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KNOW 

 **TALK**



GO

FAQ

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

On Life Planning for Adolescents & Youth
and Family Planning/Childbirth Spacing

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Introduction

What is Family Planning / Childbirth Spacing?

- It is a way of life, a voluntary, informed decision by an individual or couple regarding when to start having children and how much time to give in between births.
- It promotes quality of life for the entire family.
- It is an affordable, safe and effective way to have children when a couple wants to have them.
- It may help couples who face fertility challenges to have children.

What are the benefits of Family Planning/Childbirth Spacing?

To Women:

- Allows her to rest between pregnancies in order to regain her health and strength thereby reducing the risk of complications during or after pregnancy.
- Gives her time to develop herself and contribute financially to the upkeep of her family.
- Allows her to give more attention to her husband.
- Reduces anxiety and stress related to unplanned pregnancies.
- She will be able to breastfeed for a long period, thus providing her baby with nutritious food and protection from diseases.
- By delaying the next pregnancy, she is able to spend quality time with each child.

To Men:

- Enables him fulfil his fatherly role of giving guidance and support to his children.
- He is able to provide for his family.
- Allows him to have quality time with his family, promoting a closer relationship with them.
- Fathers will have less anxiety and stress related to unplanned pregnancy.

To Young People:

- Promotes healthy behaviours by allowing young persons who wish to prevent, delay or limit pregnancies know what to do.
- Helps them realize their potential and empowers them to make the right choice about their future. This way, they are able to achieve their life goals without the stress of an unplanned pregnancy.

To Children:

- They receive adequate care and attention from their parents.
 - Better health and education opportunities.
-

What modern Family Planning/Childbirth spacing methods are available in Nigeria?

- Pills (including the minipill for nursing mothers)
- Injectables (taken every 2 or 3 months, depending on the type selected)
- Implant
- Intra -Uterine Device (IUD)
- Male Condom
- Female Condom
- Lactational Amenorrhoea Method (LAM) i.e Exclusive breastfeeding
- Bilateral Tubal Ligation (BTL- permanent method for women)
- Vasectomy (permanent method for men).

Do some Family Planning/Childbirth spacing methods have side effects?

Yes. Some of the modern methods have side effects. Side effects are not signs of illness. Some women do not have them at all. Most side effects become less or stop within a short period. The client should go back to the provider for help if the side effects bother them.

Do contraceptives cause depression and headaches?

Headaches may occur as a side effects when using hormonal contraceptive methods. Contraceptives have not been proven to cause depression.

Does Family Planning/Childbirth spacing cause infertility?

No, family planning/childbirth spacing does not cause infertility. For some people, fertility returns soon after the method is discontinued while for others, there might be some delay. In time, the woman will return to her own fertility.

What method can a young person use that will not affect his/her fertility in future?

Temporary family planning methods do not affect future fertility. This includes all methods except the surgical methods. Remember, everybody is different and unique and bodies respond/react to things differently.

How soon is return to fertility for a young person on contraceptives?

Family planning methods are safe and once discontinued, return to fertility is almost immediate depending on the individual.

What is the best method of contraception?

There isn't a best method of contraception. There are different reasons for using FP. Some couples use FP to space their children and some do not want anymore children. The best method is the one that suits you. See your health provider to make the choice that suits you.

Can Family Planning/Childbirth spacing methods fail?

Yes, however most modern family planning methods are effective. If a method fails, it might be because it is not used correctly.

Is it possible to combine more than one method of Family Planning/Childbirth spacing?

Yes, it is possible. Barrier methods such as condoms can be used with other family planning methods to protect against both pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) including HIV. Talk to your provider for more information on this.

KNOW

Modern family planning methods are safe and effective.
The right method is the one that suits you.



Male and Female Condoms



What are male and female condoms?

They are rubbers sheaths used on the penis (Male Condom) or inside the vagina (Female Condom) and act as a barrier to prevent the sperm from meeting the female egg during sex. Condoms protect couples from unintended pregnancy and STIs including HIV.

My friend says that condoms are dangerous to use because they break. Is he right?

No, condoms are not dangerous to use. They are safe when used correctly. Condoms do break occasionally, but this is unlikely if you handle them carefully, store them properly and do not cut them with your fingernails or jewelry. Using more than one condom does not offer additional protection and could lead to friction causing it to break. Condoms require correct use with every act of sex for greatest effectiveness.

Do condoms expire?

Yes. That is why you must check the expiry date before you use a condom. If expired, a condom has an increased risk of breaking.

Do condoms interfere with pleasure during sex?

Some people say there is a different sensation when using condoms. However, sex with a condom can cause more pleasure because the users are not worried about pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections including HIV.

Are some condoms better than other condoms?

Registered condom brands available in Nigeria are safe and effective. They have been certified by safety and regulatory bodies.

Do the female condoms expand like male condoms?

The female condoms do not expand. It is about the same length as the male ones but has two rings of which one end is inserted into the vagina and the partner penetrates through the other end.

Can condoms be reused?

No, condoms should not be reused. A new one should be used for each sexual act.

Can condoms stop bleeding at first sexual intercourse?

Bleeding at first sexual exposure is due to a breach of the female's hymen. Not all women will bleed at first intercourse and this has nothing to do with the use of condoms.



**Correct facts
about male
and female
condoms**

- **Condoms are used by persons who are married or unmarried**
- **Men have the same sex drive if they use condoms.** Condoms do not make men sterile, impotent or weak
- **Condoms are safe for men and women.** They do not cause illnesses. A woman does not need sperm to be healthy. Condoms cannot get lost in a woman's body
- **Female condoms are safe for breastfeeding mothers**
- **Condoms protects against some sexually transmitted infections.** Consistent and correct use of condoms can effectively reduce the risk of contacting sexually transmitted infections including HIV.

IUD



What is an IUD?

The Intra-Uterine Device or IUD method prevents pregnancy for 5 - 10 years. The IUD is inserted in a woman's uterus by a trained provider. IUDs are safe for breastfeeding women to use.

What are the side effects of the IUD?

Some women can have changes in menstrual patterns, especially in the first 3 to 6 months. These could be prolonged and heavy bleeding, irregular bleeding or cramps during monthly bleeding. These side effects are normal and become less over time.

Can a woman who has infection use the IUD?

No, women with infection cannot use the IUD until they are proven free of an infection.

What is the best time to have an IUD?

If a woman is not pregnant, an IUD can be inserted at anytime by a health provider. After delivery, an IUD can be inserted within 48 hours. Otherwise the woman will have to wait until four weeks after delivery to insert an IUD.

Can IUDs cause cancer?

No, IUDs are not known to cause cancer. Once a woman becomes sexually active, she is encouraged to have routine and regular breast and cervical examinations with a service provider to help identify any abnormalities as early as possible.

Can the IUD come out on its own?

Yes, an IUD can come out on its own. This can happen if it is not inserted properly or the woman has other underlying gynaecological conditions. Speak to a trained service provider.

Can a woman in a polygamous home use IUD to prevent infection from the other wives through the husband?

No. IUD does not offer protection from sexually transmitted infections. Speak to a trained health provider if you have any concerns.

Does IUD cause fibroid?

No, IUDs are not known to cause fibroid. If you have any concerns about fibroids, speak to a trained health provider.



Correct facts
about IUDs

- **IUDs are safe for women including breastfeeding mothers.** They must be inserted by a trained provider. It can be inserted immediately after birth, within 48 hours or four weeks after delivery
- **A woman can get an IUD even if she has not had a child**
- **The IUD stays in the uterus.** It does not move to the heart or brain
- **A woman can return to her own fertility after IUD removal.** IUDs do not make women infertile and are not known to cause birth defects in children after removal
- **IUDs are rarely known to cause discomfort for women during sex.**

TALK

Share the information
from this booklet with your
partner.



Pills



What is the Pill?

A small tablet a woman takes at the same time everyday to prevent pregnancy. The pill must be taken everyday, whether or not the woman has sex that day.

What are the side effects of the pill?

Some women have:

- Changes in monthly menstrual patterns
- Headaches
- Weight loss or gain
- Breast tenderness

These are normal, temporary and should not cause concerns. Speak to a trained provider on any concerns.

Do the pills cause abdominal pains?

No, pills are not known to cause abdominal pain. In some cases, pills have been known to reduce menstrual pains.

I am thinking of trying the pill. Is it safe for women?

Yes, the pill is safe for women. However, it is not suitable for all women. On a first visit to a family planning provider, the provider will ask about smoking habits, family history of heart or blood disease or high blood pressure.

Does the pill turn women off sex?

No. Pills do not affect a woman's sexual drive. For many women, their interest in sex increases because they know the pill is giving them protection against unplanned pregnancy.

What should I do if I forget to take my pill for one day?

If you missed just one pill, take it as soon as you remember. Thereafter, continue taking 1 pill each day at your normal time. This might mean taking 2 pills on the same day (1 when you remember and the other at the regular time). However, if you remember at your normal time, you need to take 2 pills at once.

Will I get pregnant if I miss one pill?

Missing one pill may not lead to unintended pregnancy, but missing up to 3 or more in a month is a cause for concern. If a woman misses pills frequently, she should consider switching to a different method.



Correct facts
about pills
and minipills:

- **They are safe for women of any age, including women who have never had a baby.**
- **Pills do not build up in a woman's body.** Women do not need to rest from taking the pills
- **A woman can return to her own fertility (her ability to get pregnant) when she stops taking the pill.** Pills are not known to make women infertile
- **Pills do not change a woman's sex drive**
- **Mini pills are safe for breastfeeding women anytime after delivery.** Mini pills are not known to affect the quality and quantity of a woman's breast milk and also not known to cause diarrhoea in breast fed babies.

GO

Make sure you keep your appointments and return to your family planning provider as recommended



Lactational Amenorrhoea (Exclusive Breastfeeding Method)



What is exclusive breastfeeding method (LAM)?

Exclusive breastfeeding is a temporary childbirth spacing method which is effective for the first six months after childbirth. A breastfeeding woman must meet all three criteria to prevent pregnancy:

- Infant is less than six months old.
- Baby feeds on demand, regularly both day and night and does not take other food or water.
- Menstrual bleeding after delivery has not returned.

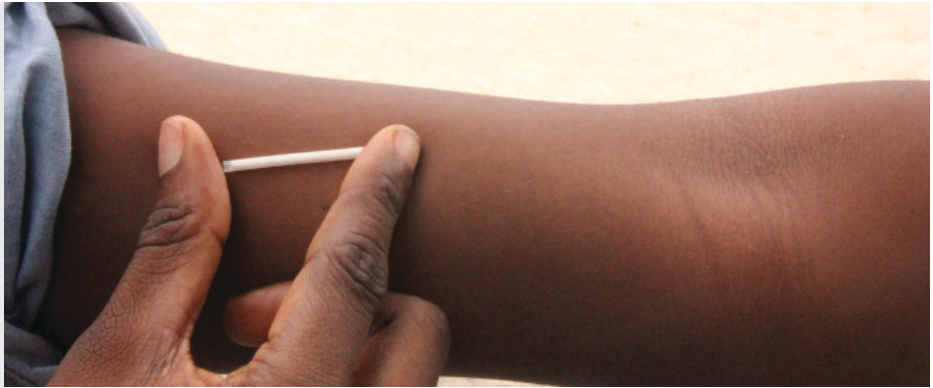
What are the side effects of LAM?

There are no side effects.

Can someone else give my baby water while I am practicing LAM?

If a breastfeeding baby is fed with water by any one, then the mother is no longer protected against pregnancy using LAM. She should choose another FP method to use.

Implants



What are Implants?

Implants are small rods (about the size of a match stick) that are inserted under the skin of the upper arm. They prevent pregnancy for up to 3 to 5 years. An implant can be inserted within 48 hours after giving birth or can be inserted at anytime as long as there is no pregnancy. Implants do not protect against sexually transmitted infections including HIV. Implants should only be inserted or removed by a trained health provider.

What are the side effects of implants?

Common side effects include:

- Changes in menstrual patterns (could be irregular, prolonged, frequent or no menstruation)
- Weight loss or gain
- Breast tenderness
- Dizziness
- Headache

These are normal, temporary and should not cause concerns. Some women may not experience any of these side effects while some may experience one or more of these. The client should go back to her provider for help if the side effects bother her.

Do implants increase weight?

Some women are known to gain weight with the use of implants, however, this can be adequately managed. If you are concerned about weight gain, please speak to a trained service provider.

Do implants increase blood pressure?

No, implants are not known to increase blood pressure, however, regular blood pressure checks are advised.

What happens if a woman dies and she happens to be using implants or IUD? Is it okay for her to be buried with the device?

Using implants or IUD does not prevent anyone from going to heaven. If the woman dies while using any FP method, she can be buried.

Is the mode of insertion of implants a surgical operation? Will I feel pain?

Implant insertion is a minor non-surgical procedure. An injection is given to numb the insertion site so you do not feel pain.

The woman may feel some pressure during the insertion and her arm may be sore afterwards for a few days. The soreness will go away without treatment.



Correct facts about implants

- **Implants are safe for women of any age, including women who have never had a baby**
- **Implants are safe for breastfeeding mothers**
- **Implants stop releasing hormones once they are removed from the arm**
- **Implants can be removed anytime the woman is ready to conceive.** After implant removal, hormones from implants do not remain in a woman's body. Generally, a woman returns to her own fertility quickly after implant removal but some women have to wait for a few months
- **Implants stay in the arm until they are removed.** Implants do not move to other parts of the body.

Injectables



What is the Injectable?

Injectables are hormonal contraceptives that are given in the arm, hip or buttocks every 2 or 3 months depending on the type used.

What are the side effects of the injectable?

- Changes in menstrual patterns (could be irregular - prolonged, frequent or no menstruation)
- Weight gain
- Dizziness
- Headache

These are normal, temporary and should not cause health concerns.

A client should go back to her provider for help if the side effects bother her.

I am breastfeeding, can I use the injectable?

Yes, you can use the injectable if your baby is more than six weeks old.



Correct
facts about
injectables

- **Injectables are safe for women of any age, including women who have never had babies.** If a woman is concerned, she can ask her provider
- **Injectables are safe for breastfeeding mothers with a baby more than 6 weeks old**
- **Injectables will not affect a woman's fertility after stopping use.** However, depending on a woman fertility, it could take a few months before a woman gets pregnant after her last injection.

Emergency Contraceptive Pills



What are Emergency Contraceptive Pills (ECPs)?

- ECPs are tablets which can prevent pregnancy if taken within 5 days of having unprotected sex. However, they are most effective if taken within the first 24 hours.

- ECPs should be taken as soon as possible after unprotected sex. The sooner they are taken after sex, the better they prevent pregnancy.
- ECPs are for emergencies and not appropriate for regular use. They should not be taken more than twice a month. There is increased risk of ECP failure if repeatedly used as a contraceptive. Talk to a trained health provider about family planning methods.

Where can a woman find ECPs?

ECPs are available in health facilities and pharmacies.

What are the side effects of ECPs?

Common side effects include:

- Changes in menstrual patterns (Irregular-prolonged, infrequent or no menstruation)
- Nausea
- Abdominal pain
- Headache
- These are normal, temporary and should not cause concerns. The client should go back to her provider for help if the side effects bother her.

Can ECPs damage the womb?

No, it cannot damage the womb. ECP is an emergency contraceptive pill not intended for regular use. It should be used within 120 hours of unprotected sexual intercourse.

Can Emergency Contraceptive Pills make girls fat?

Emergency contraceptive pills have not been known to make girls fat; they don't have weight gain as side effects. Also, bear in mind that they are not to be used long-term but only in emergency cases.



Correct facts
about the
ECPs

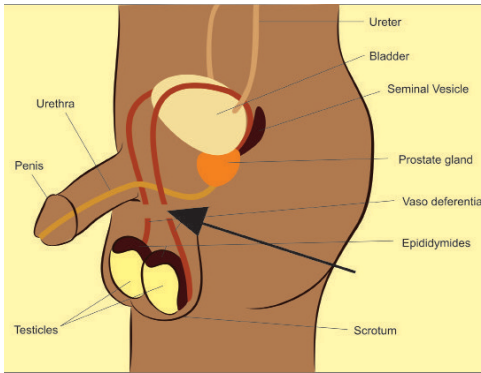
- **ECPs should not be used as a regular method to delay or space pregnancies, they are only appropriate for emergency cases.** To stay protected from pregnancy, speak with a trained health provider
- **ECPs are safe for women.** ECPs are not dangerous to a woman's health
- **A woman can become pregnant if she has sex after taking ECPs.** Taking ECPs prevents pregnancy only from acts of sex that took place in a few days before. They will not protect a woman from pregnancy from acts of sex after she takes the ECPs - not even on the very next day.

TALK

Share the information from this booklet with your friends
and neighbours.



Vasectomy



What is Vasectomy?

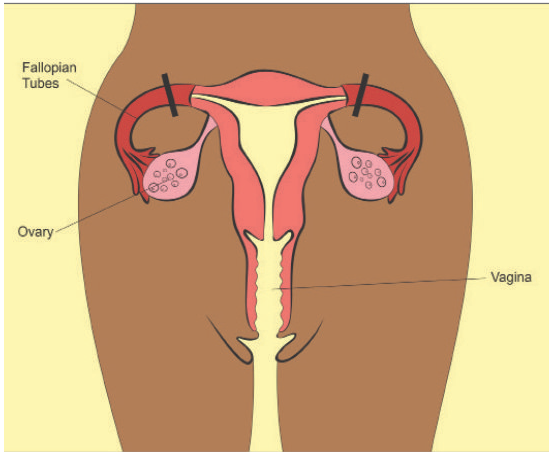
Vasectomy is a simple surgery for men that prevents pregnancy. A healthcare provider closes the tubes that carries the sperm. It is a permanent method, used by men who do not want any more children. Because it is permanent, no one should be pressured into having a vasectomy.



Correct
facts about
Vasectomy

- **Vasectomy is safe for men.** It does not cause any disease later in life.
- **A man is just as strong after vasectomy as he was before.** It does not cause a man to gain weight, become weak or less masculine. Vasectomy does not affect male sexual performance.
- **Vasectomy is not known to cause cancer**
- **Men have the same sex drive after vasectomy as they had before.** Vasectomy does not remove the testicles and does not affect sexual function. A man's erection is as hard, last as long and he ejaculates as he did before.
- **Vasectomy does not protect from pregnancy immediately.** There is a 3 month delay before the method takes effect. A male condom or another method should be used for 3 months after the procedure to prevent pregnancy.

Bilateral Tubal Ligation



What is bilateral tubal ligation (BTL)?

BTL is a permanent contraception for women who do not want to get pregnant again. BTL is a simple surgical procedure where a health provider ties the fallopian tubes that carry eggs to the uterus.



Correct Facts about Tubal Ligation

- **BTL is safe for women**
- **BTL has no side effects.** BTL does not cause hormonal imbalances or change a woman's menstrual cycles. Also, it does not cause any changes in weight, appetites or appearance
- **A woman is as strong after BTL as she was before.** It does not make women weak
- **BTL does not remove a woman's uterus or ovaries**
- **BTL is not known to cause cancer**
- **Women have the same sex drive as they had before.** BTL does not change women's sex drive
- **BTL does not protect against sexually transmitted infection including HIV.**



I Need to know

Will a provider give contraceptive method to a young person below 18 years?

A provider will give a person below 18 years a contraceptive method after comprehensive counselling where there is parental/guardian consent.

Do I need parental consent for some types of family planning methods?

If you are 18 years or above, you do not need parental consent for any contraceptive method. The provider will counsel you and provide you with all the information you will require to make a voluntary and informed choice. If you are younger than 18, you will require parental/guardian consent to access FP services.

Do I have to return to where I received FP if I want to discontinue?

Some methods (pills, injectables, condoms) do not require the help of a provider to be discontinued while IUDs and implants do. You can return to any trained health provider to discontinue IUD or implant.

It is however advisable to discuss why you want to discontinue.

Will taking FP increase Libido?

Using FP does not increase libido.

Are young unmarried people allowed to use FP contraceptives by law?

Family planning is a human right based on voluntary and informed choice. Young unmarried people aged 18 years and above are allowed to use contraceptives. Those below 18 years will require parental/guardian consent.

Can a lady get pregnant if she practices withdrawal method?

Yes, a lady can get pregnant. Before a man ejaculates, there may be pre-ejaculatory fluid which contains sperm, thereby increasing the risk of pregnancy.

For someone who has had a sexual debut, how do I choose secondary abstinence?

Secondary abstinence is the process in which a person abstains from sex, even though they have previously had sex. If you decide to abstain, you have to work with that in mind, avoiding situations and scenarios that could be compromising especially if you are in a relationship.

Can STIs lead to infertility problems?

Poorly treated or untreated STIs can damage the reproductive organ which can lead to infertility over time. Visit the healthcare center if you suspect symptoms of STIs to prevent complications.

Can the fertility of those who use contraceptives over a long period be affected in the future?

There is no evidence to show that prolonged use of contraceptives affect fertility in the future. Some contraceptive methods can preserve fertility. For example, condoms have no effects on fertility but can prevent STIs which can lead to infertility.



Post-Pregnancy Family Planning

What is the post-pregnancy period?

It is the period between when a woman becomes pregnant and up to one year after childbirth irrespective of whether she delivers a live birth, a stillbirth or has a miscarriage. A woman can get pregnant during this period if she does not start using a family planning method soon after delivery.

What is Post-pregnancy Family Planning (PPFP)?

Post-pregnancy Family Planning is an informed decision made by a woman or couple to space their pregnancies by using a modern contraceptive method soon after a delivery.

What methods are safe and effective during the post-pregnancy period?

Lactational amenorrhoea method (exclusive breastfeeding), male and female condoms, oral contraceptive pills, injectables, implants, intrauterine devices, bilateral tubal ligation (female permanent method) and vasectomy (male permanent method). Depending on whether the mother is breastfeeding or not, the age of her baby and her reproductive intentions.

Do hormones or other substances from modern family planning methods get into a woman's breast milk and does this harm a baby who is breastfeeding?

The hormones in modern family planning methods are in very small quantities and are like the natural hormones produced by a woman's body. They can transfer into breast milk but in amounts that are usually very low and therefore insufficient to harm the baby.

Is it possible to get pregnant even if menstruation has not returned?

Yes, though menstruation has not returned, a woman can still release her egg once her body is ready. Therefore, the woman can get pregnant during this period if she has unprotected sex.

Are modern family planning methods more reliable than the withdrawal method?

Yes, majority of modern methods have above 98% effectiveness in preventing pregnancies with correct and consistent use while on the other hand, women are at a higher risk of getting pregnant with withdrawal.

GO

Return to your family planning provider any time if you;

- Have questions or problems.
- Experience side effects that persist and bother you.



To access family planning/childbirth spacing services;

Visit a family planning provider at a health facility close to you,
where you see this sign:



For additional information or more copies of this brochure, contact us at:

Lagos field Office:

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DO YOU KNOW?

You can learn to make responsible life choices and healthy decisions about your reproductive health with complete and correct information, healthy attitudes, good decision making, communication and life planning skills.

LIFE PLANNING

To make responsible and healthy choices about your reproductive health, you need adequate and accurate information about reproductive health.

You have the right to be counselled about your reproductive health and to ask questions when necessary.

When properly nurtured and guided, you have the capacity to achieve your potentials and grow into a productive adult.

IMPROVE YOUR SELF ESTEEM

Self-esteem is the judgment a person makes about him/herself. It is the recognition of one's qualities and ability including values, goals, talents, worth, physical attributes and purpose in life.

Self - esteem;

- Accept your self the way you are
Identify your strengths and weaknesses
- Identify your values and behave according to them
- Set realistic goals
- Develop your abilities and self confidence
- Cultivate positive relationships
Accept compliments
- Be pleased with who you are.

BE ASSERTIVE

Assertiveness means standing up for what you want or believe in. It is when you communicate your feeling and needs without violating the rights of others. You should:

- Know what you want to say
- Be specific about what you feel and what you need from the other person
- Say exactly what you want without being rude or threatening
- Maintain eye contact, do not look down or away
- Don't whine or be sarcastic
- Hold your head up high, do not sag your shoulders or hide your face with your hands.

NEGOTIATE

Negotiation skills help you respond to persuasion so you are not forced to do something you don't want to do To negotiate;

- **Refuse:** Say no clearly and firmly and, if necessary, leave. “No, no, I really mean no,” “No thank you”, and “No, no, I am leaving” are all examples of refusing
- **Delay:** Put off a decision until you can think about it. “I am not ready yet,” “Maybe we can talk later,” and “Maybe another day” are all examples of delaying
- **Bargain:** Make a decision that both parties can accept. Examples of bargaining include: “Let's do...[Something else] instead, or I won't do that, but maybe we could do ...[something else]”.

SET YOUR GOALS RIGHT

A goal is something you work to accomplish. It is a proposed achievement or accomplishment towards which efforts are directed.

- **Long Term Goals:** These are goals meant to be accomplished over a long period of time e.g 6 months, several years or over a lifetime
- **Short-term Goals:** These are goals you set to accomplish in a short period of time such as one week, two weeks or a month. Good goals should be “SMART” that is;
- **S-Specific:** Know exactly what you want to achieve
- **M-Measurable:** Be able to measure your progress towards your set goals
- **A-Achievable:** Be sure the goal is something you have the ability to accomplish
- **R-Realistic:** Be sure the goal is something you can do and within the desired time
- **T-Time bound:** Set time limits.

SEXUAL ABSTINENCE

Sexual abstinence means having no sexual intercourse at all. It is a conscious and deliberate decision not to have sex for a certain period or for life. Some people may decide not to have sex or postpone sexual intercourse for moral, religious, ethical, legal or health reasons. Secondary abstinence is where you have already had sex but choose to stop having sex and wait for a period of time.

Choosing to abstain from sex often requires an act of self control and commitment over the desire to have sex. The display of the strength of character is sustained during this period when you keep reminding yourself why you choose not to have sex and think about the potential consequences of changing your decision. When you abstain from sex, there is no fear of unplanned pregnancy and contracting sexual transmitted infection including HIV.

Your desire to abstain can be further achieved when you are equipped with skills that will enable you say 'No' to sex until you are fully ready. Remember, it's okay to say No.

Sexual feelings are normal, but sexual activities should only be engaged in when one is consciously ready and fully convinced. You need to respect your body and that of your partner. Never hesitate to talk to parents, trusted friends or health workers if you feel pressured to have sex when you don't want to. Resist sex based on transactions, pity or threat. You own your body and must make conscious personal decision before engaging in sex.

