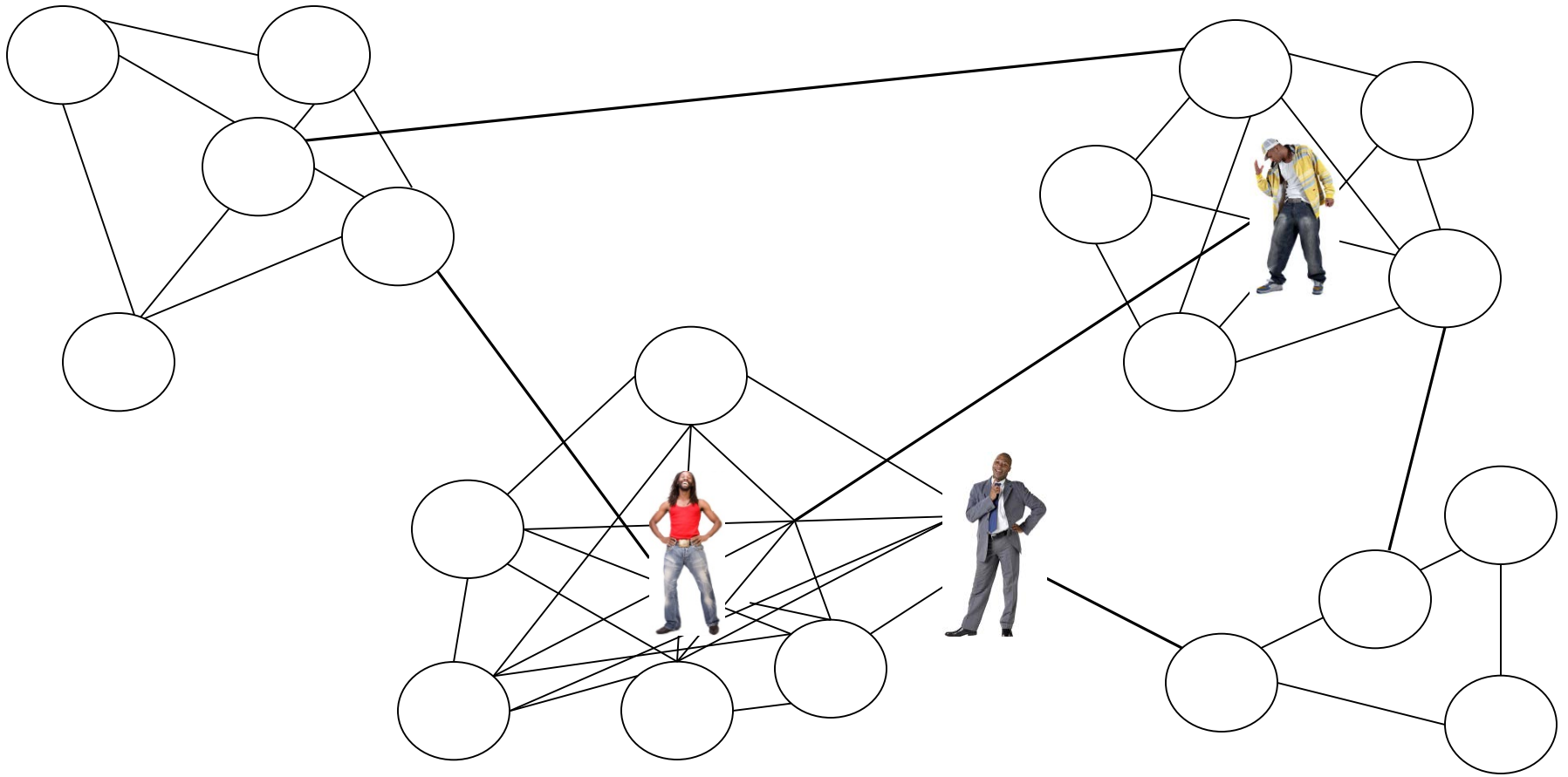
Changing Social Norms (cont.)

- Friends of opinion leaders talk to other friends about the benefits of safer sex
- The idea spreads over time
- More members of a group of friends and acquaintances adopt safer sex behaviors (e.g., use condom consistently)
- Safer sex becomes the new norm or trend

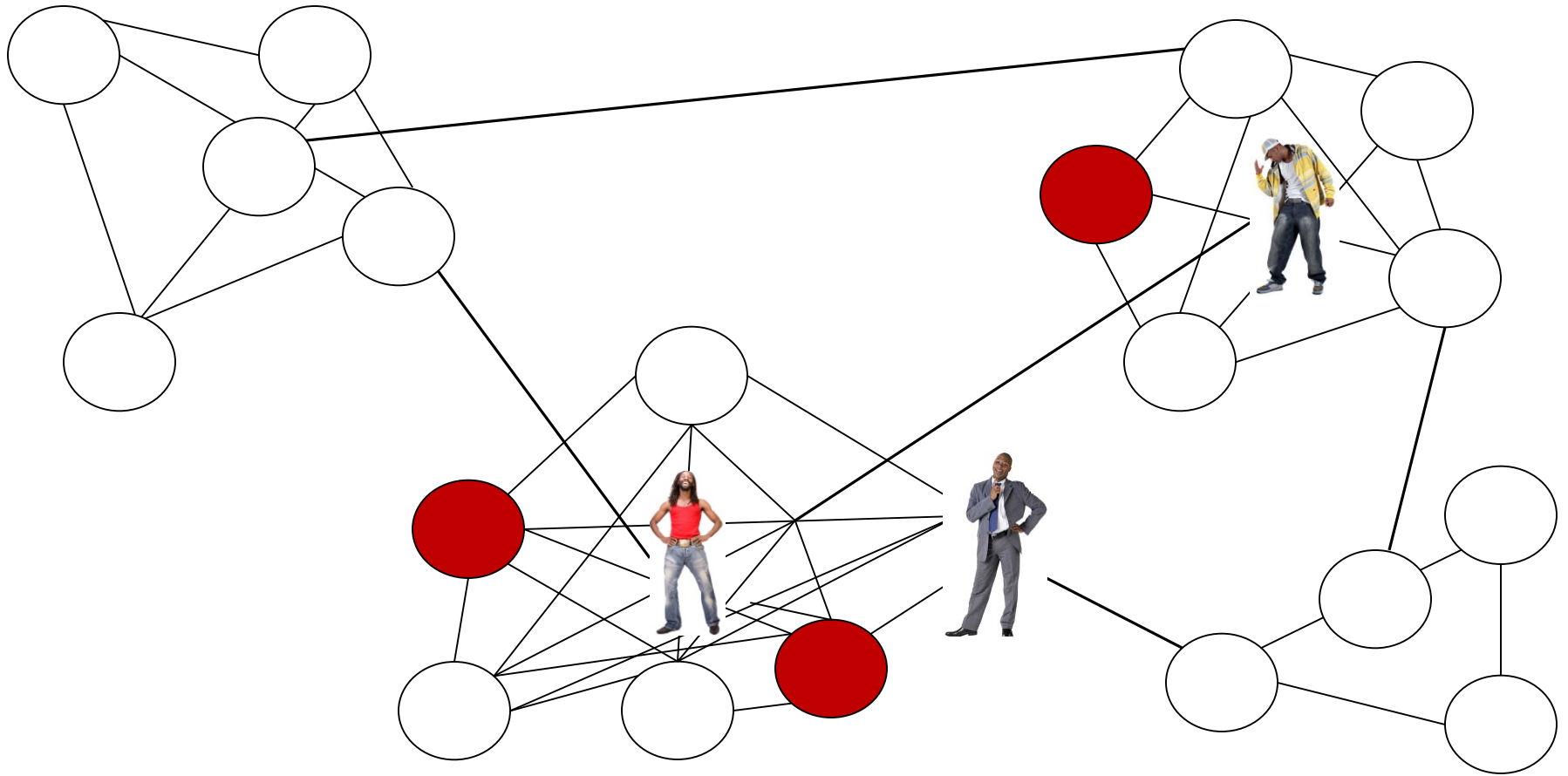
Social Network of Linked Friendship Groups



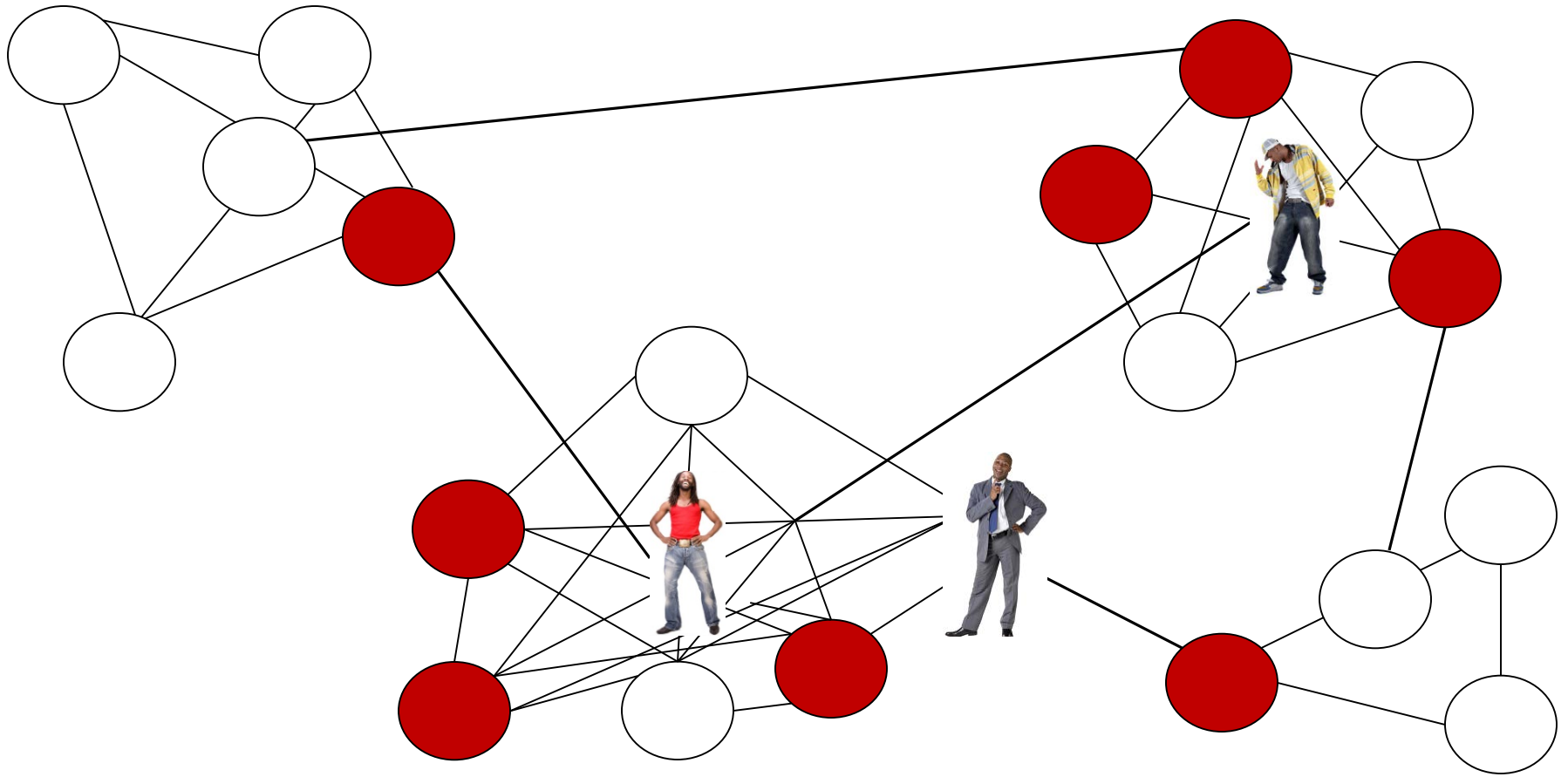
Identify Opinion Leaders



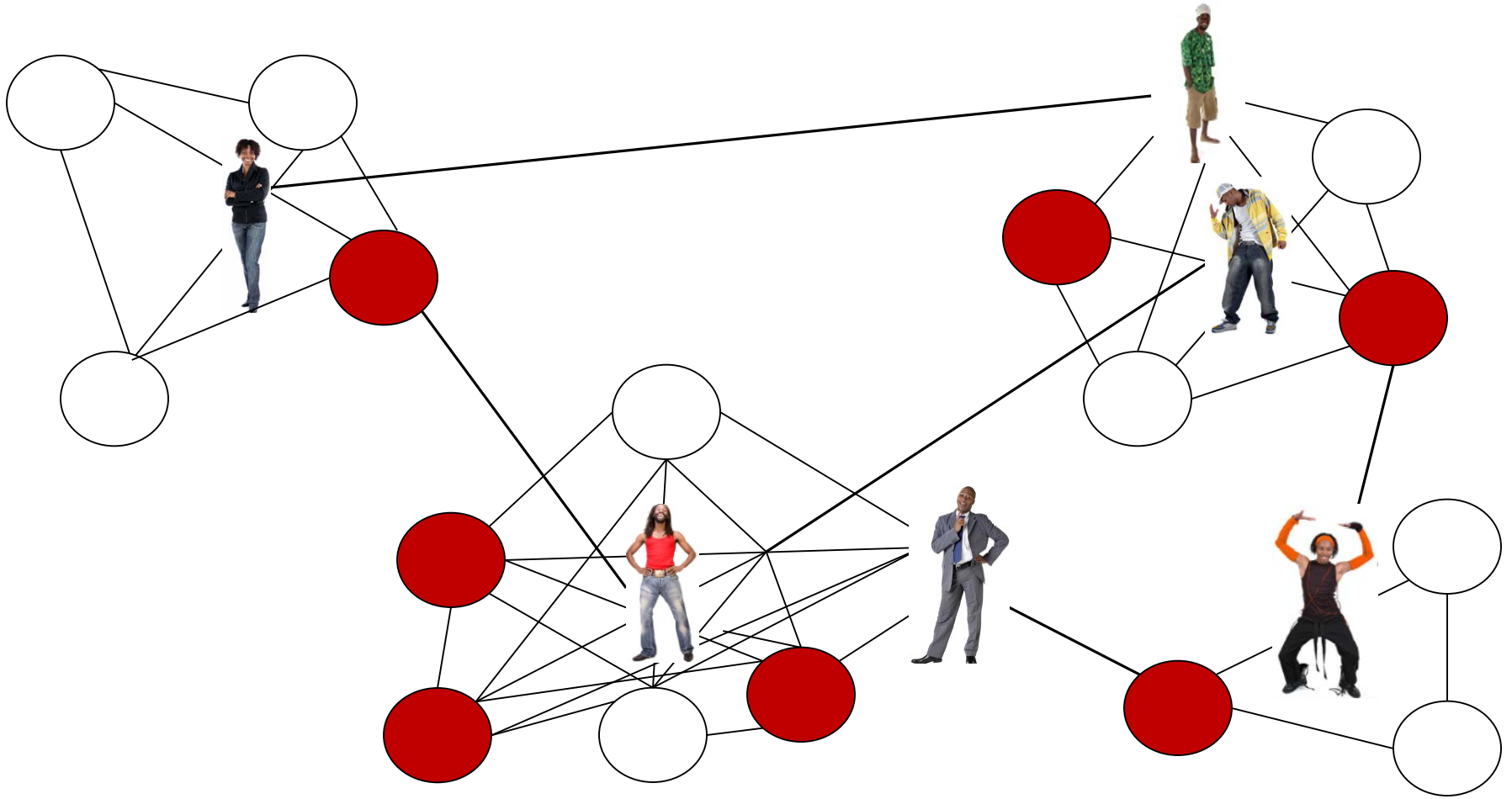
Opinion Leaders Endorse Safer Sex to Friends



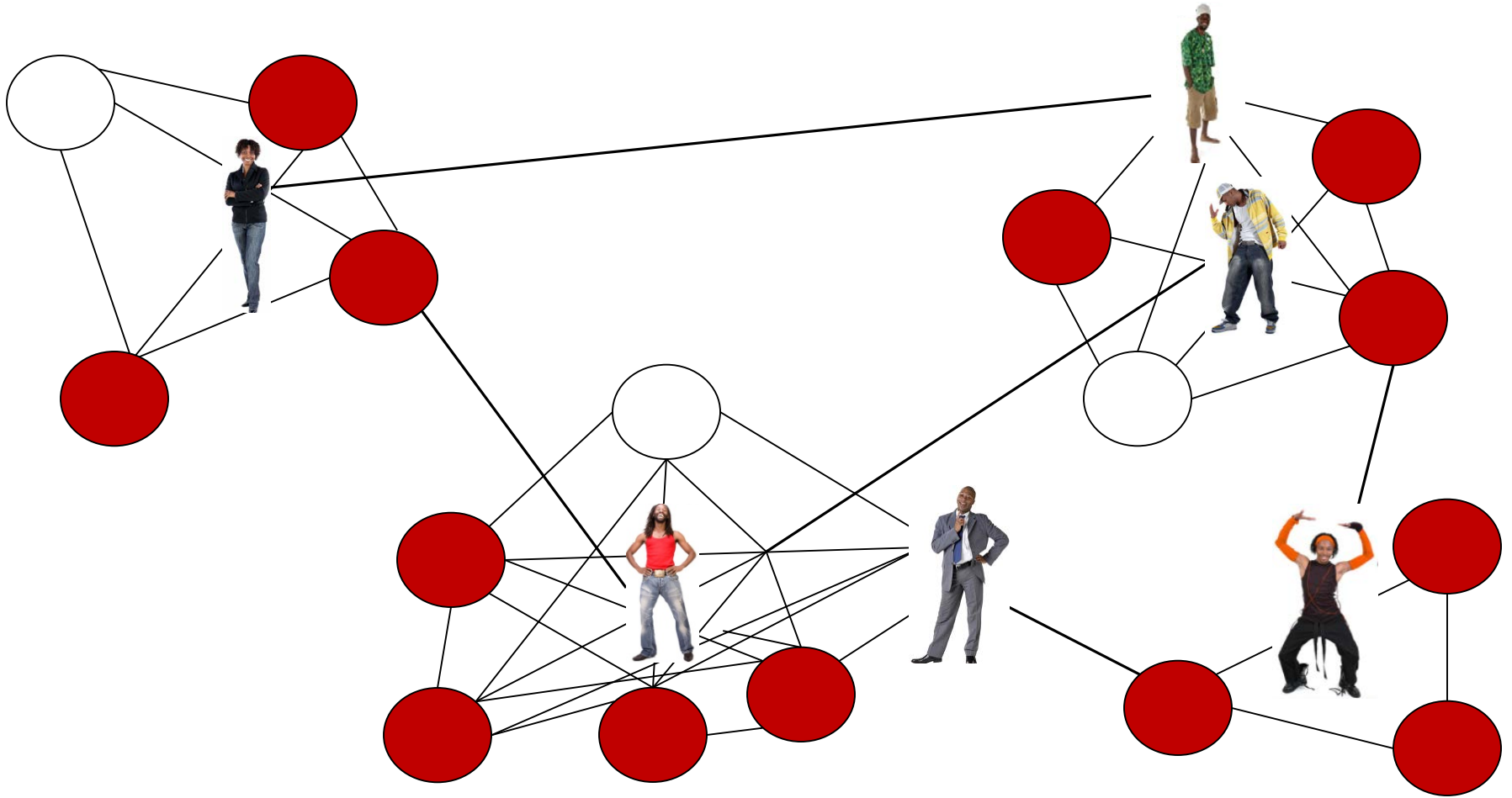
Opinion Leaders Endorse Safer Sex to More Friends



More Opinion Leaders Are Recruited



Norm Diffused



Factors That Contribute to Risk

- Racism
 - Experience with racial discrimination can create stress
 - Race-related socialization and preparation for bias can lead to more positive outcomes

Preparing for Bias

- Men who have received guidance on how to respond to and cope with racial and other forms of discrimination have better outcomes
- Individuals prepared for bias may be more determined to succeed
- Individuals may seek to disprove negative views that others have about them

Preparing for Bias (cont.)

- Men who have been prepared for bias that may affect sexual risk may be more likely to associate with peers who endorse safer sex norms
- Including messages to help cope with bias and discrimination can help promote positive self-worth among Black MSM
 - Increased belief they are worthy of protecting
 - Enhanced self-acceptance

Characteristics of Opinion Leaders

- Respected
- Credible
- Trustworthy
- Listened to
- Empathetic to friends
- Self-confident

Roles of Opinion Leaders

- They can change norms within a social group of friends and acquaintances by having everyday conversations
- Over time, these conversations can help reduce rates of HIV infection

Understanding HIV

- **H — HUMAN**
 - Transmittal of the virus is transmitted from human to human
- **I — IMMUNODEFICIENCY**
 - An inadequacy of the body's immune system to fight infection
- **V — VIRUS**
 - A living organism that is too small to be seen without a microscope

HIV's Progression to AIDS

- HIV infection progresses to an AIDS diagnosis in stages
- Progression is marked by changes in the immune system
- How rapidly progression occurs depends on many factors, including:
 - Overall health
 - Other medical conditions
 - Response to treatment

Understanding AIDS

- **A — ACQUIRED**
 - A disease you get from someone else
- **I — IMMUNO**
 - Body systems that protect against infection
- **D — DEFICIENCY**
 - Immune system that is damaged or weakened by HIV
- **S — SYNDROME**
 - Collection of symptoms

The Facts

- HIV can be found in:
 - Blood
 - Semen
 - Pre-semen
 - Vaginal/cervical secretions
 - Breast milk
 - Any body fluid containing the blood of an infected person

The Facts (cont.)

- HIV is spread through:
 - Unprotected vaginal, anal, or oral sex with an infected person
 - Needle sharing with an person infected with HIV
 - Tissue in the birth canal during child birth
 - Breast milk from a mother infected with HIV
 - Blood or plasma transfusions (very rarely)

The Facts (cont.)

- Fluids through which HIV is NOT transmitted:
 - Sweat
 - Tears
 - Bloodless:
 - Nasal discharge
 - Saliva
 - Feces
 - Vomit
 - Urine

The Facts (cont.)

- HIV is not transmitted by:
 - Air
 - Food
 - Water
 - Animals
 - Insects
 - Donating blood

Difference Between HIV and AIDS

- Having HIV infection means having the virus
- HIV attacks the body's immune system by invading and taking over CD4 cells
- HIV treatments can slow the HIV attack on the immune system
- HIV treatment can decrease a person's susceptibility to serious opportunistic infections
- AIDS is the condition that occurs over time after being infected with HIV

Points to Remember

- A person with HIV can have no symptoms and not know they have been infected
- It is important for people living with HIV or AIDS to protect and strengthen their immune system

Points to Remember (cont.)

- People living with HIV or AIDS are vulnerable to other infections
 - These infections weaken the immune system more
- Today, people living with HIV or AIDS can live longer and healthier lives if they take good care of their overall health

Risk Reduction Strategies

- Abstinence only sure way
- Defend yourself
 - Assume everyone is HIV-positive
 - Practice safer sex (e.g., use condoms consistently)
- Know your partners' sexual history
- Reduce your number of sex partners

Risk Reduction Strategies (cont.)

- Use latex or polyurethane condoms—always
- Use only water-based lubricants
- Do not use lubricants containing spermicide
- Avoid the use of alcohol or other drugs that may impair judgment
- Do not share sex toys

Risk Reduction Strategies (cont.)

- Do not share needles for any purpose
- Avoid behaviors that may result in contact with:
 - Blood
 - Semen
 - Vaginal secretions

Risk Reduction Strategies (cont.)

- Educate your partners
- Have types of sex that stay outside the body

HIV Testing

- Basically four types of HIV tests:
 - Standard blood test
 - Oral test (mucus between lower cheek and gum)
 - Urine test
 - Rapid test (blood)

About Negative HIV Tests

- A person can have a negative HIV test and still be infected
 - It takes time for antibodies to develop
 - A test taken immediately after exposure may be negative, though infection has occurred

About Negative HIV Tests (cont.)

- The period between the time of infection and development of antibodies is the most infectious period
 - More likely to transmit virus to someone else at this time

HIV Treatment

- There is no cure for HIV
 - HIV is a living organism
 - Once it enters the body, it remains
 - Despite treatments, there is NO CURE
- Treatments slow the progression to AIDS, allowing people to be healthy longer

Key Points to Remember From Session 1

- As opinion leaders, you have the opportunity to:
 - Protect yourselves
 - Take charge of reducing HIV infection among your friends and acquaintances
 - Use your influence to establish safer sex as the norm
 - Save the lives of your friends and acquaintances

Key Points to Remember From Session 1 (cont.)

- HIV is a serious problem, and we can do something about it
- HIV is transmitted through five bodily fluids
- Adopting safer sex behaviors adds credibility to the messages you deliver

Preview of Session 2

- Myths and misconceptions about HIV and infected persons
- How social norms can be used to change behaviors
- Strategies for making it easier for you to talk to other about HIV and AIDS