

# CHOOSE

# LIFE

Guide for Peer Educators and Youth Leaders



A curriculum for youth ages 10 to 14





Copyright ©2006 World Relief

Sections of this book may be reproduced, translated, or adapted with minor changes to meet local needs provided they are distributed free or at cost and not for profit. Please inform World Relief of plans to translate these materials into another language and provide World Relief with one copy of the final publication.

Written permission from World Relief is required for any large-scale reproduction or distribution of more than 50 copies per year, any electronic reproduction, or any major change in content.

Please include the following statement on all section reproduction:  
Reprinted from Choose Life Guide for Peer Educators and Youth Leaders:  
For Youth Ages 10-14  
Copyright ©2006 World Relief, used by permission

For inquiries regarding rights and permissions, information on where to obtain additional copies or to learn more about other materials and services please contact:

World Relief  
Mobilizing for Life  
7 East Baltimore Street  
Baltimore MD 21202 USA  
+1 (443) 451-1900



email:wraids@wr.org  
www.worldrelief.org

This publication is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of World Relief and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

# CHOOSE LIFE

Guide for Peer Educators and Youth Leaders



*A curriculum for youth ages 10 to 14*

Second Edition

# Acknowledgements

This guide was designed and developed through a collaborative process with World Relief staff and partners from Mozambique, Kenya, Haiti and Rwanda.

## *Design Team Members*

### **Haiti**

Daniel Éliassaint  
James Vilus, MD

### **Kenya**

Joyce Machatha  
Mary Mnjama  
John Muia  
Danson Mukosi  
John Mwangi  
Esther Ng'ang'a  
Wanjiru Njiraine  
Lucy Njoroge  
Kepha Nyandega  
Nerea Thigo  
Irene Tongoi  
Lilian Wambua, MD  
Juliet Wangai

### **Mozambique**

Sybil Bayloi

### **Rwanda**

Emmanuel Ngoga  
Edith Nyirabarera

### **Editors**

Deborah Dortzbach  
Lisa Firth  
Megan Laughlin  
Joanna Mayhew  
Laura van Vuuren

### **Cover design**

Kevin Matheny

### **Layout**

Ben Caplan

### **Photographs**

World Relief staff  
Jon Warren

## Dedication

Dedicated to the many youth around the world who  
are Choosing Life and saving sex for marriage.

# Table of Contents

Introduction.....	ii
Session 1: Self Awareness and Self Worth..... <i>To protect youth from risk by helping them build confidence and accept themselves</i>	1-1
Session 2: Good Communication..... <i>To help youth develop skills that will improve and encourage healthy communication between their friends, families and others in their community</i>	2-1
Session 3: Body Changes during Puberty..... <i>To explain to youth the physical changes they can expect during puberty and how these changes bring new responsibilities</i>	3-1
Session 4: Family and Friends..... <i>To equip youth to deal with increased peer pressure and to seek good role models</i>	4-1
Session 5: Consequences of Premarital & Extramarital Sex..... <i>To help youth examine the consequences of sex outside of the marriage relationship</i>	5-1
Session 6: The Facts about HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)..... <i>To encourage youth to avoid the risks of sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS</i>	6-1
Session 7: Dispelling Myths about Puberty, Sex and AIDS..... <i>To help youth consider how believing myths can lead them to make bad choices</i>	7-1
Session 8: Valuing Abstinence..... <i>To help youth better understand the concept of abstinence and its importance in their lives</i>	8-1
Session 9: The Dangers of Drugs, Alcohol and the Influence of Media..... <i>To sensitize youth to the influence of the media, drugs and drinking</i>	9-1
Session 10: Sexual Vulnerability and Protection..... <i>To equip youth to respond to unwanted sexual advances</i>	10-1
Session 11: Achieving our Goals and Dreams..... <i>To encourage youth to plan for their future</i>	11-1
Session 12: Committing to Abstinence..... <i>To encourage youth to choose abstinence to protect themselves emotionally and physically</i>	12-1

## Additional Resources

Frequently Asked Questions.....	A-1
Understanding and Working with Youth.....	B-1
Protecting our Youth.....	C-1
Using Small Groups.....	D-1
Using Dramas and Role-Plays.....	E-1
Credits.....	F-1

# Introduction

## A Note to Youth Leaders and Facilitators

Young people face many new and exciting options today, but they also face difficult choices. The consequences of these choices could lead to life and the fulfillment of their dreams, or to the loss of their dreams, their health and even their lives.

As a role model for youth, you are being asked to help young people make wise choices, especially about relationships and sexuality, so that they can have long and full lives. This is not an easy task. This guide will help you to help them **Choose Life**.

As a group leader, it is important for you to create an environment where youth feel free to express themselves. They should be able to interact freely with you and with one another. They need the opportunity to reflect on their dreams and goals, and the decisions they must make to reach them.

The interactive learning sessions in this guide are designed to help you create a supportive and positive learning environment. This will allow dialogue about sexual behavior and make group members feel free to ask questions, communicate openly, challenge one another, clarify their values, express concerns, and grow in understanding of relationships with the opposite sex.

### **Who is the target audience?**

This guide was primarily designed for boys and girls aged 10-14 from rural and urban areas of Haiti, Kenya, Mozambique and Rwanda. It can be adapted to fit local culture, customs and language.

### **Learning approach**

During these learning sessions, leaders must provide a supportive environment for youth that will help them develop self confidence, acquire correct knowledge, dispel myths, develop positive values and attitudes, and adopt responsible practices in their relationships.

Youth will receive correct information about the changes during puberty and the consequences of early sexual debut. At the same time, they will consider the advantages of abstinence and marital faithfulness. They will be made aware of the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse, unhealthy media messages and certain cultural practices. They will learn how to protect themselves and make good decisions. They will receive correct, clear, consistent and culturally appropriate information about HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

This information should be offered in an environment where youth are valued, listened to and respected for who they are at this stage of their lives. They will be guided to value sex as a gift for marriage and to personalize the risks associated with sex outside marriage, including HIV/AIDS. They will be helped to understand their sexual vulnerability and the value of abstinence and faithfulness.

Through participatory learning using games, stories and role plays, youth will be encouraged to feel good about who they are, their bodies, their families and their friends. They will then be able to make good decisions, set goals, communicate with parents and friends, care for their bodies and be assertive. These are skills that lower their risk of HIV infection and sexual exploitation. Learning to maintain a healthy lifestyle will protect them throughout their lives.

## Guidelines for Leading the Sessions

### Your role as a facilitator is to:

- **Be a resource person.** Seek to serve the needs of youth rather than give orders or your own opinion.
- **Set the stage for learning.** Create an atmosphere of openness, trust and excitement, where youth will not be made to feel small or ignorant.
- **Set the task and time frame.** Explain clearly what you want the group to do, and let them know how long they have to do it.
- **Be a good listener.** Don't tell when you can ask.
- **Put the learner first.** Keep youth engaged and at the center of the learning process.

### Important things to remember:

1. **Be prepared.** Give yourself enough time to prepare. Be familiar with the lesson for that day. Follow the curriculum provided, but be natural. Don't read it word for word.
2. **Don't lecture or dictate to youth.** Youth need activity. They are easily bored and need to be engaged.
3. **Let youth discover important lessons for themselves,** rather than giving them all the answers. Discovery is a powerful teacher.
4. **Keep the energy going.** There should be no delay between activities. Leaders should always be prepared with the next activity beforehand.
5. **Encourage participation.** Always involve the youth and include as many youth as possible throughout the session. Remember to **talk less** and **let the young people talk and DO more.**
6. **Be sure** the information you give is factual and current.
7. **Use small groups** as suggested in the session guide. Small groups help involve all participants, build teamwork and encourage openness.
8. **Teach from your heart.** Youth know if you are being sincere.
9. **Encourage and praise** youth for their efforts.
10. **Be humble.** Let the youth know that you are a learner with them.
11. **Show respect** by listening and valuing the young people's ideas and contributions.
12. **Be consistent and fair to all.** Show equal love to all, especially the ones who are difficult to love.
13. **Make learning fun.** Have a sense of humor. Make the sessions fun and exciting so that the youth are eager to attend and don't want to miss anything. The sessions should be something they will look forward to.

See the resource section for more information.



# How to Use this Guide

The Choose Life Youth Leaders Guide provides detailed lesson plans for 12 interactive learning sessions. It uses an easy-to-follow format with helpful reminders and notes. The activities were designed to make learning fun, engaging and dynamic. They include stories, short presentations and learning games and activities that develop life skills. These learning activities are designed to be enjoyable and create openness.

The sessions offer simple and clear ways of saying things (a script to follow). You should make these words your own as you become more comfortable with them. The words of the script appear in normal type face. Questions appear in **bold**. *Italics* are used to indicate instructions. Useful tips are also offered.

Each session starts with a section called *Notes to the Facilitator*. This section provides you with information to help you prepare for the lesson. Each learning session focuses on a single **purpose** designed to motivate behavior change. These are listed in the table of contents and also mentioned in the notes. Specific **objectives** indicate what the participants should have achieved by the end of the session. A **preparation/materials** section is included to remind you what materials should be prepared in advance. An approximate delivery **time** provides an estimate of how long the session will take. This may vary depending on group size. Finally, the **activities** are listed to outline the steps in each session, with approximate times for each one. This can help you adapt the sessions to be shorter or longer if needed.

## Outline of the learning session

Each session offers a combination of the following activities:



**Introduction:** Welcome and statement of the topic for the session.

**Review of previous session** (sessions 2 - 12): Starting with a review allows you to find out what youth remember from the previous session. It gives them an opportunity to share what they know and seek help if they are having difficulties. It also benefits those who may have missed a session. This section offers a variety of review activities.

- **Answering questions from the Question Box:** Youth often have questions that they find embarrassing to ask in front of a group. The sealed question box provides a safe way for them to ask these questions. Questions for the previous week are answered at the beginning of each session. This allows you to group the questions into categories and to find answers on topics that are unclear to you. If you feel someone in the group could answer the question, throw the question back to the group. Answer the questions you can but never feel compelled to answer a question if you are not sure. Simply say you don't know and that you will try to find out.



**Story or stories:** These will focus on relevant issues, struggles and challenges youth face and how they overcome these challenges. Stories will provide role models and show what can happen when youth make poor decisions. For some sessions, two stories are offered. You can choose to use one or both, depending on the time available, the message you want to emphasize, and the maturity of the listeners. To be sure the story has been understood, you can ask a volunteer to repeat the main points after you read or tell it. It is essential to discuss the story after it is told. This encourages youth to reflect on the messages in the story and apply the lessons learned by the characters to their own situations. Small or large group discussions can be used.



**Life skills activity:** This is an interactive group activity that allows youth to practice or apply new skills and knowledge.



**Bible story (optional):** For church youth groups and other settings where Biblical references are appropriate, a Bible story that is relevant to the topic being discussed may be included. Again, it is essential to ask questions that apply the messages of the story to the young people's own lives.

**Reflection verse (optional):** A verse from the Bible is offered that reinforces the messages in the session. You can also use this as a memory verse.



**Review and take action:** This gives you an opportunity to sum up the lesson and make sure that the young people have understood its key messages. The take-home assignment or activity reinforces the learning objectives.

## Adapting the Guide for Various Settings

An approximate time for each activity is offered, so you can adapt the sessions to fit the time allowed. For example, if the learning sessions are implemented through schools (during or after classes) you may have to limit the number of activities or shorten them to fit into a prescribed time.

If there is time, you can include songs and local proverbs or sayings that reinforce the messages of the lesson. It can also be appropriate to relate personal experiences, as long as this does not turn the session into a lecture or take time away for participatory activities.

The learning sessions can be held in classrooms, churches, community meeting places, or in the open air.

# Preparing for the Learning Sessions

## Creating a good learning environment

- Meetings and learning sessions should always be places where youth feel protected, emotionally and physically, and free to express themselves.
- Assume the role of a facilitator who is helping youth discover things for themselves, not a teacher or lecturer telling them what to do. These learning sessions are intended to be different from what youth experience in the classroom.
- Youth should be allowed to express themselves freely. Even if they give the wrong answers, they should not be made to feel as though they have failed.

## Location and room arrangement

- Whether the meeting takes place in a classroom, church, or open space, the set-up should be as little like a school room as possible.
- Make sure you arrive 30 minutes before the session begins to prepare the room. If possible, move desks and chairs so that the youth are sitting in a circle or semi-circle without desks in front of them.
- The meeting space should be healthy, with good ventilation and protection from harsh weather like sun, wind and rain (even insects!).
- Youth should face away from things that could distract their attention from the learning session, such as a busy street or playing field.
- If possible, vary the venue or the set-up to reduce monotony.

## Before the session

- Read through the entire lesson and practice it until you are comfortable.
- Have all materials ready.
- Arrive early!





## Self Awareness and Self Worth

### Notes to Facilitator

Between the ages of 10 and 14, youth experience many physical, emotional and mental changes. These changes occur at different times in boys and girls and vary from child to child. Because of that, youth often compare themselves to others. They can be embarrassed easily and feel insecure.

The purpose of this lesson is to help youth build self confidence, self acceptance and to value themselves. Improving how young people see themselves makes them less vulnerable to sexual exploitation. It also reduces their risk for HIV and other dangers. Youth who value themselves, who feel confident and positive, are more likely to make good choices and to seek the best for the future.

Typically, adolescents are not happy with who they are or their situation. They want to be taller or shorter, to have better marks at school or more money, to live in a different house, be more popular, be older, and so on. They are vulnerable to pressures from others (especially from older youth) to try things that could harm them. They also begin to challenge authority and assert themselves. For these reasons, it is important to help young people build healthy views of themselves. This can protect them from negative influences and those who try to harm or take advantage of them.

#### **During this session youth will:**

1. Discover that they are unique and have value
2. Identify the benefits of self acceptance and being happy with who they are
3. Identify some of their good qualities and abilities

**Time:** 45-50 minutes

#### **Materials needed:**

Pens or pencils and paper for each participant; question box: a box with a slotted lid or a bag with a drawstring, where youth can put their questions.

#### **Learning activities:**

1. Introduction of the series – 3 minutes
2. Story and discussion – 15 minutes
3. Life skills game – 15-20 minutes
4. Biblical application and discussion – 10 minutes (optional)
5. Review and take action (take-home assignment) – 2 minutes

# LEARNING ACTIVITIES



## Introduction to the series and the question box – 3 minutes

*Introduce yourself to the group and welcome them to the session.  
Then introduce the series.*

Ask:

**? Have any of you been on a journey?**

**? What was it like?**

*Answers might include: fun, interesting, long, difficult, full of new experiences.*

Today we are starting a journey together. We will discuss and explore things that young people are facing today. I will tell you some things, but I will also ask you what you think. This will not be like your regular school classes. There will be no tests, and you don't need to take notes unless you want to. I hope we will have lots of fun learning together as well.

The important thing is that you feel free to say what is on your mind and in your heart. Many of you may have questions that you are afraid or embarrassed to ask. Write out your question without putting your name on it and put it in the question box. Your questions will stay private; I will not embarrass you in front of each other. The next time we meet I will answer them.

*Depending upon the security of the box, you can emphasize that their questions will be kept secure and their privacy respected.*

In the coming weeks, we will talk about your dreams for the future. We will talk about your friends and families, choices you have to make, and changes your body is going through. And we'll also talk about the changes in your heart and mind.



## Stories and discussion – 15 minutes

*You can use either Mary's or Winnie's story and the corresponding discussion questions.*

### **Mary's Story**

Mary was 14 years old on her last birthday. She had a good relationship with her parents and was well thought of in her community. She enjoyed school, although she wasn't the most popular girl in her class. Ever since she was born, Mary had a problem with her right foot. She walked with a limp and couldn't run as fast as the other children.

One day, as Mary was working hard in class, her teacher went to the front of the room. "Students, I have an announcement. This week we are forming volleyball teams," he said. Everyone smiled and began talking with excitement. Mary slouched lower in her chair. She could never play volleyball well because of her foot.

At recess, all the others rushed out to begin practicing for volleyball. Mary sat under a tree. She looked up and saw her best friend Elizabeth rushing by. "Elizabeth – come and sit with me! I have something to tell you," Mary called. "Sorry, Mary. I have to get in line to play volleyball!" Elizabeth replied. Mary sat under the tree alone.

After school she went home with a heavy heart. She could not stop the hurtful thoughts in her mind. "If I could run fast, then I would be popular," she thought bitterly. She thought about her family. They had enough to eat but lived in a small house. They did not often have new clothes. "If my family was rich, then others would like me more," Mary thought. "I could have nice clothes and look beautiful."

"Mary, wait for me!" a voice called behind her. It was Elizabeth. She came up and put her arm around Mary. Mary did not look at her friend. "Mary, what is wrong?" Elizabeth asked. Mary was silent for a long time, then she finally burst out, "I can't help it that I can't play volleyball! It's not fair. No one likes me. The others all tease me because I can't run. It is not worth going to school when I am so lonely!"

Elizabeth listened to her friend. Then she said quietly, "Mary, I am sorry you cannot play volleyball. I am sorry if I made you feel left out. But it is not true that you have no friends. I am your friend, and think of the other girls—they are friends too. When we were little, others used to tease you because of your foot—but now almost no one does that. Do you know why?" Mary shook her head. Elizabeth continued, "It is because you never say anything mean about anyone. The whole class respects you. You are clever, too—you are the top of the class! And your family is so kind, even to me. They love you very much."

Mary thought for a moment and said, "That's true. There are good things in my life. And I have dreams for my future—I want to finish school and attend university." Elizabeth smiled. "You can reach your dream!" Mary smiled more. "You are right. I do not need to play volleyball to reach my dream—and I have many good things in my life."

**Questions for discussion:**

- ? What happened in this story that made Mary feel sad?**
- ? How did her friend Elizabeth make her feel better?**  
*Remind youth that they can encourage their friends too.*
- ? Why did Mary's classmates like and respect her?**

**Winnie's Story**

Winnie woke up slowly. She felt sad and did not want to get out of bed. Her stomach was empty, and she was not sure when she would have her next meal. Winnie was 12 and the third child in a family of seven children. Her mother was bringing them up by herself. Winnie's mother loved her children very much, but sometimes she looked sad because of all their needs. Yesterday had been a particularly hard day. The food reserve was almost gone. They only had a small plate of boiled maize to share amongst the whole family. Winnie's younger brother and sister fought a lot and that seemed to take all her mother's energy.

Winnie sometimes wished she had been born into her friend Irene's family. They never seemed to lack food or new clothes. Irene had one older brother and both parents to care for her. Her parents were teachers at a local school and always seemed happy together. Besides that, Irene was popular with the other students in school, both boys and girls. She had even received two love letters from different boys. Winnie thought that Irene was beautiful.

Winnie secretly blamed her mother for their poverty. She wondered why her mother had married her father. He had beaten his wife and children. Until his death he had neglected the whole family and had not provided for them. Winnie was afraid she would also make a bad mistake in choosing a husband, like her mother. She thought to herself that marriage seemed difficult and perhaps most men treated women badly. But she envied the way her friend Irene giggled and seemed happy when boys from their class talked to her.

In the midst of her wishful thinking, Winnie remembered what her mother always told her. Her mother said, "Winnie, do not compare yourself to others. You are not them—you are your own special person. Study hard, and do well at school." Winnie thought about her family. She was glad that she had many sisters and brothers to play with which made it fun at home. She was also happy to be a top student in her class and to have good school friends. Her friend Irene and other students always said that she was very clever.

Winnie arose with a start from her daydreaming at the sound of her mother calling her. She had hope for better things to come.



**Questions for discussion:**

- ? What things didn't Winnie like about herself?**
- ? Which of these things can she change? Which probably won't change?**
- ? What things did Winnie like about herself?**
- ? What advice would you give to Winnie?**

*After the discussion, say:*

Each one of us is special. We are made the way we are for a special purpose. If we were all the same the world would be a boring place, don't you think? I like the color *[name your favorite color]*, but imagine if everything in the world was that color—the trees, the grass, the sky, the houses, the people. That would not be as beautiful as the world we know.

There are many surprising and wonderful things about the way we are made. Perhaps the most amazing is that we are all different from one another. Each person is special and different.<sup>1</sup>

KEY CONCEPT: You are special because you are "one of a kind" (unique).

We can see that differences are good. They make the world beautiful and interesting. But often we are not happy with ourselves the way we are.

*Ask:*

- ? What are the benefits of being happy with yourself, just as you are?**  
*Encourage participation. Listen to several responses.*

Whether you know it or not, you are each deeply loved. You are loved by members of your family and your friends. The following game will show you some of the reasons you are so loved.

---

<sup>1</sup> From Adventures Unlimited



## Life skills game: Why I like you – 15–20 minutes

*The purpose of this game is to allow youth to identify and talk about positive qualities in one another. Ask the youth to arrange themselves in groups of two (or three if the group is very large). Each person should have a pen and a paper. Ask them to face each other and write at least three things they like about the other person. They can also draw one thing they like about the person.*

*Then ask the youth to tell their partners what they have written or drawn about that person. The other person should say whether they knew they had those qualities and how they feel now that others see those qualities in them.*

*After the small groups have had time to share, ask for volunteers to share their feelings about this game with the whole group.*



## Biblical application and discussion – 10 minutes (optional)

*From Luke 19:1-9*

This story is about a man named Zacchaeus who lived over 2,000 years ago, at the same time as Jesus.

Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector in his town and very wealthy, but he was very unpopular with his neighbors. Zacchaeus was also a short man and had trouble seeing over other people's heads. He had heard that Jesus was coming to town and wanted to see why everyone was talking about him. So Zacchaeus climbed a tall tree to get a good look. Jesus saw Zacchaeus in the tree and knew that this man needed to know that he was special in the eyes of God. Jesus said to Zacchaeus, "Zacchaeus come down immediately. I must stay at your house today."

The people saw this and began to complain because they didn't think Zacchaeus was worthy of this honor. But Zacchaeus surprised them all by saying, "Look Jesus, here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor and, if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount!"

*Ask for a volunteer to repeat the main points of the story. Then ask the following questions or use questions of your own. The purpose is for youth to discover from the story that when people feel that others believe they are good, it often brings out the best in them.*

**? What did the people in the story think of Zacchaeus?**

**? What did Jesus think of Zacchaeus?**

**? How did the fact that Jesus accepted and honored Zacchaeus make him act differently?**

We can see from this story that knowing we are loved and having a good attitude about ourselves helps us to do good things.

### **Reflection verse**

*This can be used as a memory verse. Using gestures and acting out the words improves memorization.*

Psalm 139:14

"I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made."



### **Review and take action – 2 minutes**

*Remind the youth that each one of them was created to be different and special.*

**? What did you learn today that could help you accept yourself the way you are?**

*Listen to several responses.*

*Take action:*

This week, do one thing to encourage someone you know and to help them feel that they are special. The next time we meet we will hear what happened when you did this.





## Good Communication

### Notes to Facilitator

Being able to communicate thoughts, feelings, needs and desires is a skill that can help youth build self-confidence, solve problems, resolve conflict and protect themselves from unwanted sexual advances.

Youth are often afraid to ask questions about their own sexual development or feelings, and instead get false information from other children or from the media. Many youth who are sexually abused by adults or other youth never tell anyone about their experience because they are afraid that they have done something wrong and will be punished.

Healthy relationships and good communication involve having confidence and good verbal and non-verbal communication skills, including listening skills. The purpose of this session is to help develop good communication skills and to encourage healthy communication between youth and their friends, families and others in their community.

This session is also important to encourage good communication with you, the facilitator, and between the young people in the group. It paves the way for the frank discussions about puberty and sexuality that come in later sessions.

#### **During this session youth will:**

1. Identify barriers to good communication and what makes it easier
2. Consider the importance of clear communication when they are solving a problem
3. Identify examples of good communication

**Time:** 45 minutes

#### **Materials needed:**

Question box

#### **Learning activities:**

1. Review and answer questions – 6 minutes
2. Discussion about communication – 10 minutes
3. Story and discussion – 12 minutes
4. Life skills activity – 10 minutes
5. Biblical application – 5 minutes (optional)
6. Review and take action (take-home assignment) – 2 minutes

# LEARNING ACTIVITIES



## Review and answer questions – 6 minutes

- ? **What do you remember from the last time we met?**
- ? **What did you do recently to encourage one of your friends to feel good about him- or herself?**

*Encourage participation and listen to several responses.*

*Answer questions from the question box.*



## Discussion about communication – 10 minutes

Today we're going to think about good communication, what it means and why it is important.

- ? **Why do we need to talk to one another?**  
*Listen to several responses. These could include: to express our needs, what we think, what we want from others.*

Say:

Think about an adult who is easy to talk to.

- ? **Why is this adult easy to talk to?**  
*Listen to responses. These could include: they listen to us, use humor, don't judge or lecture us, ask us questions, act like they want to know what we think and feel.*

*In pairs, ask youth to discuss:*

- ? **What things do you talk about with your parents?**

*Then ask the group:*

- ? **What one thing would you like to say to your parents that you have never said before?**  
*Listen to several responses. Encourage participation.*



## Story and discussion – 12 minutes

### **Elizabeth and Pauline's Story**

Elizabeth and Pauline were great friends and lived near the city. They had been going to school together since grade 1 and were now in grade 7. One Friday, when they were coming home from school, they went to a park to play. The weather was so nice and they were having such a good time that they forgot their books and went home without them. When they remembered them that night, it was too late to go back for them. The next morning was Saturday and the two friends both went out very early to look for their books, but they couldn't find them anywhere. They realized with great dismay that their school books were lost. How would they study for their upcoming exams? How would they explain their lost books?

Pauline was afraid to tell her parents about the books and kept silent, fearing her parents would punish her. Once, when she had torn her new school uniform, they had been very angry. But Elizabeth didn't have any fear of her parents and simply explained what happened. She admitted she had been having such a good time playing that she had forgotten her school books. Elizabeth's parents were disappointed that she had been so forgetful, but they said they would try to help her solve the problem. Pauline worried all weekend about the lost books, but kept it to herself and did not mention it to her parents.

When Monday came, Pauline and Elizabeth's teacher noticed that they did not have their books. "Go home and get your books or come back with your parents," the teacher said to the two girls. Elizabeth went home and came back with her parents. They spoke together with the teacher. Elizabeth explained what had happened and the teacher gave her new books so that she could continue with her studies, since final exams were the following week.

But Pauline didn't go home. She stayed away until school was out, fearing her parents would be angry with her. She thought to herself, "I will stay away from school and hide in the bush every day until exams are finished." Pauline missed all her classes that week. Elizabeth noticed that Pauline was absent and went to her house on Friday to find out what had happened. When she didn't find her, she told Pauline's parents the story of the lost books. They were surprised. "We thought she was going to school all this time! Why didn't she speak with us about this? We would have gone with her to the school, just like your parents did." At that moment, Pauline came in the door. When she saw the look on her parents' faces, she knew that Elizabeth had told them what had happened. "I was afraid to tell you," said Pauline. "I'm sorry; I see now that not telling you was worse than losing my books."

Elizabeth passed her exams and went on to the next class, but it was too late for Pauline. She had to repeat that year and from that day was always a year behind her friend Elizabeth in school.

- ? Why do you think Pauline was afraid to speak openly with her parents?**
- ? How did her fear of not talking with her parents affect Pauline's life?**
- ? What were the benefits for Elizabeth when she spoke openly with her parents?**
- ? What are the benefits of being open and honest with your teachers and parents?**



### **Like skills activity: The human knot – 10 minutes**

*This game allows a team (up to 10 participants) to work together and untangle themselves from a knot by listening to each other and following suggestions. It may be difficult to do in a cramped classroom. In that case, ask one group of 8 youth to come to the front and demonstrate this game.*

Say:

All players stand in circles of no more than 10 people with shoulders touching. This game has three rules:

1. Each player should grab the hand of another player. They can grab anyone's hand EXCEPT the hand of the player standing next to them.
2. You must use both hands, but you CANNOT hold both hands of the SAME person; you should be holding hands with two different people. You should not be holding the hand of the person next to you on either side.
3. You must listen to each other and try to coordinate what you are doing rather than just doing your own thing.

Now that you are all tangled in a knot, it looks as though it could never be untied, but try it! You can move in any direction, as long as no one lets go of the other's hands. You may need to lift arms over shoulders several times and step over each other's clasped hands. If you all work together, and listen to each other's suggestions about your movements, you should end up in a single joined circle, although some of you may be facing out rather than in.

*After the knot is untangled, ask the following questions:*

- ? What do you think this game teaches us?**
- ? What would the game be like if no-one talked to each other? What if everyone talked at once?**

*Listen to several responses and encourage participation.*





## Biblical application – 5 minutes (optional)

This story is about the importance of good communication when you are trying to solve a problem. It is found in the Bible in Numbers 27:1-7.

Listen to this story about the daughters of a man named Zelophehad who lived long ago.

Zelophehad had no sons, but he had five daughters. Their names were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah. When their father died, they received nothing. So they went to seek help from their leader, Moses. They said to Moses, "Our father died in the desert and left no sons. Why should our father's name disappear from his clan because he had no son? Give us property among our father's relatives."

So Moses brought their case before God, and the Lord said to him, "What Zelophehad's daughters are saying is right. You must certainly give them property as an inheritance among their father's relatives and give their father's inheritance over to them."

*Ask for a volunteer to repeat the main points of the story, then ask the following questions:*

**? What examples of good communication did you see in this story?**

**? How did using communication help Zelophehad's daughters solve their problem?**

*Encourage participation. Responses could include: they stated their situation clearly and spoke the truth; Moses listened carefully to them; they were treated justly as a result.*



## Review and take action – 2 minutes

This week pay attention to how you communicate with others. Do these two things:

- Listen before you speak.
- Only speak words that will build others up.

Try it and see what happens. You can share your experiences the next time we meet.





## Body Changes during Puberty

### Notes to Facilitator

Youth often learn about the changes of puberty and sex from their peers. They may hear myths that confuse them and lead to risky behavior. Children should be taught about body changes *before* these changes take place. For example, it can be very frightening for a girl to have her first period and not understand why she is bleeding. It is important for youth to have correct information to protect themselves and make healthy choices.

The physical changes that occur between the ages of 10 and 14 differ from child to child. In general, girls experience rapid physical growth and are often taller than boys the same age. Their hips widen, pubic hair appears, their breasts begin to develop and their menstrual periods start. In boys, sex organs and pubic hair grow, and they begin to experience wet dreams. They have big appetites and their voices deepen. Being embarrassed to ask questions or not knowing how to deal with physical changes may lead to poor personal hygiene.

This session provides youth with correct information about the changes in their bodies. It also includes new things they need to consider during this time, for example, paying more attention to personal hygiene. Youth will reflect on what makes them male and female as well as thinking about the beginning of boy/girl relationships.

You may want to separate girls and boys for this session so that they will feel more free to discuss these sensitive issues and ask questions. Remember to encourage them to put any questions they would prefer to ask privately in the question box.

As you discuss sexuality, you should also introduce the concept of abstinence (waiting until marriage to have sex). Abstinence should be presented as a healthy and natural part of sexual development rather than a punishment youth must endure.

#### **During this session youth will:**

1. Identify the physical changes that occur during puberty
2. Determine the appropriate time to be sexually active in a love relationship
3. Discuss the importance of personal hygiene and how to practice it

**Time:** 45 minutes

**Materials needed:** Paper and pens for drawing pictures (optional); question box.

#### **Learning activities:**

1. Review & answer questions – 5 minutes
2. Learning game – 7 minutes
3. Presentation & discussion:  
Changes during puberty – 12 minutes
4. Stories & discussion – 15 minutes
5. Biblical application – 3 minutes (optional)
6. Review & take action  
(take-home assignment) – 3 minutes

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES



### Review and answer questions – 5 minutes

**? What did you do since we met last time to improve the way you communicate with others?**

*Give the youth an opportunity to share their experiences. Affirm and encourage their efforts.*

*Answer questions from the question box.*



### Learning game: Changes – 7 minutes

*Divide the larger group into two groups, one of boys and one of girls. Sub-divide further into groups of two to three. Ask each group to write at least five changes their gender goes through during this time of their life (puberty). If time allows, also ask them to draw a picture showing those changes.*



## Presentation & discussion: Changes during puberty – 12 minutes

*Remain in gender groups for this presentation and discussion if possible.*

Today we are going to talk about a phase in your life called “puberty.” Puberty is the time when the bodies of boys and girls change in many ways. Your body grows taller and wider, hair starts growing in new places, and your sexual organs start to mature. These changes are completely normal. They are caused by chemicals called “hormones” that your body produces.

**?** **What physical changes did you identify in your discussions and drawings?**  
*Listen to responses then give the following information:*

Puberty most often starts between ages 8 and 13 in girls, and ages 10 and 15 in boys, although each person is a little different. In other words, everyone starts and goes through puberty at his or her own pace.

*You can use illustrations to show these changes.*

**For girls,** puberty usually starts between the ages of 8 and 13.

- They grow taller and may have “growing pains” in their legs or arms.
- They gain weight, especially on the hips and thighs, and become rounder in general.
- Breasts develop; nipples also become more noticeable. Sometimes one breast will grow more quickly than the other, but they should even out over time. Breasts may be sore or tender as they grow.
- Pimples may appear on the face, chest and back.
- Hair starts to grow in the armpits and between the legs (around the vulva) and sweat from these areas can cause a strong smell.
- The folds of skin (labia) around the entrance to a girl’s vagina grow larger.
- One or two years after her breasts start to develop, a girl’s monthly periods (menses) begin. About every 28 days, the lining of the womb (uterus) breaks down, causing menstrual fluid, which is mainly blood, to flow from her vagina. The bleeding lasts a few days each month. Between periods, the ovaries begin to release an egg (ovum) each month in preparation for having babies in the coming years. Girls usually don’t feel anything when this happens. At first, a girl’s periods might not be regular – they might come one month but then not for several months. With time, periods will become more regular.

**For boys,** puberty usually starts between ages 10 and 15.

- They grow taller, gain weight and muscle, and their shoulders become wider.
- Some body parts (especially hands and legs) may grow faster than others. Some boys have uncomfortable growing pains in their legs and arms.
- A boy’s penis will lengthen and widen, and his testicles will become larger.
- Boys grow hair on the chin, upper lip, chest, armpits and around the sex organs.

- Sweat from the armpits can cause a strong odor unless boys wash more often.
- Some boys develop swelling underneath their nipples, which looks like the start of breasts. This will usually go away with time. It is caused by the different hormones that are moving through the body.
- The voice starts to become deeper – it may be scratchy at first as the voice box (larynx) begins to change.
- Pimples may appear on the face, chest and back.
- During sleep, a boy may experience “wet dreams,” where his penis becomes long and hard and passes a white substance (semen) before returning to normal size. He often does not know it has happened until he wakes up to find the bed sheets are wet. This is normal and not controllable.

*As time allows, ask for questions to clear up any confusion about the information they have heard. If time is short or youth are too shy to ask, suggest that they write their questions on a piece of paper and put them in the question box. Assure them you will answer them the next time you meet.*

Say:

Not everyone will go through these changes in the same way or at the same time. Typically, girls’ bodies begin to change two years earlier than boys. Some girls will begin their periods at age 11 and others will not begin until age 15. The size of the breasts will differ from one girl to another.

Some boys will not notice a change in their voice until after age 13, while for others it will change at 11 or 12. Contrary to what some people say, the size of the penis has no relation to a person’s value as a man or his future sexual pleasure. Do not worry if you feel you are not changing as quickly or in the same ways as those around you. Remember that everyone has been created to be unique and develops differently.

KEY CONCEPT: Everyone has been created as “one of a kind”; don’t compare yourself to others.

These changes do not mean that a girl’s body is ready to have babies or a boy is ready to father children and support a family. In fact, a woman’s body is not well prepared to carry a baby until she is at least 18-20 years old. At that age, she has finished developing physically and is also more mature emotionally. Just like a young tree is not ready to bear fruit, a young girl’s body is not ready for pregnancy. Later, we will discuss how these body changes relate to sex, marriage and having babies.



## Story and discussion – 15 minutes

*You can use one or both of these stories, depending on the time available.*

### **Dorothy and Benjamin's Story**

Dorothy and Benjamin were the first born in their family and were twins. When Dorothy was 12 years old she started to have pimples, and she noticed her hips had begun to get wider. She sometimes wondered if these two new things were related. Just after she turned 13, she had her first monthly period. She was shocked to see blood in her panties and ran crying to her mother. "Why am I bleeding?" she asked, "Am I sick?" Dorothy's mother explained, "This is natural, my dear. You will have this every month for many years."

Dorothy relaxed a bit and stopped crying. "It is also natural that you might feel differently about boys," her mother continued. "You may start having feelings about having sex. But if these feelings come, don't think it is time to have sex. That is for after you are married," her mother explained. "Now that you have started your monthly bleeding, you could become pregnant if you have sex." Dorothy's mother also explained that it was normal to start growing hair around her private parts and her armpits, and that she may have a strong smell if she didn't take more care to stay clean. Dorothy's mother told her it was important to bathe everyday and to change the cloth or cotton wool when soiled. This information helped Dorothy a lot.

Benjamin, Dorothy's brother, was nearly 14 when he had his first wet dream. Benjamin was surprised when this happened. He worried about it for a few weeks until he finally decided to talk to his uncle. Benjamin's uncle was very kind and did not laugh at him. Instead, he said that the same thing had happened to him when he was Benjamin's age. He explained that it was a natural thing that happens to most boys at that age, and that it should stop in a year or so. Anyway, said the uncle, there wasn't much Benjamin could do about it, since it happened when he was asleep! His uncle also told him a few more things that Benjamin had not known about – that his sexual organs would become larger, his voice would change and that he should wash more frequently, especially under his arms.

- ? Why was Dorothy surprised when she started her monthly periods?**
- ? What do you think are the benefits of Dorothy and Benjamin hearing about these things from family members who they trust?**
- ? Who would be the best person to get information about puberty and sex from and why?**
- ? At what age do you think parents should talk to their children about these things? Why?**

## **Helen's Story**

Helen was both anxious and frightened about beginning her period. She was 12 years old and in class 6. The science teacher had taught the class all about the onset of menstruation, or bloody discharge, and the other changes to expect during adolescence, but she was still afraid. She remembered that earlier in class 5, before they had studied this topic, one of the older girls had been very embarrassed when she stood up from her chair and the back of her dress was covered in blood. The members of the class, both boys and girls, had teased and laughed at her. The girl ran home in embarrassment and did not come back to school for the rest of the week. Although Helen knew about menstruation now, she thought it was a bit scary to have bloody discharge and wondered if it might make her feel sick to lose so much blood every month. She was too shy to ask the teacher any questions.

Helen listened to her classmates talking about their experiences with their first menstrual periods. Joanne said it was scary at first, until she learned how to use pieces of cloth to absorb the blood. At least five girls in her class had had their first period, although three of her friends had not. One classmate named Monica seemed particularly concerned that her period had not started. Helen heard Monica whisper that after a girl gets her first flow of blood she is ready to be a real woman. Then Joanne asked curiously, "What does it mean to be a real woman?" Monica giggled and said, "You know, not be shy with boys anymore, you can allow them to touch your breasts and all!" Monica continued in a more serious tone, "You know it can be painful to have the blood issue, but when you allow a boy to touch you the pain eases. I haven't had my monthly period, but I enjoy the touch of my boyfriend on my breasts." Joanne looked at Monica with mixed awe and wonder.

As the two girls walked away, Helen could not hear the rest of the conversation. She knew that there was something not right about the information that Monica had shared with Joanne. She was also curious about the relationship between the onset of womanhood and the touch of a boy. She needed to find out the truth, and she knew who to ask – her favorite aunt who had guided her many times before. Both Monica and Joanne were her friends, and she knew she may have to talk to them after she had established some facts for herself.

**? Describe the situation Helen and her classmates were going through.**

**? What information was Helen getting about puberty and who was giving it to her?**

**? What parts of this information were wrong?**

*Listen to several responses. Make sure that the myths about being a "real woman" and girls allowing boys to touch their breasts are corrected.*

**? Who would be the best person to guide you on adolescence issues?**



Say:

There is a purpose and plan for each of us, but there is a time and place for this plan to unfold. Just as you cannot force a flower bud to open before it is ready, we should not rush the plan for our changing bodies and minds.

You may be curious and want to experiment with sex, but you should ask yourselves these questions:

- Am I ready to live apart from my mother and father, supporting myself and raising children of my own?
- Could I attend school without my parents support?

KEY CONCEPT: You are not ready for sex until you are ready for marriage and able to care for yourself and a child.

Along with the changes in your body will come changes in your feelings.

Here are some things others have experienced:

- New feelings about the opposite sex (attraction, sexual arousal or desire)
- Emotions going up and down (mood swings)
- Feeling insecure and needing more encouragement
- Being more sensitive to criticism and more easily embarrassed

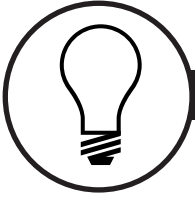
You should talk to your parents or adults that you trust about your feelings, especially if you are feeling confused.

It is normal to become more aware of the opposite sex and to feel more sexual. *You could mention that, in boys, the main sign is the penis becoming long and hard; in girls, it is a warm feeling or wetness of the private parts.*

Having sexual feelings may be normal, but acting on such feelings can bring unwanted consequences.

**? What unwanted consequences can you think of from having sexual relations before you are married?**

*Listen to several responses. These could include: unwanted pregnancy; heartbreak; having to drop out of school.*



## Biblical application – 3 minutes (optional)

Verse for reflection or memorization:

Psalms 119: 9

“How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.”

KEY CONCEPT: God has a plan for sex and this plan will help you and protect you from harm.



## Review and take action – 3 minutes

This week, write a letter to an imaginary younger brother or sister explaining what they will go through when they enter puberty. Offer tips to them to prepare them for these changes. We will hear your ideas when we begin next time.

*Facilitator note: For low-literate youth, ask them to make up a poem, story or song instead of writing a letter.*







## Family and Friends

### Notes to Facilitator

The way youth relate to their parents and friends begins to change between the ages of 10 and 14 years. Their level of anxiety is usually high due to the transition from childhood to adulthood. They may experience an identity crisis because of the tension between adult authority and an increasing sense of their own autonomy and abilities.

From ages 10 to 12, boys and girls usually prefer same-sex groups and are still quite dependent on their parents. After 13, they are generally more willing to associate in mixed groups and are beginning to seek independence from their parents.

Youth also become more sensitive and self-conscious during adolescence. They tend to be critical of themselves and others. They have a heightened awareness of gender and may appear confused about their emerging sexuality. For girls, their growing bodies and increased self-consciousness may bring a desire to have new clothes that fit and are fashionable. Socially, youth are able to identify themselves with a group and develop deep friendships.

The purpose of this session is to help youth choose friends who will support them rather than lead them into risky situations, and to welcome positive support from their parents and other adults.

#### **During this session youth will:**

1. Consider the effects of positive and negative peer pressure
2. Identify the qualities of a good friend
3. Consider the benefits of having good role models

**Time:** 45 minutes

#### **Materials needed:**

Question box

#### **Learning activities:**

1. Review and answer questions – 10 minutes
2. Story and discussion – 15 minutes
3. Life skills activity – 12 minutes
4. Biblical application – 3 minutes (optional)
5. Review and take action (take-home assignment) – 5 minutes

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES



### Review and answer questions – 10 minutes

Last week I asked you to write a letter to an imaginary younger brother or sister about all the things that change during puberty.

#### ? **Who will share what they said in this letter?**

*Listen to several responses and affirm learners for sharing.*

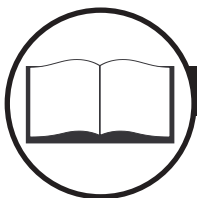
*Answer questions from the question box or from the group.*

Today we are going to talk about the people you relate to most often in your lives – your family and your friends.

#### ? **Think about your best friend. What makes him or her a good friend?**

*Listen to several responses. Encourage participation. Make a list of ideas on a flip chart if possible.*

*Optional: Add a local proverb about what makes a good friend.*



### Story and discussion – 15 minutes

#### **Judith's Story**

This story is about Judith, who is 13. She lives with her parents and brother. Their parents like to help others with problems in their community. Most evenings, after supper, the family sits and talks about what happened that day. Judith's parents were always willing to listen to her questions. They always encouraged their children to lead a good and honest life.

But this good home life didn't stop Judith's ambition to be popular and to have beautiful, fashionable clothes. One day after school, Judith was playing with her friends when her classmate Agnes came up to them. Agnes was wearing the kind of clothes that a much older woman would wear if she wanted men to look at her at a disco. Wearing these clothes seemed to transform her into a different, glamorous woman.

Judith dropped the ball that she was about to toss and stood staring at Agnes. All her friends ran up to Agnes to admire her. "Oh, you look so beautiful!" they said. Judith felt jealous. "Judith, you would look great in clothes like this," said Agnes. "If you wore a dress like this you could go with me to a party tonight. It will be lots of fun."

Judith wanted to be like Agnes. But she knew her parents would never agree to buy her clothes like that. "Come on, I'll loan you a dress like this," said Agnes. "Come to my house, and then we'll go to the party." Judith ran home and asked her mother permission to go to Agnes' house. Her mother agreed, and Judith hurried to meet Agnes. Judith put on a tight dress that made her look sexy and much older than she was.

Judith and Agnes went to the party. Judith had never been to a party like that. It was dark, there was loud music, and everyone seemed older than her. She felt very glamorous to be there with Agnes. She noticed men staring at her. No one had ever looked at her that way before. It gave her many different feelings. At first, she felt very beautiful and proud to have their attention. But it also made her feel embarrassed, as if she was naked!

One of the men began talking to her and then guided her towards a dark corner of the house. This man asked Judith to have sex with him. Judith felt scared. She wanted to leave the party and give the dress back to Agnes. But if she did, Agnes would not want to be her friend. What should she do?

- ? Who were the positive and negative role models in Judith's life?**
- ? What decisions did Judith make in this story?**
- ? Why did Judith want to wear sexy clothes?**
- ? What happened when she wore them?**
- ? What advice would you give to Judith—what should she do? Why?**

*If there is time, you can use this additional story to introduce the concepts of forgiveness and family support and honor:*

### **Rachel's Story**

Rachel was the oldest of the four children in her family. She was 14 and worked hard in school. Her parents loved her and all their children very much. Rachel obeyed them and loved them too. They were all respected in the community.

Rachel's mother was very beautiful. Many men wished she was their wife. Sometimes Rachel saw her mother talking or laughing with men. Soon Rachel's classmates started whispering about her mother. They said her mother went around with one of these men – they teased Rachel and said her mother was a loose woman. Rachel knew her mother acted wrongly and had sex with that man.

This brought great shame to Rachel's family. Neighbors gossiped about them. Rachel was ashamed of her mother and angry that she had done this thing. She worried that her parents' marriage would break up. She could not concentrate in school – she felt so ashamed and angry and worried.

But Rachel's father surprised everyone. He was a kind man, and he believed in a God who forgives. So Rachel's father forgave his wife for the shameful things she had done, and he

did not send her away. Rachel never forgot the look on her mother's face when her father said that he forgave her. Rachel was filled with a new love and respect for him.

Many of Rachel's friends were already going around with boys, and some were having sex. A few of the boys had asked her to have sex with them, but she said, "No, I will not. Sex is for after you are married." When she said this, they teased her about her mother's mistake. But Rachel had made up her mind.

She thought, "I will stick to what is right. I will continue to wait to have sex until after I am married. I know this will bring honor to God and my family." Rachel loved her father and mother, and saw how her mother's being with another man had hurt them. She wanted to restore honor to her family.

Rachel had a dream for her future. She wanted to finish school and attend university. She knew that waiting to have sex until she was married would help her realize this dream. Her faith would help her to stay strong.

Rachel studied hard once again. She got top marks that year and was honored at the school assembly. Her parents attended and went forward with her to receive her award. The school director said that if she continued to do well, she would get a bursary to attend university. From that day people in the community treated Rachel with more respect.

**? What parts of Rachel's life were most important to her?**

**? How did her mother's decision to have sex outside marriage affect the family?**

**? Why did Rachel's father forgive his wife?**

**? What does this story teach us about poor choices?**

*Encourage participation. Mention that even when hurtful consequences come from wrong choices, forgiveness is possible.*



### **Life skills activity – 12 minutes**

Say:

What kind of person do you want for a friend?

Spend the next five minutes making up an advertisement for a friend of the same age as yourself. For example: "Friend wanted for a 12-year-old boy. The applicant must be..."

*After youth have had a few minutes to write their advert, ask:*

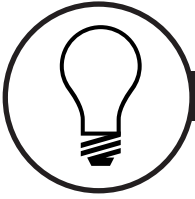
**? What are some of the qualities you put in your advertisement?**



Make a list of qualities of a good friend from the information in the advertisements. These may include: friendly, helpful, trustworthy, honest, loyal, understanding, a good listener, encouraging, humorous, etc.

Here is a suggestion about how you can tell if a person is a good friend for you:

“A good friend is a person I am happy to introduce to my parents or grandparents.”



### Biblical application – 3 minutes (optional)

Verse for reflection:

Proverbs 22:1

“A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.”



### Review and take action – 5 minutes

**? What did you learn today that you could share with a friend or family member?**

*Listen to several responses.*

<sup>3</sup>Ask for four volunteers to make up a short play (5 minutes) about one of the situations below, or make up a situation of your own about peer pressure and standing out or being different when it comes to doing the right thing.

- A new student comes to your school with very different ideas and behavior. Most of the students laugh at the newcomer and refuse to be friends. One student tries hard to make friends with the new student who is soon accepted by everyone as a result.
- A group of students are trying to encourage another student to join them in a bad thing they are planning to do. This student is not willing to join them and explains why. Gradually, the group is won over and decides not to do the bad thing – except for the ringleader who is very upset.

Youth can perform this play at the beginning of the next session.

---

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Adventures Unlimited, page 31. Scripture Union Aid for AIDS.





## Consequences of Premarital & Extramarital Sex

### Notes to Facilitator

Curiosity and peer pressure are very real forces in the lives of youth. How can girls and boys avoid experimenting with sex and remain sexually pure in the face of such challenges? Young people need to understand that sex is a special gift created by God to intensify the bond between a man and a woman in a way that nothing else can. They need to see that their sexuality is more than simply the physical act of sex, but that it also involves mental, emotional and spiritual expressions of what it means to be male and female.

The purpose of this session is to help youth value the purpose of sex in marriage and to understand that there can be negative consequences - physical, emotional, spiritual and mental - when they have sex outside of a marriage relationship.

You can separate boys and girls for this session if you think they will be embarrassed by the content or will feel freer to ask questions in separate groups. It is very important that you, the facilitator, speak clearly and frankly. You can modify the information to meet the needs of the youth in your group (older or younger, different knowledge levels), but you should not leave out facts because of embarrassment.

#### **During this session youth will:**

1. Discuss what sex means to them
2. Use a story to examine the different aspects of their sexual nature
3. Identify some consequences of early sexual activity

**Time:** 50 minutes

#### **Materials needed:**

Question box

#### **Learning activities:**

1. Review, present skit and answer questions – 10 minutes
2. Presentation and discussion – 8 minutes
3. Story and discussion – 12 minutes
4. Life skills activity – 16 minutes
5. Biblical application – 2 minutes (optional)
6. Review and take action (take-home assignment) – 2 minutes

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES



### Review, present skit and answer questions – 10 minutes

Ask youth who have prepared the skit about peer pressure to perform it. After the skit, ask:

#### ? **What did this skit teach us?**

*Listen to responses. Explore the idea of daring to be different.*

*Answer questions from the question box.*



### Presentation and discussion on sex – 8 minutes

Say:

Today we are going to talk about sex.

#### ? **What is sex? What have you heard about it?**

*Encourage participation and affirm correct responses.*

*Their thoughts might include what the sex act entails or the pressure to have sex. For example, for boys: Some say you should have sex to prove you are a man; some say you will go mad if you don't have sex. For girls: Older boys and men say they want to teach us, to show us what it's all about; some say if you're dating it's good to practice before you get married.*

*Depending on their responses and the age of the group, you could give the following description/definition of sex. It may be helpful to use pictures to demonstrate the location and names of the sexual organs.*

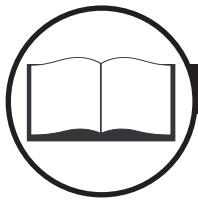
Sex is a physical act between two people when a man's penis enters a woman's vagina. As a man and woman begin touching and kissing, their bodies begin to respond in preparation for sex. The man's penis becomes hard and long, and the woman's vagina becomes moist to help the penis to enter. During sex, when the man rubs his penis inside the woman's vagina and becomes fully aroused, his penis expels a white liquid called semen. The semen contains as many as 100 million tiny cells that you can't see, called sperm; one of the sperm might unite with (fertilize) the woman's egg. If the timing is right in the woman's menstrual cycle for this to happen, the woman becomes pregnant and a child begins to develop inside her womb.

Sex is more than the physical act. We have a physical side, but we also have an emotional, a spiritual and a mental side. All four parts come together to make us whole and complete as male or female.

Our life experiences affect our whole person. Having sex before you are ready affects more than just your physical body – it affects the emotional, mental and spiritual sides of your life too.

**KEY CONCEPT:** Sex is a special experience that is intended for marriage.

When a man and woman are committed to each other in marriage, these physical, emotional, mental and spiritual responses enable a husband and wife to express their desires in a wonderful intimate way in the act of sex. Sex is about becoming one body, but also becoming one soul.



### **Story and discussion – 12 minutes**

Luke was 14 years old and still going to school when he decided it was time to start having sex. He was handsome and clever, and had many girlfriends. Soon he was having sex with several of them—but without letting any of them know about the others. One day, one of Luke’s girlfriends named Linda appeared at his home with her parents. Linda was pregnant and her parents insisted that, as he was the father, he must look after her. Luke agreed reluctantly. His parents were disappointed in him and said that now that he had a family he must make his own living.

It was difficult for Luke to find work, and there was not enough money for food as well as school fees. Luke had to stop going to school and give up his dream of becoming a doctor. He also stopped attending the church where he and Linda had been active when he was younger. Linda gave birth to their baby, and Luke worked hard to provide for them both. When he came home, tired from work, the baby would be crying and Linda would cry sometimes as well. All of this made Luke very depressed, and there were times he thought about running away.

Luke went out a lot and continued to have sex with other girls. One of his girlfriends, Nancy, was very popular and had several boyfriends. Nancy got an infection from one of her other boyfriends, but she hid this from Luke and continued to have sex with him. When Luke noticed the symptoms, he went to the clinic. After the exam, the nurse told Luke he had an infection called an STI – sexually transmitted infection. She said that he must tell any sexual partners he had to come to the clinic. Luke wasn’t sure which of his girlfriends had given him the STI, although he suspected it was Nancy. One thing he knew for sure – it wasn’t Linda. He knew that she loved him and was faithful to him.

Luke worried that he might have passed the sickness to Linda, so he had to tell her to go to the clinic to be tested. When Linda found out about Luke's unfaithfulness, she was very sad and angry. Although her test at the clinic showed that she hadn't caught the infection, she was very upset and worried about Luke's behavior. She asked him to go with her to talk to the youth leader at the church. The youth leader explained to both of them how to have a strong and healthy relationship. After all this Luke realized he had made many mistakes. He decided he would start to live differently and remain faithful to Linda. That way, life would be much easier for them.

? **What choices did Luke make that changed his life?**

? **How did having a child at such a young age affect Luke's plans and dreams?**

? **What are the consequences of early sex?**

*Mention the following effects, if the youth do not:*

**Physical** (such as contracting HIV—the virus that causes AIDS—or another STI, and pregnancy)

**Emotional** (such as being broken-hearted if the relationship ends)

**Mental** (such as worry about parents finding out or pregnancy)

**Spiritual** (such as guilt about breaking God's laws about marriage)

? **What advice would you have given Luke when he was 14?**



### Life skills activity – 16 minutes

*Ask for 4 volunteers, preferably 2 girls and 2 boys. Privately explain that you want them to dramatize some situations and that the rest of the group will try to guess what they are acting out.*

*Use the situations below or make up your own. Situations should include consequences of making bad decisions.*

- 1. A broken-hearted girl who discovers that her boyfriend has left her after she had sex with him*
- 2. A boy or girl feeling regret after he/she has had sex*
- 3. A boy or girl who is avoiding his/her parents because he/she lied to them*
- 4. A boy who gets caught cheating on a test*

*Allow each player only one minute to act out their situation while the audience tries to guess. If they cannot guess the youth should explain the situation.*

Ask the players:

**? If these were real situations, how could you have prevented them?**

*Listen to responses and affirm positive actions.*

Ask the whole group:

**? If you were this person's friend, what could you do to help him/her?**

*Listen to responses.*

*Remind youth that we all make mistakes and sometimes bad things can happen to you against your will, but that doesn't mean that you are of less value as a person.*

*Use the following illustration to show this:*

*Hold up paper currency and ask the youth to say what you are holding and what it represents. After receiving the answers, get a volunteer to crumple it, step on it, spit on it, etc. After each action ask if the note loses its worth. Then ask what has changed about the note. Say that, despite the degradation in appearance, the value does not change. You can still use it in a shop.*

Say:

Whatever happens to us, or whatever mistakes we make, we still have value. But we should not suffer unnecessarily. We should take action to protect ourselves from being forced to have sex or from being hurt or abused by another person.



### **Biblical application – 2 minutes (optional)**

*You can also use this as a memory verse. Remember that using actions will help youth to remember the verse.*

Jeremiah 29:11:

"I have plans for you, plans to prosper and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."



## Review and take action – 2 minutes

*Remind youth that if they have questions about sex or anything else that was discussed, they should put them in the question box.*

### **Take action**

Make a list of the qualities that you would like a long-term friend to have. For example kindness, patience, strength, etc. You can share your list when we meet again.







## The Facts about HIV/AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)



### Notes to Facilitator

This session deals with the facts about HIV and AIDS as well as other sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Both are easily spread when youth are sexually active and have multiple sexual partners. The purpose of this session is to give youth correct information about how these diseases are spread and how they can avoid being infected. This session also presents STIs and HIV/AIDS as some of the negative consequences of engaging in pre-marital sex and a reason to wait until marriage to have sex.

The session contains many facts. It is important to keep the facts simple and clear, and to keep the youth engaged and involved with the knowledge they are receiving. In some cases, presentations will start with a question to find out how much the youth know already.

Talking about AIDS can raise many questions. At the end of the session, be sure to encourage youth to ask questions or put them in the question box if they do not want to ask them publicly. Brochures about STIs may be available for free from government health offices or other organizations. They can be distributed to the youth if appropriate.

#### **During this session youth will:**

1. Listen to a presentation on STIs and HIV/AIDS
2. Consider how they could be infected by STIs and HIV
3. Identify the best way to avoid getting STIs and HIV

**Time:** 45 minutes

#### **Materials needed:**

Question box; brochures about STIs, if available; two different colors of sweets or small pieces of paper, enough for each person.

#### **Learning activities:**

1. Review and answer questions – 5 minutes
2. Presentation and illustration – 25 minutes
3. Learning activity – 10 minutes
4. Biblical application – 2 minutes (optional)
5. Review and take action – 3 minutes

# LEARNING ACTIVITIES



## Review and answer questions – 5 minutes

Ask youth:

**? What do you remember from the last time we met together?**

**? What qualities would you like your long-term friend to have?**

*Listen to several responses and affirm learners for sharing.*

Answer any questions from the question box.



## Presentation: The facts about HIV/ AIDS and STIs – 25 minutes

Ask youth to imagine that they knew a man was going to break into their house and kill their family. Ask them what kind of questions they would want to ask about this.

Questions may include: Who is it? How will he get in? Through the window, the door?

What weapons will he use? When will he come? Explain that they would want to know as much as possible so they could be prepared. Explain that HIV kills, so it is important to know about it and how to protect against it.<sup>1</sup>

Ask youth:

**? What do you know about HIV and AIDS?**

*Encourage participation and affirm correct answers when youth respond.*

*Then present the following facts to them.*

KEY CONCEPT: HIV is a virus that destroys the body's defense (immune) system.

- HIV stands for the Human Immunodeficiency Virus. It is a very small virus or germ that destroys a person's immune system.
- The immune system is a part of our bodies that we cannot see, but it is very strong and fights off diseases. It keeps us healthy by recognizing, attacking and destroying germs that can enter the body and cause illness.
- The immune system works like an umbrella that protects you from rain. But if the umbrella has holes, you will get wet – protection from the rain is gone.

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Better Choices page 14.

**KEY CONCEPT:** Once a person is infected with HIV, it is possible for that person to infect others.

- Once HIV gets inside the body, it never leaves. But it takes time to develop. At first, when people are infected, they still appear healthy, but they can pass the virus on to others.
- HIV slowly destroys the immune system so that it cannot protect from illness. When this happens the person has AIDS – Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

*Use the following activity<sup>2</sup> to show how HIV affects the body.*

*Choose 8 volunteers to come to the front. Assign one person (a girl if possible) to represent the body. Assign 4 of the volunteers (preferably the largest and strongest) to be the body's immune system. They are to act like bodyguards and protect the body. Select 2 volunteers as germs. These could represent common diseases like malaria or TB. Assign one volunteer as HIV.*

- *Explain that the female volunteer is the body and must be protected. She must stand still at all times.*
- *Position the bodyguards around the "body." It is their responsibility to keep anyone from touching her.*
- *Tell the germs to try to touch her arms, while the bodyguards do their job. They are to keep the germs away from the body. They can use a gesture to show they are killing the germs; the germs should retreat when this happens.*
- *Next send the HIV, but instruct HIV to go up to the bodyguards one by one and touch them, nicely at first, but then use the symbol of killing them. One by one, HIV kills each of the bodyguards. Then tell HIV to go and stand back-to-back with the "body" person. This represents that HIV is in the body.*
- *Ask the germs to attack the body again. This time they should be able to touch the arms of the girl easily, representing giving the body these diseases. The body should act like it is getting weak and fall down.*
- *Explain that this is what HIV does in the body – it kills the protectors of the body, so it becomes easier for other germs to make the body sick.*

**KEY CONCEPT:** AIDS is a collection of diseases that results from the immune system being weakened by HIV.

*Explain:*

You cannot tell by looking at someone if they have the virus. HIV can only be detected by a medical test. But you can see that a person is sick once their immune system is destroyed and they start getting many other illnesses. This can take many years to show up.

---

2 Adapted from Better Choices page 15.

## **How HIV is spread**

### **? Who knows how a person becomes infected with HIV?**

*Listen to responses and affirm correct responses.*

*Then continue giving information. Say:*

HIV can spread in 3 ways:

1. Blood-to-blood: One way is when fresh HIV-infected blood from one person comes in contact with the bloodstream of another person.

### **? How do you think someone else's blood could come into contact with your blood?**

*Listen to responses. Answers could include: transfusion, needles, cutting from the witchdoctor, tattoos and ear piercing with unclean instruments.*

HIV can be passed when:

- Blood for transfusions is not tested for HIV.
  - Unsterilized needles and syringes are shared between people who inject drugs.
  - Unclean knives, needles, razors blades or other sharp instruments are used for scarring, tattooing or ear piercing.
2. Mother-to-child: Sometimes, but not always, mothers pass HIV to their babies while the baby is inside the mother, when it is being born, or during breastfeeding.
  3. Sex: The most common way that someone gets AIDS is through sex with a person who is infected. Young people can get AIDS more easily because their bodies are not physically ready to have sex.

Along with HIV there are other infections that can be passed during sex. These are known as sexually transmitted infections or STIs.

### **? What do you know about STIs?**

*Acknowledge correct responses; then present these facts about STIs.*

Gonorrhea, syphilis and herpes are examples of sexually transmitted infections, because the main way they are passed between people is through sex.

Some symptoms of STIs are:

- sores on private parts
- unusual discharge from private parts with a bad smell or itching
- burning pain when passing urine

These symptoms can come after someone has had sex with an infected person. If someone has these symptoms, they should go to the clinic for treatment and cure. Without treatment, these diseases can develop into bigger problems. Unlike HIV, most STIs can be cured with good medical treatment.

STIs can open the door for HIV/AIDS because the body is weakened and because HIV can enter easily through open sores on the private areas when having sex.

*If handouts on STIs are available, pass them out to participants. You may not have time to answer any questions. Remind them that if they have questions, they should put them in the question box.*



### **Learning activity: How easily HIV/AIDS is spread – 10 minutes**

- *Count out enough sweets or pieces of colored paper for the entire group to each have one – make sure they are divided between two different colors or packaging or types of sweet.*
- *Select two volunteers to pass out the sweets or paper – one to pass out each type or color.*
- *Ask the entire group to stand up and mingle while the two people with the sweets or pieces of paper distribute them freely to everyone.*
- *After all the sweets or pieces of paper have been distributed, ask the participants to return to their seats. Tell the group they can eat their sweets (or pretend to eat them, if you are using colored paper) now if they want to or save them for later.*

*Explain to the group that this activity was to show how easily AIDS can spread. Explain that the sweets represent the opportunity for a sexual encounter and the blue sweets (for example) represent HIV infection. Those who ate those sweets represent those who were infected by AIDS through this encounter. Ask all the people who received and immediately ate those sweets to stand. Ask:*

**? How do you feel knowing that the sweet you ate represented HIV?**  
*Listen to several responses.*

*Then ask those who received an “HIV” sweet but did not eat it to stand. Say:*

Even though you encountered the sweet that represented HIV, you did not eat it. This represents what happens when you do not have sex.

**? How does this make you feel?**

*Ask the volunteer who distributed the sweets or paper representing HIV:*

**? How do you feel representing the one who infected others?**

You can't tell by looking at a person that they have HIV. They can look perfectly healthy but can still pass the virus easily. As we can see from this example, many people pass HIV without even knowing it.

Ask the group:

**? Why do you think it is important to know if you are HIV positive?**

**? What do you think the best way to avoid getting HIV/AIDS is?**

*Listen to several responses and affirm them when they mention abstinence.*

KEY CONCEPT: Waiting until marriage to have sex (abstinence) is 100% effective in preventing HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases, as well as preventing pregnancy. Abstinence works every time!

### ***How AIDS is NOT spread***

Now that we've talked about how AIDS is spread, let's look at the ways that HIV/AIDS is NOT transmitted. It is important to understand this so that we do not fear interacting with people living with HIV/AIDS.

If there is no transfer of sexual fluids or blood between an HIV-infected person and someone who is healthy, then the healthy person cannot become infected with the virus.

HIV is NOT an air-borne virus. That means that a person can NOT get HIV from:

- visiting someone with HIV/AIDS
- a cough or a sneeze

HIV is NOT transmitted through water. You can NOT get HIV from:

- sharing the same well or cup with someone who has HIV/AIDS
- swimming or bathing with someone with HIV/AIDS

HIV is NOT transmitted through common touch. You can NOT get HIV from:

- shaking hands
- hugging
- sharing plates, cups, bowls or utensils
- sitting in the same seat or bus

HIV is also NOT spread through any other body fluids except blood and sexual fluids.

You can NOT get HIV from:

- tears
- sweat
- urine
- diarrhea and vomit that contain no blood
- saliva

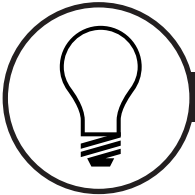
HIV is NOT spread by insects. HIV is a virus that lives in humans. It cannot be transmitted through mosquito bites, bed bugs or the bites or stings of other insects.



Let's test your new knowledge about how HIV is NOT spread:

- ? Can you get HIV/AIDS from holding hands with someone with HIV/AIDS? (No.)**
- ? Can you get HIV/AIDS from drinking from the same cup as someone with AIDS? (No.)**
- ? Can you get HIV/AIDS from wiping someone's tears? (No.)**
- ? Can you get HIV/AIDS from having sex with someone who is HIV positive even if they look healthy? (Yes.)**

KEY CONCEPT: It is OK to touch, hug and care for people with AIDS. They need your help, your love and your support.



### **Biblical application – 2 minutes (optional)**

*Reflection verse*

Hosea 4:6 says: "My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge."

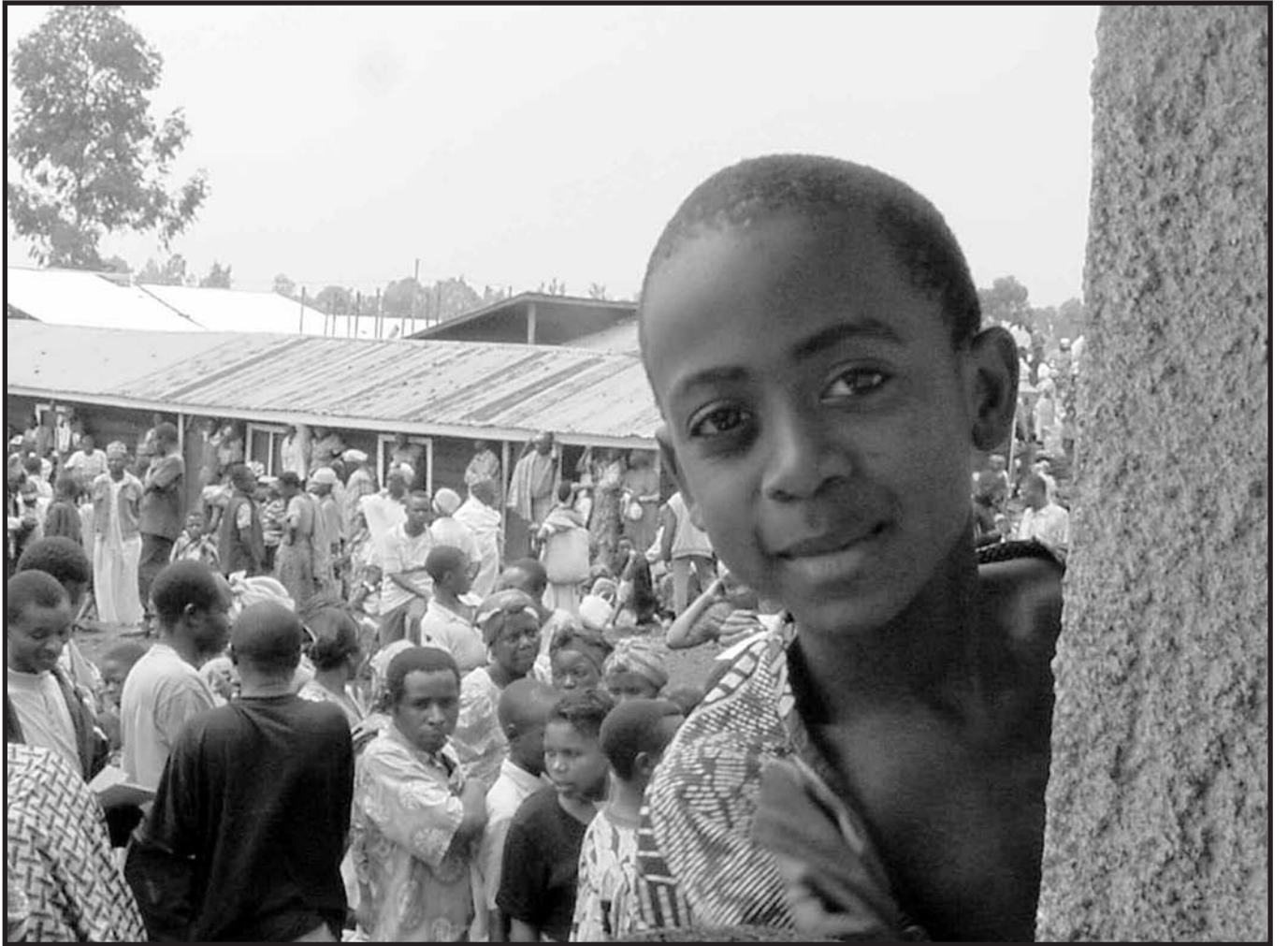


### **Review and take action – 3 minutes**

- ? What did you learn today that you didn't know before?**  
*Listen to several responses and affirm youth.*

*Remind youth to put any questions they have in the question box.*

*Explain that the next time you meet, you are going to talk about common misconceptions about sex, puberty and AIDS. Ask youth to make a list of the most ridiculous, outrageous things they have ever heard about sex, puberty or HIV/AIDS. They can share their lists at the beginning of the next session.*



## Dispelling Myths about Puberty, Sex and AIDS



### Notes to Facilitator

Myths often are based on truths that have been distorted or changed over time. Myths, misconceptions and fears about abstinence and sex often prevent youth from choosing to delay sex until marriage. Certain cultural practices, some based on superstition, can also put youth at risk.

The purpose of this session is to dispel such myths and any fears that prevent youth from valuing and protecting themselves from early and unwanted sex and its consequences. It is also an opportunity to remind youth of the importance of good communication to learn what is true and what is false.

It is important to break down any stigma surrounding AIDS in communities and to help youth see that people with AIDS need their love and support.

#### **During this session youth will:**

1. Consider how not understanding the facts can lead to fear and bad choices
2. Replace misconceptions and myths with facts
3. Consider the consequences of the misuse of sex

**Time:** 50 minutes

#### **Materials needed:**

Question box

#### **Learning activities:**

1. Review – 10 minutes
2. Identifying and clarifying misunderstandings, myths, etc. – 15 minutes
3. Story and discussion – 5 minutes
4. Life skills activity – 5 minutes
5. Biblical application – 10 minutes (optional)
6. Review and take action – 5 minutes

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES



### Review from last session – 10 minutes

#### ? What do you remember from the last time we met?

*Listen to responses and affirm youth.*

*Ask if anyone would like to share their list of the most outrageous things they have heard about sex, puberty or AIDS. After they have read a few ask:*

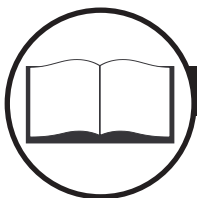
#### ? What could happen if people believed these things?



### Identifying & clarifying misunderstandings, myths, etc. – 15 minutes

*Ask the youth to form groups of 3 or 4 by gender. Ask them to discuss any concerns or confusions they have about sex or saving sex until marriage, and to come up with at least three fears or questions they have about sex.*

*Then ask them to write their questions or fears on a small piece of paper and put them in the question box, one question per piece of paper. Answer as many questions as possible at this time and save the rest for the next session if necessary.*



### Story and discussion – 5 minutes

#### **Dina and Leah's Story**

Dina and Leah were school friends. Dina was 13 and Leah was 14. Although Dina was younger than Leah, she was already sexually active and had had several boyfriends. One day when class was finished, Dina was talking to her friend Leah and noticed that Leah's face had several pimples. "What are you using on your face?" she asked Leah. But before Leah could answer, Dina said, "You don't have a boyfriend, do you? You are having problems with your skin because you are not having sex. If you don't have sex, you will start having bad headaches, so bad that you could die from them!" Dina said firmly.

Leah had decided when she was 10 years old to practice abstinence and to wait until marriage to have sex. She had been successful so far. "Where did you hear that?" Leah

asked Dina. "It may be true, but I have never heard that someone could die because of not having sex! Sex doesn't cure anything or solve any problems. I feel bad when I hear about people who have contracted HIV/AIDS or STIs because of having sex. When they get married, they bring the problem into their marriage. If these people would only have sex within marriage, then they would not have these problems!" Leah said. Leah felt differently about Dina. She had suspected that her friend might be having sex with different boys, but she had never been sure.

Just then Andrew walked up to Leah and Dina. Andrew was the star player of the local soccer team, and all the girls liked him. Dina had always had a crush on him and couldn't believe he was coming to talk to her. "Hi Leah," he said. "This is my friend Dina," said Leah. "Oh, hi. Maybe you'd like to come to the soccer game. There is a meeting afterwards at our church that is going to be really cool. The group leader is a great guy, a bit older than us—I think he's 17. He told us last week about his commitment to himself to wait until he is married before having sex. He said a lot of guys and girls are making that decision."

Dina was stunned and didn't know what to say. "Maybe you would like to come to the meeting, Dina," said Andrew.

**? How did Dina's beliefs about sex and puberty affect her choices?**

**? How did Leah react to Dina's beliefs?**

**? What advice would you give Dina?**



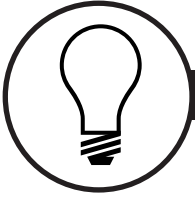
### **Life skills activity: "Telephone" or "Pass the message" – 5 minutes**

*Gather everyone in a circle. If there are more than 30 people, divide the group into 2 smaller circles. Have one person whisper one sentence into the ear of the person on their left. They may only whisper the message once, and they must do their best to whisper clearly. The next person then repeats what they have heard into the ear of the person sitting to their left, and so on all around the circle until the sentence reaches the last person. The final person repeats what they have heard out loud and then the person who started the sentence tells what they really said. The two sentences will probably be very different!*

*Next, try the same thing but have two sentences going around the circle in opposite directions. The end result is likely to be even more distorted than the first time when only one sentence was going around the circle.*

**? Why do you think the final sentence was so different from the original sentence?**

As you can see, when information is passed between many people, the facts can get confused. It's important to have good and correct information.



## Biblical application – 10 minutes (optional)

*From II Samuel 13: 1–29:*

David was a very powerful King of the land of Israel. David's son Absalom had a beautiful unmarried sister named Tamar who was a virgin. Amnon, another of David's sons, fell in love with her, even though she was his half sister. He was so in love with her that he became sick, because it seemed impossible for him to have her.

Amnon's cousin, a man named Jonadab, asked him what the matter was. "I'm in love with Tamar, the sister of my half brother Absalom," Amnon answered. Jonadab said to him, "I have an idea. Pretend that you are really sick and go to bed. When your father comes to see you, say to him, 'Please ask my sister Tamar to come and feed me. I want her to make the food here where I can see her, and then serve it to me herself.' "

This seemed like a good idea, so Amnon pretended that he was sick and went to bed. King David went to see him, and Amnon said to him, "Please let Tamar come and make a few cakes here where I can see her, and then serve them to me herself."

So David sent word to Tamar to go to Amnon's house and make him some food. She went there and found him in bed. She made some cakes there where he could see her, but he would not eat them.

Amnon sent everyone else away. Then Amnon said to Tamar, "Bring the cakes here to my bed and serve them to me yourself." She took the cakes and went over to him. As she offered them to him, he grabbed her and said, "Come to bed with me!"

"No," she said. "Don't force me to do such a thing! That's awful! How could I ever hold my head up in public again? And you – you would be completely disgraced in Israel. Please, speak to the king, and I'm sure that he will give me to you." But he would not listen to her. Since he was stronger than she was, he overpowered her and raped her.

Then Amnon was filled with a deep hatred for her; he hated her even more than he had loved her before. He called in his personal servant and said, "Get this woman out of my sight! Throw her out and lock the door!" The servant threw her out.

Tamar sprinkled ashes on her head, tore the sleeves of her royal robe, and went away crying with her face buried in her hands. When her brother Absalom saw her, he asked, "Has Amnon molested you? He is your half brother, so don't tell anyone about it." So Tamar lived in Absalom's house, sad and lonely. Absalom hated Amnon for having raped his sister Tamar.

Two years later Absalom was doing some business near the town of Ephraim, and he invited all the king's sons to join him there. He asked King David, "Will you and your officials come and take part in the festivities?" The king refused, but he let Amnon and his other sons go.

Absalom prepared a great banquet and told his servants, "Notice when Amnon has had too much to drink, and then when I give the order, kill him. Don't be afraid. I will take the responsibility myself. Be brave and don't hesitate!" So the servants followed Absalom's instructions – when they saw that Amnon had had too much to drink, they killed him. All the rest of David's sons mounted their mules and fled.\*

*Ask for a volunteer to repeat the main points of the story, then ask the following questions:*

- ? What misunderstandings did Amnon have about sex that made him follow his desires?**
- ? What were the consequences of Amnon's misuse of sexuality on Tamar's life? On his own life?**
- ? How can advice we get from other people make us do things that are wrong?**



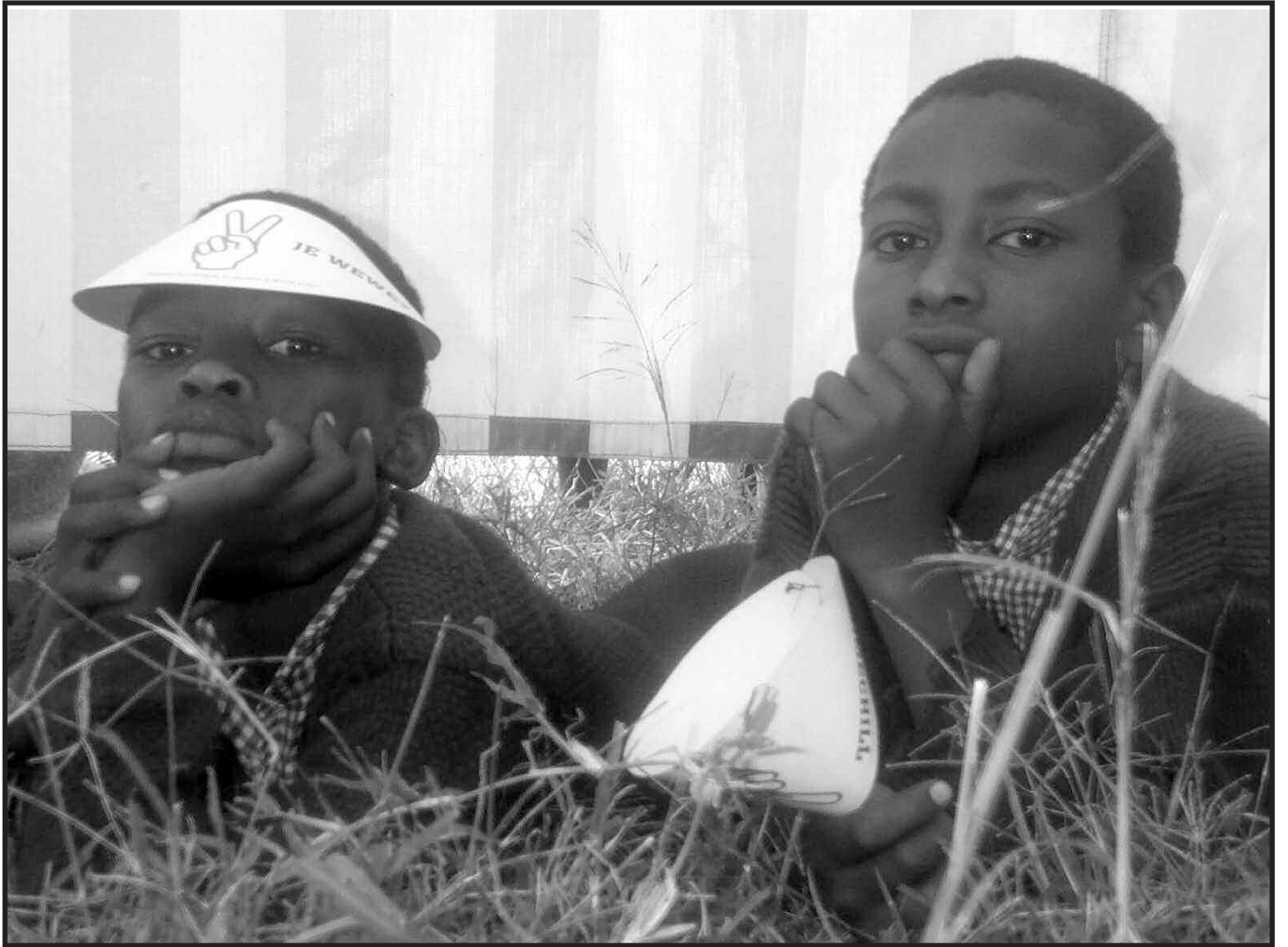
### **Review and take action – 5 minutes**

- ? What did you learn today that will help you in the coming week?**

Before we meet again, make a list of the main reasons that you should save sex for marriage. We will share these reasons during the next session.

---

\* Taken from the Good News Bible Translation with some minor modifications







## Valuing Abstinence

### Notes to Facilitator

Although young people may be aware of the negative consequences of pre-marital sex, they may still decide to have sex in spite of risks to their health and well-being. They may be seeking acceptance, admiration and affection from their peers. All young people are faced with the pressure to gain recognition from their peers and from adults in their lives.

In this session you will try to help youth discover that they can still have these things without being sexually active. They will also consider the challenges of resisting the temptation of sex and the advantages of choosing to delay sex until marriage.

#### **During this session youth will:**

1. Consider the advantages of abstinence until marriage
2. Practice how to communicate doing what is right when pressured by others

**Time:** 50 minutes

#### **Materials needed:**

Question box

#### **Learning activities:**

1. Review – 3 minutes
2. Stories and discussion – 15 minutes
3. Small group discussion – 15 minutes
4. Life skills activity – 12 minutes
5. Biblical application – 2 minutes (optional)
6. Review and take action – 3 minutes

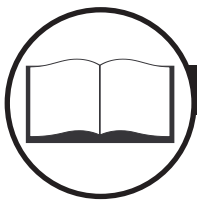
## LEARNING ACTIVITIES



### Review – 3 minutes

- ?** **How has what we have learned together helped you in your daily life?**  
*Listen to several responses and encourage youth.*

*Answer any outstanding questions from the question box.*



### Story and discussion – 15 minutes

*If possible, use both of these stories – the first to show the negative consequences of multiple sexual partners, and the second to introduce the idea of youth resisting unwanted sexual advances.*

#### **Claire's Story**

Claire was 14 and had a good reputation in her school and community. She loved reading and studying. She listened to her parents and hardly ever had to be disciplined by them.

For some months, Claire had been attending a youth club at her church. They discussed issues that youth were interested in there. After thinking about it for a long time, Claire decided that she would make a promise to save sex until she was married. She was very aware that this wasn't going to be easy. She needed to be strong about her decision. But she knew that it was the right thing to do.

Anne, Claire's cousin, was 13 and had not made this commitment to wait until marriage to have sex. She seemed to do the opposite of whatever her parents told her and was more interested in being with her friends than studying. She had had several boyfriends. Since her cousin Claire didn't have a boyfriend, she decided she would look for one for her. When Claire found out about this, she was angry with Anne. "I don't want a boyfriend now," she said. "I don't want to mix boyfriends and falling in love with school. I want to focus on my studies." "As you wish," said Anne, "but you don't know what you're missing!"

Claire hadn't seen Anne for some time when she heard from her mother that Anne was in the hospital. Anne had got a bad infection from having sex with a boy who had many other girlfriends. Because she was hiding her lifestyle from her parents, she didn't tell them about it or go to the clinic. The infection had become worse and worse until Anne was in so much pain that she couldn't hide it any longer.

When Claire went to visit Anne in the hospital, she had just had an operation to try to correct some of the damage that the infection had caused. The doctor said she might not be able to have children. Anne was very sad about this. When she saw Claire, she began to cry. "I have damaged my womb, and I may not be able to have children," she sobbed. "I am so sorry for you, Anne," said Claire. "The decision I made not to remain a virgin until I was married has made this happen," said Anne, wiping away a tear. "If only I had followed your example."

- ? What were the consequences for Anne of having sex?**
- ? What were the benefits for Claire of remaining a virgin?**
- ? What can you do so that you'll never have Anne's problem?**

### **Prudence's Story**

Prudence was in grade 7 at the Future Leaders Primary School. She was aware that her body size was big. She was even bigger than some of the female teachers at her school. Prudence performed well in class. The teachers, including her class master, liked her and even appointed her a class prefect.

On separate occasions, her male class teacher and the library master had touched her face and breasts. Both teachers told her she was grown up, beautiful and could make a good wife. This happened while she was alone with her teacher in the classroom and when she arranged books at the school library. "Have you ever had sex with a boy?" the library master had asked. Some boys from class 8 in her school and some who attended secondary school classes from her village had also approached her for sex.

Prudence wondered whether the changes in her body meant she was ready for sex. Faith, her close friend, whose body size was smaller and who did not have big breasts, told her boys were asking her for sex too. Faith, however, understood these changes in her body. "These changes are normal and do not mean that one is ready for sex. We are encouraged to abstain from sex until marriage. One of the bad consequences of having sex at our age is catching sexually transmitted diseases. And we girls can also become pregnant. I am sure you wouldn't like to drop out of school as a young mother or become sick," Faith explained. "I have been discussing these changes in my body with my parents, brothers and sisters."

"Thank you, Faith. I will talk to my parents tonight about these body changes," replied Prudence. "Let's talk more about this later," Faith said as they parted ways, going home from the village shop where they had met.

- ? What was happening in Prudence's life that made her think about having sex before she was ready?**
- ? What could Prudence have done when the library master or the boys in her school approached her to have sex?**

*Listen to several responses. Explain that it is wrong for an older man to ask a young girl for sex or to touch her inappropriately. If that happens the girl should tell him to stop and tell her parents or another trusted adult about what happened.*

- ? What would you tell Prudence regarding choosing abstinence until marriage?**
- ? What do you think of Faith's response to Prudence about body changes and sex?**



### **Small group discussion – 15 minutes**

*Ask youth to form small groups of 3-5 people. Refer to the resource section to choose an appropriate and fun way to form groups (e.g., mingle, mingle).*

*Remind the youth that the last time you met they were asked to consider their main reasons for saving sex until marriage. Tell them they have 5 minutes to discuss this. Ask:*

- ? What are some of the benefits of waiting to have sex until after you are married?**

*After 5 minutes of discussion, ask for youth to share their ideas. Make a list from their ideas, titled, "Our Reasons to Save Sex for Marriage," and post it on the wall. Remind youth that sex has physical, emotional, mental and spiritual effects. These can be good effects, or bad effects if sex is misused.*



### **Life skills activity: "Saying 'No' in a Sandwich"<sup>1</sup> – 12 minutes**

There may be times when you want to say "no" to something a friend wants you to do together. You don't want to stop being his/her friend, but you don't think it is right to do this particular thing. It will help if you sandwich your "no" between two positives, like this:

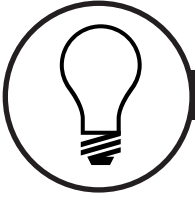
"I really like you, and I am glad you are my friend.  
But I don't want to do that.  
Why don't we go to the youth group with our friends instead?"

This way, you can keep the friendship without doing things that you feel are not right.

*Ask for volunteers to practice this with several situations they come up with, for example: going places you've been told not to go; cheating on an exam; looking at pornographic material; not telling your parents the truth.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from Adventure Unlimited, page 63



## Biblical application – 2 minutes (optional)

*You may want to use the following verse as a memory verse. Remember that using gestures helps memorization.*

Philippians 4:8

“Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy, think about such things.”



## Review and take action – 3 minutes

**? What did you learn today that you can use to make your life better?**

*Listen to responses and encourage positive actions.*

Say:

Before we meet again, do a survey of advertisements you see for beer, wine or other alcohol. These could be billboards, magazine or newspaper ads, posters, radio or TV ads. Count how many you find and remember the one that interests you the most. You can share this information when we meet again.



# The Dangers of Drugs, Alcohol and the Influence of Media



## Notes to Facilitator

Young people may want to make good choices, but there are many influences and temptations that can persuade them to make bad decisions. Using drugs and alcohol can put youth in situations of great risk to their life and health. Unfortunately, taking drugs, drinking alcohol and premarital sex can be thought of by youth as rites of passage. They may even be encouraged by adults.

The purpose of this session is to help youth be more aware of these dangers and to consider how these things can affect their health, goals and decisions. The session also focuses on negative peer influences and builds life skills to overcome peer pressure, allowing them to follow what they know is right and what they really want to do.

### **During this session youth will:**

1. Consider the influence of negative media
2. Consider the dangers of drugs and alcohol
3. Practice saying no to negative peer influences

**Time:** 45 minutes

### **Materials needed:**

Question box

### **Learning activities:**

1. Review and answer questions – 8 minutes
2. Story and discussion – 15 minutes
3. Life skills activity – 15 minutes
4. Biblical application – 2 minutes (optional)
5. Review and take action – 5 minutes

# LEARNING ACTIVITIES



## Review and answer questions – 8 minutes

*Answer questions from the question box.*

Ask:

- ? What do you remember from the last session?**  
*You could review the list of “Our Reasons to Save Sex for Marriage.”*

Say:

The last time we met, I asked you to count the advertisements you saw relating to alcohol. How many did you find?

*Encourage youth to share this information with the group.*

- ? Who would like to tell us which advert they liked the best and why they liked it?**

*Let youth share what they liked without passing judgment on them. If they have examples of positive media, point out that the media is also used to promote healthy actions. If not, ask the following yes/no (closed) questions:*

- ? Did you see any ads that talked about how many people die from alcohol-related accidents?**
- ? Did any of the ads warn youth about the dangers of drinking and not being in control of their actions?**
- ? Did any of them mention that if a pregnant woman drinks alcohol it can harm her baby?**

*Point out that media and advertisements can be used both positively and negatively to influence people to do healthy or harmful things.*





## Story and discussion – 15 minutes

In past sessions we have talked about making good decisions that will keep us safe and healthy. But even though we may want to make good decisions, there are things that can affect our judgment. Like the advertisements we just heard about, some things are presented as only positive when they really have negative sides as well. Listen to this story about Francis and John, two friends who made decisions that took them down very different roads.

### **Francis and John's Story**

Francis lived with his family. He was in grade 6 and a very good student. All of his teachers praised him for his intelligence. Every day on his way to school, Francis met his friend John, and they would walk the rest of the way together. John was also one of the best students in grade 6.

One morning Francis noticed that John was coming from a different direction and that he looked lost and very tired, as if he had not slept for a few days. "What happened to you?" asked Francis. "Can we sit down?" asked John. "I'm not feeling too well." After some time, John explained that the day before he had gone to a party at his aunt's house. There he met Bob. Bob was well known in the community and had a reputation for always having drugs and alcohol. Bob liked to impress the youth with stories about the international drug trade, famous people he knew, and all the drugs he had taken. He showed them films about boxing and karate, with famous actors drinking alcohol and surrounded by beautiful women.

"So you went to the party; what happened next?" asked Francis. "Bob invited me to watch a film, and he gave me a strong drink." John talked about the film and explained that then Bob gave him a famous drug that the movie stars use at parties. "I don't remember what happened after that," said John. All of this sounded very exciting to Francis, especially the part about the movie stars. "Can I go with you when you see Bob again?" asked Francis. "Sure," said John. "Bob said to bring some friends next time."

Francis got up to go to school, but John just sat there, unable to move. Francis had second thoughts. "John looks really bad," he thought to himself. "And sometimes he didn't make any sense when he was telling me what happened at the party. He's usually so quick minded. What is wrong with him?" he asked himself. "I don't want to end up like John. I've been promised a place at university if I continue to do well in school. There is an exam today. John is in no shape to take an exam. I need to help him stay away from Bob."

Francis took John to his house and gave him a place to sleep until the effects of the drugs and alcohol went away. But when Francis came back from school, John was gone. Later Francis learned that John had gone back to find Bob. Francis mentioned to his older brother what had happened with John. His brother explained to him the bad effects that drugs and alcohol have on a person's judgment.

Francis tried again and again to convince John that the drugs Bob gave him were not a good thing, but John wouldn't listen. John continued going to Bob's parties and spent less and less time at school. Soon he was addicted to the drugs and longed for the feeling the alcohol gave him. He could not go one day without having them. Most of the time, John didn't know where he was and couldn't remember anything from the day before. He did not even remember his dreams to go to university and to become an engineer.

- ? Why do you think John was attracted to Bob?**
- ? Why do you think he continued to take drugs?**
- ? What should John have done after Bob gave him drugs the first time?**
- ? How did the media (movies, in this case) influence Bob's and John's decision to take alcohol and drugs?**
- ? What would you say about Francis' decision?**



### Life skills activity – 15 minutes

"I love you Baby, why won't you smile?"

- *Have the whole group stand in a circle but choose one person to be in the middle and act as the "persuader."*
- *Everyone standing in the circle must keep a straight face and not smile.*
- *The person in the middle then goes around the circle, from person to person saying, "I love you baby, why won't you smile?" The person says back to the persuader, "I love you too, but I just can't smile." The person in the middle tries to make at least one person smile as they ask the question.*
- *The persuader can make funny faces, jump up and down—do whatever they think they need to in order to make someone smile.*
- *When someone in the circle finally breaks down and smiles, he or she becomes the new persuader in the middle and the game begins again.*

Sometimes people in our lives try to persuade us to do things we do not want to do. In this case it was smile, but sometimes it can be more serious and have bad consequences.

Abstinence is not always easy. Sexual temptation and peer pressure are very real forces that affect us all.

Ask youth to discuss the following question in small groups:

- ? What are some situations where others might try to make you do things you don't want to do?**

*After youth have discussed for several minutes, ask them to share their ideas. Encourage participation. Responses may include situations where youth are pressured to have sex, drink, take drugs, watch movies that cheapen sex, cheat, steal and so on. Then ask:*

**? What could you do to protect yourself in those situations?**



### **Biblical application – 2 minutes (optional)**

Galatians 5:19-21

*“The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.”*



### **Review and take action – 5 minutes**

*Ask the class to mention radio stations, TV channels and their favorite programs. Ask them to write down why they like or they dislike the programs or channels before the next session. Tell them to think about how these programs affect their actions and decisions.*





## Sexual Vulnerability and Protection

### Notes to Facilitator

Young people may value abstinence and wish to save sex for marriage, but they can be easily coerced or forced to have sex against their will. Because young people tend to be trusting by nature, adults they know, including family members, neighbors, older youth or teachers, may take advantage of them.

There are many things that make youth aged 10-14 more vulnerable to being taken advantage of sexually. These include: becoming sexually aware, having more independence that puts them in new situations, low self esteem or over-confidence, misinformation or lack of information about sex, simple curiosity, being adventurous and taking risks without understanding the consequences, identification with the wrong role models, being trusting of all adults, and so on.

The purpose of this session is to help youth become aware of their sexual vulnerability and learn how to protect themselves from the dangers around them. Youth will learn about the dangers of rape and sexual abuse, incest (sex with family members) and certain pressures that can put them at risk. This session focuses again on the importance of open communication, listening to parents and following good role models.

#### **During this session youth will:**

1. Consider how they could be in danger of sexual exploitation
2. Practice ways to avoid unwanted sexual encounters

**Time:** 40 - 50 minutes

#### **Materials needed:**

Question box

#### **Learning activities:**

1. Review and answer questions – 5 minutes
2. Stories and discussion – 10-15 minutes
3. Life skills activity – 10-15 minutes
4. Biblical application – 7 minutes (optional)
5. Small group discussion – 7 minutes
6. Take action – 1 minute

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES

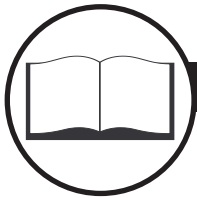


### Review and answer questions – 5 minutes

*Remind the class that you asked them to think about their favorite radio stations, TV channels and programs, and to write down why they like or they dislike the programs or channels and the influence these programs have on them.*

*Ask for youth to share and, if there is time, ask them to mimic popular adverts.*

*Answer any questions in the question box.*



### Stories and discussion – 10–15 minutes

*You can use one or both of these stories, depending on the age and experience of the youth and the time available.*

#### **Edith's Story**

Edith was a lovely 12-year-old girl in grade 5. She lived with her parents but had no older brothers or sisters. When her parents made a trip to visit some relatives in another province, they asked her grown-up cousin, Jack, to look in on Edith. Jack was part of the family, and they thought he could be trusted. "We are leaving Edith behind because of her school. Could you please check on her and make sure she is alright and has everything she needs?" they asked. "Certainly," said Jack.

Jack stopped in one day before it was dark and found Edith busy with her studies. She greeted him and was happy to see him, as she had been lonely with her parents away. Jack took out some money and said to Edith, "Use this to buy food for yourself or anything else you need." Edith was very happy and thanked Jack. She had never been given such a generous gift before.

A few days later, Jack returned to check on Edith again, late in the evening. Edith greeted him nicely and said, "Thank you for the money. I have bought food and I have all I need." "I'd like to give you more money," said Jack. "But I would like you to give me something, too." Jack told Edith that if she would have sex with him, he would give her more money. "What?!" said Edith. "I am still a virgin." "That's OK," said Jack. "I will teach you about sex." "No!" said Edith, and she ran out of the house as fast as she could. Edith ran to the next street, where a friend of her mother's lived who she called Auntie Ruth. She told her what had happened, and Auntie Ruth said, "You must not go back home. Stay with me until your parents come home."

**? What do you think of Edith's decision to run away from Jack?**

**? How about her openness to discuss the issue with Auntie Ruth?**

**? What can you do to protect yourself in a similar situation?**

*If you are not using the second story, make sure that the suggestions listed after it are mentioned.*

### **Sarah's Story**

Sarah balanced the full bucket of water carefully. She was returning home from the well located just outside the village. Sarah tried to hurry – it would soon be time to cook the evening meal. Then she heard footsteps coming up behind her on the path. It was George, a friend of her older brother Richard. George and Richard were both 15 years old. George often came to her house to study with her brother.

Sarah greeted him with a smile. "Hello George!" George came up to her and began talking. "How old are you now, Sarah?" he asked. "I am 11, almost 12," she said. "I would have never guessed that – you look very mature and beautiful!" said George. Sarah blushed at the compliment. No boy had called her beautiful before.

George continued chatting with her. "Sarah, you should come see this great place by the river where I catch fish," he said. Sarah hesitated. "Well, I need to get home soon. My parents will be waiting for me." "Oh, come on," George said, "It will only take a minute." Sarah liked all the attention George was giving her. She agreed to go with him.

The two turned off the main path to a smaller one. No one else was around. George put his hand on Sarah's shoulder. "Sarah, a girl as beautiful as you should have a boyfriend." Sarah was surprised and uncomfortable. She moved away from his hand. "George, I think I need to go. My mother is waiting for me to bring the water." George grabbed her again. The bucket fell and water was spilled. He pressured her to have sex with him. Sarah was very scared. She tried to get away. She told him "No" and to "Stop," but he was stronger than her. George forced himself on her.

After George left, Sarah felt ashamed. She did not want to tell her parents or her brother what had happened. She thought they would be angry because she did not come straight home after fetching water. She decided to run away instead. "I cannot face my family," she thought. "And what if I am pregnant? How will I explain that?" She was very afraid – even more afraid than when George raped her. She ran and hid near her aunt's house.

Sarah's parents and her brother were very worried about her and asked everyone where she could be. Late that night, her aunt found her. "Sarah!" cried her aunt, "We've been looking everywhere for you! Your parents are so worried and want you to come home. They found out about George, and Richard has disowned him as a friend." "They are not angry with me?" asked Sarah in disbelief. "No, they are just worried about you, and angry with George. What happened was his fault. Come, let me take you home."

**? Why was Sarah raped?**

*Listen to several responses. Stress that rape is **never** okay or justified, even if Sarah would have been wiser to not be alone with George.*

**? Why weren't her parents angry with her?**

*Stress that what happened was not Sarah's fault.*

**? What can girls do to help protect themselves from situations like this?**

*Add the following if they are not mentioned:*

- *Avoid secluded areas, especially after dark.*
- *Never be alone with an older man.*
- *Spend your time with people you can trust.*
- *Stay occupied with safe and healthy activities.*
- *Decide on your limits for a boy-girl friendship and stick to them.*
- *Say no to alcohol and drugs.*
- *Never accept gifts or money in return for "sexual favors."*
- *Report inappropriate behavior to an adult you trust.*

*Remind youth:*

If someone is forcing you to have sex or encouraging you to go to a private place, be prepared to firmly say "No." If necessary, run away. If it is not possible to run away and someone is forcing sex on you, scream as loud as you can and try to get the attention of others. Adults and older youth should help protect young people, especially girls, from getting into situations like that.



**Life skills activity: "Quick Skits" – 10–15 minutes**

*Choose 8 volunteers to form 4 groups of players with 2 people in each group. The remaining youth will be the audience and can help encourage the players.*

*Explain that you will be giving them a situation and that they have to act it out.*

*Ask each group to pick a number from one to four and then assign them the corresponding situation. Give them a few minutes (no more than 3 minutes) to think about it and then act it out. Each skit should be done quickly, in no more than 3 minutes.*

*(If time is short, choose 4 volunteers to form 2 groups of 2, and choose 2 of the situations.)*



*Suggested situations (or provide your own):*

- 1. Economic pressures (sugar daddy): Girl can't pay school fees and also wants new clothes and nice things. An older man offers to pay for them if she will sleep with him.*
- 2. Peer pressure: Boy being teased because he is a virgin. His friends want to take him to a prostitute.*
- 3. Partner pressure: Girl loves movies and videos. If she had a dress and good hairdo, she could be like the glamorous women in them. Her boyfriend says he will buy her these things if she sleeps with him.*
- 4. Temptation and media pressure: Boy who has committed to secondary abstinence is exposed to sexuality explicit media. There is a flirtatious girl who has made it obvious that she would sleep with him if he asked.*

*Encourage and affirm the efforts of the players.*



### **Biblical application – 7 minutes (optional)**

*From Genesis 39:1-23. You can read the story from the Bible or tell it as it is below.*

This story is about a young man named Joseph who lived long ago. Joseph had to persevere through many difficulties. First of all, Joseph's brothers were jealous of him and sold him as a slave to a rich and powerful man named Potifer. Potifer's wife was full of desire for young Joseph because he was strong and handsome, and she wanted to have sex with him.

Joseph knew it was not right and refused to have sex with her. She asked again and again, and he always said, "No." This made Potifer's wife angry, so she tricked everyone and said that Joseph had tried to force her to have sex with him! Potifer believed this lie and put Joseph into prison.

But Joseph's story didn't end there. Because Joseph did the right thing by refusing to have sexual relations with his master's wife, he later became the most important man in the land, next to the king. In later years, when Joseph's family was suffering from a famine in his homeland, he was also able to save the lives of his father and his brothers, as well as their families and cattle.

**? Why do you think Joseph made the decision he did?**

**? What were the long- and short-term consequences of Joseph's decision?**



## Small group discussion – 7 minutes

*Ask youth to discuss this question in small groups:*

**? What could you do if someone wants you to do something that you know is not right?**

*Ask them to share their responses with the whole group. Affirm and encourage youth.*



## Take action – 1 minute

Before we meet again, design a poster (advertisement) that will help protect youth like you from the dangers around them.







## Achieving our Goals and Dreams

### Notes to Facilitator

All young people dream dreams and have goals. They have great hopes for the future but they live in the present moment, often not considering the consequences of their actions or what it will take to realize their goals and dreams.

Understanding that the choices they make today can determine whether or not they achieve their goals and dreams is an important lesson. With this understanding, youth can use their dreams and goals to reinforce healthy choices and actions.

The purpose of this session is to help youth identify what it will take to achieve their goals and dreams. It also focuses on helping youth make good decisions in their day-to-day lives, especially concerning how they spend their time.

#### **During this session youth will:**

1. Consider what they need to do today to achieve their goals and dreams
2. Reflect on how they use their leisure time

**Time:** 45 minutes

#### **Materials needed:**

Question box; small pieces of scrap paper

#### **Learning activities:**

1. Review and questions – 5 minutes
2. Story and discussion – 15 minutes
3. Life skills activity – 10 minutes
4. Biblical application – 12 minutes (optional)
5. Review and take action – 3 minutes

## LEARNING ACTIVITIES



### Review and answer questions – 5 minutes

*Ask youth who designed posters on how to protect themselves from the dangers around them to show their posters and explain them.*

*Answer any questions from the question box.*



### Stories and discussion – 15 minutes

#### **Albert and Laura's Story**

Brother and sister, Albert, 12, and Laura, 14, lived in a small town, not far from the capital city. Albert was a rather disorganized and lazy child who didn't like to study. After school, Albert wanted to have fun and would meet with his friends, who were like him. Albert loved the cinema and parties, and his greatest ambition was to go to discos and dance. Although he was young, he was very adventurous. His sister Laura loved to study and took school seriously. She always made time for her schoolwork and was careful about how she spent her free time and the friends she chose. Laura was active in her church youth group and had dreams of attending university.

Albert and Laura's father and grandfather were well respected in the town and their grandfather had many influential friends. Their father was not a wealthy man and could not continue to send both of his children to school. He was concerned about their future. He knew that education was important and was sad that he did not have the funds to ensure a good education for his children. Knowing this, his father's friends decided to provide a bursary for one of the children, whichever showed the most promise.

Albert heard about this and assumed it would be him. But he also knew that he would not pass his exams because he hadn't studied for them. The day the marks were posted, Albert went to a party with his friends and didn't even look to see if he had passed. Later he arrived home very excited and told his father that he had passed. The family had a big party to celebrate and told him about the bursary. Laura was happy for her brother, but surprised he had passed the exams.

It didn't take long for Albert's father to discover that his son had not told the truth about his marks. The bursary went to Laura, who continued to succeed in school.

? **How did Albert's decisions about how he used his leisure time determine his future?**

? **Why do you think Laura studied hard in school?**

? **If you were giving a bursary, which of these children would you have given it to and why?**

*Encourage participation. Affirm youth in their positive responses.*

*Then say:*

As we discussed in previous sessions, the decisions we make today, especially our choices about having sex, can determine our future and whether we achieve our dreams and goals.

Here are some things that may help you:

**Know what you believe** – Think about what is really important to you. Write down what you believe about sex and morality. Be clear about your beliefs, review them often and express them to others.

**Focus on building strong friendships** – True friends are there when times are tough. They will watch out for you and protect you if you are in trouble. Choose friends who will support the good choices you make.

**Set boundaries in relationships** – It is not wrong to find a particular person attractive and want to focus some of your time and attention on him or her. It is necessary, though, to set some limits for those relationships, to keep them from leading you into sex and emotional and physical pain.

- Anticipate difficult situations before they happen.
- Think about what sort of messages the clothes you wear and the way you act send to the other person.
- Do not put yourself in a situation where you are alone with the person for a long period of time, especially at night or in the dark.
- Stay away from drinking alcohol and using drugs because they will lower your will power and self control.

**Seek the help of others** – Seek the support of others who understand your commitment to delay sex. You could choose a group of 2 or 3 friends who have made the same commitment and agree to encourage one another to stick to it.

**Know your personal goals and work towards them** – Think about your goals and dreams for the future. One wrong choice can have a big impact on your chances of living your dreams.



## Life skills activity: "Aiming at Nothing" – 10 minutes

- Hand out several small pieces of paper to each person and tell them to make balls of paper.
- Ask youth to throw the paper balls at nothing and hit it. They may not understand this direction, but simply encourage them to throw wherever they please.
- Next, put a target out for them (a wastebasket or spot on the wall).
- Then ask them to hit that target.

Ask:

- ? **Why did you find it difficult to hit nothing?**
- ? **Why did you find it easy to hit nothing?**
- ? **What did you feel when you aimed at nothing?**
- ? **Why do you think you felt that?**

Remind youth that to achieve their goals, they must have goals, know what it will take to reach them and aim for them. (Calculate, consider and aim.)



## Biblical application – 12 minutes (optional)

In the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30) Jesus told this story:

It [the kingdom of heaven] will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. So also, the one with two talents gained two more. But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

After a long time, the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. "Master," he said, "you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more."

His master replied, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness."



The man with the two talents also came. "Master," he said, "you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have gained two more."

His master replied, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness."

Then the man who had received one talent came. "Master," he said, "I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you."

His master replied, "You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Then you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest."

"Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents. For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him."

**? What are some of the "talents" that are given to us?**

*Responses could include: education, money, family and friends, health, etc.*

**? What should we do with them?**

Ephesians: 5:15-16 says:

"Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil."



**Review and take action – 3 minutes**

*Ask for a small group of volunteers to create a song about what they have learned together during these sessions. They will perform it at the beginning of the next session.*





## Committing to Abstinence

### Notes to Facilitator

During this session youth will be asked if they want to make a private or public decision about primary or secondary abstinence. Some may have already made their choice long before this day and may want to renew that commitment. Others may be committing for the first time and may either want to make this commitment privately or have public recognition. Some may NOT be ready to commit and would rather support others as they make their choices.

Care must be taken so those who are not ready to commit are not ridiculed or judged. This event should be an inspiration for those who have not yet made a decision or who have decided not to abstain. You should be sure to leave it open for such youth to make a decision in the future.

You will need to plan in advance how you will celebrate the act of making a commitment to save sex for marriage. This is a time to build confidence, solidarity and strength, and to help youth look forward to a future filled with life and hope. Youth should also feel good about making a decision that is combating AIDS in their own life, as well as in their country. They need to know they have chosen the most effective way to prevent being infected with HIV.

For those who do want to make a commitment, you may consider having a ceremony either during this session or at a later time when parents, family, community, church members or school members could be present. Depending on their age, the ceremony could take on the form of a "Rite of Passage" event that reflects traditional coming of age or a celebration of their self-control, strength and integrity.

This session also offers an opportunity for youth to see that they can have a positive influence on the lives of others. It gives the group an opportunity to create their own abstinence pledge. Several examples of pledges are offered, but coming up with their own will strengthen their commitment.

#### **During this session youth will:**

1. Make a decision about committing to abstinence
2. Consider what it will take to follow this commitment until marriage

**Time:** 40 minutes - 1 hour (depending on how commitment is handled)

**Materials needed:** Copies of various commitment pledges

#### **Options for activities:**

1. Review – 10 minutes
2. Biblical application – 10 minutes (optional)
3. Life skills activity – 20 minutes
4. Time of commitment – open

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES



### Review – 10 minutes

*Ask the small group that was assigned to create a song in the previous session to perform their song and teach it to the whole group. Consider ways to use this song in the community to promote abstinence to others.*

Say:

Every day we are faced with decisions about right and wrong. Sometimes we make the wrong decisions; sometimes we make the right ones. Often there are people around us trying to influence us. But we have to persevere and try to find our way through despite all of this.

Here are some things that may help you:

**Realize it's not going to be easy.** Physical urges, curiosity, music, movies, and the pressure from other people will constantly tempt you to ignore your values and the consequences of bad decisions.

**Choose friends that share your values** to support you. If you always go around with people who are sexually active, you will be more likely to give in to pressure. Choose a few close friends who agree together to help one another keep the promises they have made.

**Be prepared to say no.** Regardless of who you or your friends are, you will feel pressured to go along with what others are doing. You should practice different ways to say "No" to negative peer pressure. Be prepared to give one or two reasons for your refusal. You may need to repeat yourself as people try different ways to convince you.

If someone pressures you to do something you don't want to do, speak in a confident but not angry tone and with love and respect. Be brave enough to walk away from a bad situation and from those you love. "You don't respect my values, my body or my life, so I'm leaving."

**Be yourself.** Remember that sometimes people talk big just to gain recognition. If they pressure you to try something because "everyone is doing it," they may not have done "it" themselves.



## Biblical application – 10 minutes (optional)

*From 1 Samuel 17: 1-50*

This is the story of a boy named David who killed an angry and cruel giant named Goliath who was threatening to take over his home country.

David was the youngest of eight brothers. He lived long ago in a city called Bethlehem and tended his father's sheep. A neighboring group of people wanted to take over David's country, so they gathered their forces for war and assembled them on a hill inside David's country. Their champion was named Goliath and was fierce and about three meters tall. He wore a bronze helmet on his head and a coat of steel that weighed nearly 60 Kgs (130 pounds). He also had armor on his legs and a huge spear with a bronze tip that weighed 7 Kgs (15 pounds)! He even had a man walking in front of him carrying a huge shield for extra protection.

Goliath stood at the edge of the camp and shouted to the army of David's country, "Choose a man and have him come down to me. If he is able to fight and kill me, we will become your servants, but if I overcome him and kill him, you will become our servants." On hearing this, all the soldiers were terrified and lost hope. "Give me a man and let us fight each other!" shouted Goliath again.

For 40 days, Goliath came forward every morning and evening and took his stand and shouted this challenge. But no one from David's nation was brave enough to fight him.

During this time, David was sent to bring food to his older brothers who were soldiers in the army trying to protect their country. When he heard about Goliath, he was surprised that no one had tried to defeat him.

Even though he was just a boy, David was very brave. Once he had defended his flock of sheep against a lion and a bear with just his two hands and his slingshot. David was full of confidence because he trusted in God for his strength. He trusted that God would be with him if his heart was right.

David knew the battle against Goliath was a righteous one and that God would be with him. "I will go and fight Goliath, and I will kill this intruder!" he said. Everyone mocked David and laughed at his boast, but he was confident that he could succeed and persuaded the king of his country to let him go and fight Goliath.

When Goliath saw David coming, he laughed. "Am I a dog, that you come at me with sticks? Come here boy, and I will give your flesh to the birds of the air and the beasts of the field!" But David did not back away. He said to Goliath, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, whom you have defied."

As Goliath moved closer to attack him, David ran quickly towards the battle line to meet him. Reaching into his bag and taking out a stone, he aimed it with his slingshot and struck Goliath on the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground. David ran and stood over Goliath. He took Goliath's sword and cut off Goliath's head.

*Ask for a volunteer to repeat the main points of the story. Then ask these questions:*

**? How is the giant Goliath like AIDS in our land?**

David was just a boy with a slingshot, but he killed the giant Goliath who had all sorts of weapons and armor.

**? What can you do to stop AIDS like David stopped Goliath?**

*The point of this question is to help youth consider that through their actions they can stop AIDS from destroying their lives and the lives of others.*



**Life skills activity: Writing an abstinence pledge – 20 minutes**

*Ask for volunteers to read the following pledges/statements to commit to abstinence. You may use other examples if you wish. Or youth can adapt the below examples to make a more personal reflection of their own beliefs. If possible, have copies to hand out or have them posted on the wall.*

#1

Believing in saving myself for marriage, I make a commitment to myself, my family, my friends, my future spouse, and my future children to be sexually abstinent from this day forward until the day I enter a lifelong, committed marriage.

#2

I know I want to have a marriage that is based on love, trust, respect and commitment. On my wedding day, I would like to give my life partner a gift – my sexual purity. I want this and I choose this today!

#3

I've chosen to save sex for marriage. Waiting isn't easy, but waiting is worth it. I've chosen to wait because I know sex is supposed to unite a man and a woman in a way nothing else can.

*Divide youth into groups of 6-8. Ask them to create a pledge/statement about their commitment for themselves. Then ask each group to read their pledge/statement.*



## **Time of commitment – open**

*To be determined by each program/culture. One option is to have youth sign abstinence cards or make a private commitment. Commitment time could be public or private.*





# Frequently asked questions about HIV/AIDS

## **What does HIV/AIDS mean?**

HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. HIV is a virus too small to see which is passed between people through sexual fluids and fresh blood. When a person has this virus, he is considered to be "HIV-positive." If someone is HIV-positive, he can easily become sick. When the HIV-positive person becomes sick with many illnesses that do not go away, then he is said to have AIDS. AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

People with HIV can live very productive lives but most eventually get sick with various illnesses such as tuberculosis, diarrhea, pneumonia and skin sores. If people have access to antiretroviral therapy (ARVs), they are often helped to live long lives. Other medications can help reduce illnesses but there is no cure from any medication or vaccine for HIV/AIDS.

## **How is HIV passed from one person to another?**

HIV is passed between people in three ways:

1. **Sex.** The most common way of getting HIV/AIDS is through sex with a person who is HIV-positive.
2. **Blood to blood.** Someone can be infected with HIV if fresh blood that contains the HIV virus enters their bloodstream. This happens if a person receives HIV-positive blood in a transfusion, although almost all hospitals and clinics test blood to make sure that it does not contain the virus. It can also happen if an infected syringe needle is reused rather than destroyed, if a razor blade or any cutting instrument is used on a person who is HIV-positive and is not properly cleaned before being used on someone else, or if HIV-infected blood enters the blood stream through an open cut or sore.
3. **Mother to child.** A baby can be infected from the mother if the mother is HIV positive. Most babies born to HIV-positive mothers are not infected. But some babies (with treatment this is reduced) become infected during pregnancy, at the time of labor and delivery, or while the baby is breastfeeding.

## **Should an HIV-positive mother breastfeed her baby?**

Some women may have questions about whether they should breastfeed their babies, especially if they know or suspect they are HIV-positive. In settings without adequate healthcare, clean water or financial support for breast milk substitutes, it is recommended that HIV-positive mothers exclusively breastfeed their babies until they are six months old and then transition to other food sources.

This is because the dangers of other health problems from not breastfeeding during the first six months are greater than the risk of giving the baby HIV.

## **Why are young girls more vulnerable to HIV infection than boys?**

There are a number of reasons why girls may be at greater risk for HIV infection. Young girls can get HIV more easily than older women if they have sex before their body is ready. The skin and tissue around their sex organs is not as strong and may tear easily. This makes it easier for the HIV virus to pass from sexual fluids, through fresh blood and into the girl's bloodstream.

Younger girls may have sex with older men, sometimes through marriage, sometimes through sexual abuse, and sometimes for money or gifts. Some men have many sexual partners and bring a great risk of HIV to the girls they have sex with.

Education influences behavior. In some places girls complete fewer classes in school than boys and are not given equal opportunity to learn and gain skills for life. Lack of knowledge may put these girls at a higher risk.

## **How is HIV/AIDS NOT spread?**

It is important to know how HIV/AIDS is NOT spread so we are not fearful of caring for those affected by the disease.

HIV is NOT spread:

- by touching someone with HIV/AIDS
- by mosquitoes or other insects
- by kissing
- by sharing eating utensils—spoons, forks, etc
- by swimming or bathing with someone with HIV/AIDS
- by living in the same house or working with someone with HIV/AIDS
- by using the same toilet

## **How does HIV affect the body?**

You cannot tell by looking at someone if they are infected with HIV. It may be years before someone gets sick with AIDS.

The following are common symptoms that can come with being HIV-positive or even other illnesses. It is important to seek medical help with any of these symptoms:

- fever that comes and goes, but does not go away completely
- diarrhea that comes and goes, but does not go away completely
- frequent cough
- weight loss

Other illnesses that some HIV-positive people get include:

- respiratory illnesses, especially TB and pneumonia
- mouth sores
- skin sores
- some forms of cancer
- mental illness
- blindness

## **How do you know if you are infected with HIV?**

The only certain way to know if a person has HIV is to be tested at a health clinic or testing center.

When a virus enters the body, the body produces special cells called antibodies. By taking a sample of blood or saliva, a health care provider can use an HIV test to check for these antibodies. If they are present, the person is HIV-positive.

However, it can take up to three months after a person is infected with HIV for his body to produce enough antibodies to be detected through an HIV test. This is known as the "window period," the time between when a person is infected and the immune system's response to the virus (antibodies) can be measured. If the person has an HIV antibody test during the window period, the test will be negative, even though this person really does have a lot of the virus in his or her bloodstream and can infect others. Because of this window period, to be sure a person who has had unprotected sex in the last three months does not have HIV, this person will need two blood tests three months apart. Between the tests the person must refrain from sex to avoid infecting themselves and creating another "window" period.

## **What is VCT?**

VCT stands for Voluntary, Counseling, and Testing. VCT is when a person chooses to undergo HIV/AIDS counseling so that they can make an informed decision about whether to be tested for HIV. It is important that people who are not sick come forward and be tested. This will help lessen the stigma of testing. Also, it is important for those who are infected to find out as early as possible so they can better care for their health, avoid infecting others, and prepare for the future.

Special sites for VCT testing have been established in urban and rural communities. At these sites, counseling and testing is provided for a minimal fee or no cost. People who have good pre- and post-test counseling are able to cope better with their results and more likely to look after their health and protect others from infection.

## **Do Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) make it easier to get HIV/AIDS?**

Yes, a person who has a STI is at much greater risk of getting or spreading HIV because these diseases cause sores or breaks in the skin, making it easier for blood or sexual fluids containing HIV to pass from person to person.

## **What can I do to avoid getting HIV?**

1. Boys and girls, men and women, should not have sex until they are married.  
This is the safest way.
2. Before you marry, it is a good idea for you and your partner to be tested for HIV.
3. When you marry, commit to being faithful to your marriage partner (only having sex with your partner) to protect yourself and your partner from infection.
4. If you or your marriage partner does have sex with someone else, use a condom every time you have sex. Go for an HIV test to determine your status and encourage your partner to do the same.

5. A mother who is HIV-positive should carefully think about getting pregnant. It is best for her to avoid getting pregnant, first to protect her own health (pregnancy while being HIV-positive is difficult), but also to avoid passing HIV to a baby. If the mother and father are both HIV-positive, children are left orphans unless their parents' lives can be prolonged with antiretroviral therapy.
6. Avoid blood transfusions, if possible. If a transfusion is essential, be sure the blood has been tested for the virus.
7. Do not share anything that pierces the skin with anyone.
8. If you have another sexually transmitted disease, have it treated immediately. Continue your medicine until it is finished.

### **What about condoms?**

Some youth may ask about condoms. It is important to know the facts. The only 100% effective choice for preventing the spread of HIV through sex is abstinence from sexual activity. If a young person is sexually active, a condom reduces the risk of a person getting HIV/AIDS if used correctly and every time he or she has sex. Studies suggest that when male condoms are used correctly and consistently, they are effective in reducing the risk of getting HIV through sex. There is also a female condom available. There is a great deal of ongoing research into developing new barrier methods of protection.

### **What do you mean by using a condom correctly?**

- The packet should be sealed and not expired (before date on package).
- When opened, the condom should be moist. Never use petroleum jelly or Vaseline on the condom.
- Do not unroll the condom before putting it on. Put the condom on only when the penis is erect (stiff). Pinch the tip of the condom to leave a small empty space to hold the semen and use the other hand to slowly unroll it down the erect penis.
- If the condom tears or has a hole in it, remove it and replace it with a new one.
- Hold the base of the condom when the man withdraws so the condom does not slip off and the semen does not spill.
- After removing the condom, dispose of it properly. Tie the end in a knot and throw it in a pit latrine or bury it.
- Never wash a male condom or try to reuse it.

### **What drugs are available for people living with HIV/AIDS?**

There are many different drugs available to treat people living with HIV. Some of these drugs treat the symptoms and illnesses that often affect people with HIV/AIDS (such as skin rashes, TB, and other STIs). These include fever reducers or pain medications (such as acetometaphin or panadol) and antibiotics.

Other drugs work on the virus itself. These are called antiretroviral (ARV) medications. There are many different types of ARVs and a doctor must decide which combination of drugs is best for a patient. When a person takes ARVs, the speed at which the HIV virus multiplies inside the body can be greatly reduced. A person taking ARVs will usually stay healthy significantly longer than someone who does not take them. It is very important that the patient carefully follow all guidance from their health worker about taking the medicines. ARVs do NOT cure AIDS. A person taking ARVs can still pass the virus to others.

ARV drugs are expensive and still not available to most people with the illness. New international initiatives are lowering the price and increasing availability in some areas. Find out through a local healthcare provider whether ARVs can be made available for people living with HIV/AIDS in your community.

Not all illnesses that result from HIV/AIDS require drugs from the clinic. There are some simple but effective home treatments such as Oral Rehydration Solution that treat conditions like diarrhea. It is important to talk to a doctor or health worker about all traditional and home treatments before using them, as some practices may be harmful to a patient.

Good nutrition and exercise are equally important in keeping healthy. People living with HIV or AIDS need to be included in the daily activities of family and life. They also need spiritual and emotional support.

### **Can someone live normally knowing they are infected with HIV?**

Persons infected with HIV can lead very normal lives for some time. They should continue with all their normal activities such as working a job, walking around, visiting friends and family, and if they go to church, attending church for as long as possible. To avoid spreading the disease to others and re-infecting themselves (which can bring on AIDS more quickly), it is best for an HIV-positive person not to have sex. If they do, they must always use a condom.

### **What can I do for someone with HIV/AIDS?**

Persons living with HIV/AIDS need a friend. They need someone to care for them and help them live as normal a life as possible. You can be a friend.



# Understanding and Working with Youth

## I. Participatory Learning and Facilitation

All people, including children and youth, learn better when they are involved and learning by doing rather than just by listening. All the learning sessions in this book teach through stories, discussion and activities, including games.

Youth love to play and need to have fun. Laughing while learning creates a safe environment for youth to open up and express their emotions and inner thoughts.

Games break down barriers between the facilitator and the youth, helping the young people to be more comfortable with the teacher. When there is safe physical contact and laughing together, young people relax and talk more.

Play is not only important to engage youth, but it has a role in the development of the brain. We want to give young people a safe place to play and to express themselves in the process.

### Creating a good learning environment

- Arrive 30 minutes before the session begins and move desks and chairs if possible so that the youth are sitting in a circle or semi-circle without desks in front of them. You can use mats so they can sit on the floor in a circle. Make it feel as little like school as possible.
- The space should be clean and cheerful.
- Youth should be allowed to say what they feel and, even when they give the wrong answers, should not be made to feel as though they have failed. Sessions should always be a SAFE SPACE, both emotionally and physically. Youth should be allowed to say what they feel and, even when they give the wrong answers, should not be made to feel as though they have failed. Youth should not be punished physically, and even touch during play must be appropriate and not hurtful.
- The space should face away from things that distract attention.
- Change the setting from week to week or month to month, if possible, to add variety to learning.

### Keeping the energy going

- Youth should be engaged whenever possible. **Leaders should remember to talk less and let the youth talk and DO more.**
- The flow between activities should be quick and without delay.
- Leaders should always be prepared with the next activity beforehand.
- Utilize peer educators or other more mature youth as much as possible in helping with games or activities.

## **Dos and don'ts**

### **Do:**

- Make learning fun! Have a sense of humor.
- Involve the youth at all times as much as possible.
- Laugh with the young people.
- Play games with them, don't just instruct them.
- Be consistent in keeping discipline.
- Have rules, explain them to the young people and stick to them.
- Be fair to all of them.
- Show equal love to all of them.
- Let them talk, while guiding them, to allow them to discover important lessons themselves rather than just listening to your prepared instruction.

### **Don't:**

- Preach to them.
- Talk too much and make them do nothing but listen.
- Hit them or threaten to hit them.
- Speak harshly to them.
- Dismiss any comment, unless it is rude or inappropriate.
- Force them to sit facing forward and remain very quiet as if they were in school.

## **Communicating effectively with youth aged 10-14 about sexuality:**

- Listen to them and learn from them.
- Communicate at their level.
- Accommodate their seemingly awkward behaviors
- Have fun, fun, fun!
- Tap into their natural imagination, creativity and desire to communicate.
- Make the message complete and relevant to their daily lives.
- Appreciate and acknowledge them.
- Be flexible (adapt the lesson to fit the needs of the youth).
- Involve them in decision making, giving them ownership and accountability.
- Be vulnerable by giving appropriate examples from your own life.
- Don't use others they know as examples (avoid disrespect or humiliation).
- Appeal to their will, conscience and heart.
- Help youth to see that change can make their lives better.
- Appreciate that at first youth may be reserved, embarrassed, or confused. Take time with them and be open and frank, gradually introducing the topic.

## **Preparing for a session:**

- Give yourself enough time to prepare thoroughly.
- Follow the curriculum provided. Know the lesson well.
- Keep things simple.
- Teach from the heart
- Aim to bring permanent change for the better in each young person whenever you teach or plan a session.
- Variety is very important—a child should know that when they miss club meeting, they are missing something new and wonderful.



## II. Changes and Transitions, and How to Respond

The years between ages 10 and 14 are a time of constant change. This is very normal. Boys and girls of these ages experience significant changes in all aspects of their lives.

### Physical:

#### Girls

Hips enlarge  
Breasts develop  
Pubic and armpit hair grows  
Pimples may appear on face  
Menstruation starts  
Strong-smelling perspiration

#### Boys

Voice becomes hoarse/deepens  
Pimples may appear on face  
Pubic, face, armpit, chest and body hair grows  
Strong-smelling perspiration  
Muscles enlarge  
Sensations – wet dreams, erections, etc.

**Both** boys and girls have big appetites and grow rapidly during puberty, although girls are often taller than boys of the same age because they start puberty earlier. If they don't know how to respond to physical changes and are embarrassed to ask, their personal hygiene can be poor.

### Emotional:

- Both boys and girls begin to compare the changes that they are going through with their peers; this can become a source of conflict.
- Their level of anxiety is often high as they transition into adulthood.
- They may feel very confused about their identity. There may be tension between adult authority and their growing independence and abilities.
- Sensitivity levels increase and they are more self-conscious.
- They often are confused about their emerging sexuality.
- They are critical of themselves and others.
- They prefer group activities.
- They identify themselves with a group socially and form deep friendships.
- From ages 10 to 12 boys and girls generally prefer same-sex groups and are more dependent on their parents. After age 13 they are more willing to associate in mixed groups and are beginning to seek independence from their parents.
- They have a heightened awareness of gender.
- They experience mood swings and seem emotionally unstable.
- In girls, their changing bodies cause self-consciousness and a need to have new clothes that fit and are fashionable.
- They often are confused about their emerging sexuality.
- They are sensitive to criticism and easily become embarrassed.
- They need a lot of encouragement.

*Be careful – treat them with respect and avoid embarrassing them.*

**Spiritual:**

- Curious about beliefs; may question their own belief or belief of their parents
- Need honest answers to honest questions
- Increased sense of belonging to a faith group
- Increased ability to actively participate and take leadership in a faith group’s activities

**Mental:**

- Curiosity is high
- Begin to think abstractly and reflect more
- Easily distracted
- Fantasy and imagination levels are high
- Risk takers who don’t think through the consequences of actions
- Begin establishing goals and dreams for their future
- Begin enjoying challenging questions

**Why this age group is at risk for early sexual activity and HIV:**

- Emerging sexual awareness, but often lack accurate information
- Peer pressure
- Seeking independence, which results in their being on their own in some situations for the first time
- Self esteem is challenged
- Sexual myths and misconceptions prevalent
- Sexual excitement
- Curiosity about sex
- Improved physical appearance
- Adventurous and risk-takers, but often do not think through consequences
- Identification with bad role models

**How young people view themselves:**

**Ages 10-12**

Primarily see themselves as children  
 Feel dependent on parents  
 Hesitant about making choices  
 Don’t see HIV as a personal threat  
 Low sense of their own mortality

**Ages 13-14**

Start to challenge authority and assert their rights and opinions  
 Not sure if they are children or adults  
 Feel capable of making choices  
 Think they know everything  
 Low sense of their own mortality  
 Don’t see HIV as a personal threat

**Things youth aged 10-14 enjoy and appreciate:**

- Playing/games
- Food
- Company of peers (this often determines leisure time)
- Songs
- Competition and challenging activities
- Debating and arguing
- Adventure
- Fantasizing

### **Things youth aged 10-14 enjoy and appreciate (continued)**

- Affirmation and praise
- Experimenting
- Freedom
- Fashion
- Music
- Exercising their independence
- Sports

### **Basic fears of youth aged 10-14:**

- Being different (too intelligent, tall or small—anything that distinguishes them from their peers)
- Death or absence of parents
- Fear of correction
- Being humiliated/ridiculed in front of others
- Fear of loneliness and rejection—that others won't be their friends

## **III. Understanding Youth Aged 10-14**

### *1. They have difficulty understanding their role, whether they are children or adults.*

- They still need games, but more constructive ones.
- Always give them a chance to talk about their feelings and ask questions.
- Explain the new responsibilities they will have as they approach adulthood.
- This is a good time to start developing leadership capacity in them.
- Encourage high self-esteem. This is the most important thing to help them overcome the new challenges they are facing.
- Discuss “hot” topics with them, including sex and their views on sexual matters.
- Show them respect, and model positive adulthood for them. But don't act too old or strict – remember to still have fun with them.
- Show them love in spite of all their uncertainties and instabilities.

### *2. They value friends and like recognition. Befriend them by:*

- Visiting them and their parents at their homes.
- Inviting groups of them into your house.
- Notice each one of them during the sessions.
- Listen when they talk and use some of their ideas.
- If they discuss something with you, do some follow-up to show that you care and remember (ask them about it later, for example).
- If appropriate pray with them and promise to continue praying for them.
- Respect them by keeping their secrets.
- Show them you love them equally, by uplifting those who are feeling inferior and carefully guiding those who feel superior.
- Show you care about them all the time. Know their lives outside of the hour session you spend together each week – school, church, home and friends. Be involved!
- Be trustworthy to them, and be “reachable” – they should know they can come to you at all times.

3. *They are adventurous. You can:*

- Guide them through all of the life changes they are experiencing.
- Help them practice taking on new responsibilities and thinking through real-life situations they will face.
- Since they all have different gifts, try to help each one discover and develop his or her gifts through different activities: school activities, choir, drama, at the market (business skills), leadership, involvement with a faith group, etc.
- Do active learning—play games that help them experience different things.
- Use dramas.
- Encourage questions about their faith and guide them toward discovering answers for themselves.
- Give them time for group discussion instead of always feeding them information.
- Allow them to show their abilities by giving them responsibilities during the sessions, for example, reading stories, leading prayers (if appropriate), singing, presenting dramas or poetry, etc.

4. *They still need boundaries and discipline as teenagers, so:*

- Guide, train and teach them about respecting the norms of society.
- They require a lot of patience, love, firmness, respect, understanding and trustworthiness from you as a facilitator.
- Make sure they know and understand the rules. Discipline must include preventing inappropriate behavior as well as correcting it.
- Do not hurt or embarrass a young person. There are other ways to help them learn.
- Do everything with love.
- Understand what causes youth to misbehave:
  - Boredom
  - A place without rules
  - A leader who is too strict or too soft
  - A leader who doesn't show respect by his or her language or behaviors
  - The group being too big
  - An inappropriate lesson – too childish or unprepared
  - A young person may have problems in other areas of life – family problems, immaturity, school problems, low self-esteem, etc.
  - Testing leaders – wanting to see how far they can push you
  - Lack of attention from others

## IV. Promoting Abstinence to Youth Aged 10-14

### Risk factors that may encourage early sex

<b>Risky practice or attitude</b>	<b>Root causes or barriers to avoiding this action</b>
Sex for favors or material goods	Poverty, desperation, poor self image, seeking acceptance and approval, need to gain status, corrupt adults, naivety, pressure from older men
Attending discos where intimacy, privacy are encouraged	Lack of alternatives for leisure and recreation, bad company, desire for fun, lack of parental guidance, attraction to opposite sex, peer pressure
Alcohol and drug use	Poor role models, desire to escape from problems, negative peer pressure, easy access to drugs and alcohol, low self esteem, media influence, myths, adults who intentionally exploit children
Dressing modes that attract attention sexually	Poor role models, hero worship, media influence, peer pressure, curious about their sexuality, desire for attention from opposite sex
Lack of personally valuing abstinence	Perception that abstinence is not supported by peers, lack moral teachings, poor adult role models, myths

Other attitudes, circumstances, myths and cultural practices in communities and homes can put youth aged 10-14 at risk for sexual exploitation or prevent them from being abstinent. As youth participate in the sessions and begin to open up to you as the facilitator, you may learn a lot about the risks and challenges they are facing. You must be prepared to talk about these issues with the young people openly, without judging them or showing embarrassment. It is important to respect privacy, but also to seek help for a young person who is in danger or who is being abused or exploited.

Risk factors may include: child-headed families; lack of parental guidance; sex being considered taboo and not discussed; poverty; drug and alcohol use; divorce/dysfunctional families; lack of positive role models; poor socialization; child abuse; absentee parents; initiation ceremonies; developmental issues; child marriages and religious match-making; wife inheritance (uncles abuse children); step parents or foster parents; child prostitution; media influence and representation of sex; witchcraft; sex as a recreational activity, to be fashionable or as a means of earning favors or material things.

Myths that you may hear and need to refute include: sex is proof of manhood or womanhood; it will enlarge breasts or make menses easier; sex is cleansing (that is, sex with a virgin cures AIDS); HIV is not present in same-sex relationships; condom use is 100 percent effective in preventing HIV.

**Positive practices that promote the delay sex and reduce HIV risk:**

<b>Positive practice or attitude to protect youth and encourage abstinence</b>	<b>Barriers to accepting this action</b>	<b>Information, attitude or skill needed to promote this behavior</b>
Avoiding high-risk areas	Negative peer pressure, curiosity, parental expectation, desire for independence	Decision-making skills, taking responsibility, understanding risks and consequences
Keeping the right company, positive peer pressure	Negative peer influence, lack of support from adults, fear of rejection, negative media influences	Decision-making skills, setting life goals, how to choose the right friends, self esteem, moral standards
Staying occupied with safe and healthy activities	Lack of recreation facilities, negative peer pressure, curiosity, desire for independence	Assertiveness, decision making, positive peer support, moral values, opportunities for healthy fun and recreation
Setting boundaries in relationships	Lack of skills to set boundaries, low self esteem, fear of rejection, rape	Self esteem, self awareness and assertiveness, goal setting, communication skills, good adult role models
Saying no to alcohol, drugs and gifts for sex	Fear of rejection, low self esteem, poverty, curiosity	Positive peer support, self esteem, self awareness and assertiveness, goal setting
Reporting suspicious or inappropriate behavior to a responsible adult	Fear of rejection or retaliation, rebellion, embarrassment	Responsibility, integrity, truthfulness, dependability, self confidence



# Protecting our Youth

It is important to protect the youth in our care from sexual contact with adults. We can best do this by modeling appropriate behaviors with young people and by holding our peers responsible for appropriate behaviors as well. Protecting our youth helps them to grow up strong and healthy and helps us protect our reputations and the reputation of our community. We should strive to be known for our high standards in protecting our young people.

## **Appropriate Behaviors:**

- Do nothing in secret. Act in such a way that you need not be afraid to have all your actions known.
- Meet with youth participants of the opposite sex only in public areas, or under the supervision of an adult of the opposite sex.
- Be careful to give youth gifts only in an appropriate manner. This means no expensive or inappropriate gifts and no gifts for only selected youth.
- Be careful how you touch youth in your care. Touching young people sexually (touching their breasts or buttocks, or stroking their face or hair) is always inappropriate. Other touching is inappropriate if it makes the young person uncomfortable or is focused only on a certain young person or group of youth.
- Hold the same standards of behavior and performance for all of your participants. In this way your reputation is safe from accusations of favoritism due to sexual motivations.
- Never engage in sexual jokes or teasing with your youth. If it is appropriate to talk about sex with your participants, do so only in a professional manner and in a public setting. If a young person of the opposite sex needs to discuss sexual issues individually either direct them to a member of their opposite sex or have an adult of their opposite sex present.
- If you have questions about the behavior of one of your peers bring it to his/her attention and if necessary to the attention of his/her supervisor. Be willing to submit to questions about your own behavior. Strive to be known as a person of honor, whose life can withstand scrutiny.

Remember when we protect our youth we are also protecting our future.



# Using Small Groups

Discussion questions asked by the facilitator can help participants learn through their own experiences. Discussions can be in a large group which usually need the facilitator to help moderate or in smaller groups or pairs where more people are likely to share and participate.

Whether or not to use small groups depends on the types of questions being asked, the amount of time available, and how well people know one another.

- Pairs of two people are useful for intimate sharing or practicing a skill.
- Groups of three are useful for getting everyone to think and participate actively.
- Groups of four to six are useful for sharing ideas and insights in a less competitive or intimidating environment than a large group.

Here are some ideas for how to form small groups in a fun way:

1. **Counting off:** First divide the number of participants by the size of group you want in order to determine how many groups you will have. For example: if there are thirty people in your large group and you want six people in each small group, you will need five groups total. Next ask participants to count off depending on the number of groups. For example if you have five groups count - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; 1, 2, 3, 4, 5... - until all have a number. Then form groups by number—all "1's" in a group, all "2's" in another, etc.
2. **Mingle-mingle:** Ask participants to stand in the center of the room and move around at random (they can also do a circle dance). Then shout out the number of the group size, for example "six." Participants then quickly reach out and grab the people nearest to them to form a group that size.
3. **Common traits:** If groups don't have to be exactly even, use things like the month they were born in, their age, their favorite color, or their favorite type of food. Be careful to not pick any traits that would reinforce conflicts of your culture or society.
4. **Drawing a number:** Write out numbers on small pieces of paper relating to the number of groups you need. Have participants draw a number from the basket.
5. **Different types of sweets:** Same process as above, but use different types of candy instead of numbers.

# Using Dramas and Role-plays

## About dramas

*Why use drama to communicate a message?*

- It gets and holds people's attention.
- An educational drama is often easier to relate to and remember than a lecture.
- It encourages people to start talking to one another about the problem or situation.
- It provides information and encourages people to think about a problem or situation in a non-threatening environment.

*Tips on performing an educational skit or drama:*

- Consider the message the drama is trying to share and be sure that the characters and the action clearly communicate this.
- Understand the character you are playing as well as the other characters in the skit.
- In a formal skit it is best to stick to the agreed upon script during the performance. Don't add lines or new ideas without discussing it with the other actors first.
- If you are using a script, study and memorize your lines.
- Face the audience when you are speaking or gesturing, your back is not very expressive! Only turn your back when it's part of the intended action.
- Be sure the audience understands you. Speak clearly and loud enough for all to hear.
- Practice the skit before you perform it!

## About role-plays

Role-plays are a special kind of drama that allow participants to demonstrate or practice their interpersonal skills. In a role-play there are no prepared words for actors to say. Instead, a general situation is described and participants say and do whatever they think is in character with their role and the situation.

*Helps for directing a role-play:*

- Make sure each participant clearly knows which role they are to play and that they stay in character during the role-play.
- Stop the action as soon as the point is close to being made or has just been made. Say something like "stop" or "cut." Do not let the role-play drag on.
- If participants do not model good behaviors during the role-play, you may want them to repeat the role-play. Give them some instruction on how to improve.
- After a role-play ends, discuss what happened with the larger group. This helps participants process what they have learned.
- If you think it would be helpful, ask for someone who can think of a different way of responding to the same situation to repeat the role-play.
- Always thank participants for their contribution.

# Credits

## *Session 1*

- 1 Cunningham, D. and Cunningham, J. Adventures Unlimited: Growing up in today's world. Scripture Union. 1993.

## *Session 4*

- 1 Cunningham, D. and Cunningham, J. Adventures Unlimited: Growing up in today's world. Scripture Union. 1993.

## *Session 6*

- 1 Better Choices. New Life World Aid, Inc. 2002.
- 2 Ibid

## *Session 8*

- 1 Cunningham, D. and Cunningham, J. Adventures Unlimited: Growing up in today's world. Scripture Union. 1993.

