

ExtraCurricular RiskReduction andAvoidance Handbook forYouth



Ministry of Education and Training



what is

in this handbook

What is in this Hand book

Acknowledgements

Introduction

Part I: Adolescence

Being healthy during adolescence

Our bodies

Sex and sexuality

Part II: Developing life skills

Skills of knowing yourself

Relationship skills

Effective communication

Thinking skills

Love and sex

Protecting yourself against rape

Part III: Prevention of STIs and HIV

STIs

HIV and AIDS

What is the risk

HIV Prevention

Knowing your status and living positively

Some of the major causes of HIV

Part IV: Sex, Gender and HIV

Part V Substance Abuse

Part VI: Teenage Pregnancy

Using Contraceptives

Part VII: Taking action

Collective action

Part VIII: Important words

introduction

Welcome to this Handbook. It contains important information which you can use in your life and with your friends, family and in your school and community.

This Handbook will help you to:

- Increase your in-depth knowledge of HIV and related issues
- Develop your life skills so that you can put your knowledge into practice
- Put into practice knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help you to reduce and avoid risks that can make you vulnerable to being infected by or infect others with HIV and AIDS.

This Handbook is your personal copy which you can read on your own or you can use with other young people in your school or community.

So, once again, welcome to this Handbook. It gives you detailed and accurate technical information as well as key aspects of life skills so that it can act as a supportive and knowledgeable resource for you as you make decisions about important issues in your lives, in particular those related to reproductive health and HIV prevention.

Note: The manual uses the terms youth and young people, interchangeably — all referring to people from 10 to 24 years of age, unless otherwise specified. The term adolescence is used to refer to the time just before and after puberty (when they are teenagers)

Part One

1

adolescence

Adolescence is usually between the ages of 10 and 19. It is the time when many changes become visible...

- Your bodies change and grow until you have all the characteristics of grown men and women.
- Your feelings change often very suddenly and for no reason.
- Your thinking changes. You ask more questions, you want reasons for many things and you want to understand more.

All these bring changes to the way you relate with others. In the handbook you will learn more about these changes and how to deal with them.

Adolescence is also a time of discovery. You discover new talents and abilities that you did not know that you had. For example, you may discover that you have a talent for music, acting, mathematics, helping your friends to understand their problems. All these discoveries help you to understand yourself and your abilities.

Growing and changing

It is important to be clear about the physical and emotional changes, what they mean, how they affect your behaviour and how to cope with them so that you can deal with them in an appropriate manner. The list below shows specific changes that take place in both boys and girls:

Physical Changes

Boys

- They grow quickly
- Muscles become strong
- Voice cracks and becomes deep
- They start to have wet dreams
- Pubic hair starts to grow around the private parts and under arms
- They develop lumps around the nipple
- The hair may become oily
- They may sweat more heavily and have body smell
- Their weight may also change

Girls

Grow taller, bigger (often before boys)

- Breasts begin to enlarge
- Hips widen
- They may have pimples
- Hair grows around genitals and under arms
- They start to menstruate
- The hair may become oily
- They may sweat more heavily and have body smell
- Their weight may also change

Emotional Changes

- Their moods may change every now and then
- They are often confused about emotional and physical changes
- They begin to have sexual feelings and curiosities
- They begin to be attracted to people of the opposite sex
- They begin to seek acceptance by peers through competition and achievement
- They may also become aggressive
- Their moods may change every now and then
- They are often confused about emotional and physical changes
- They become very concerned with physical appearance
- Self-esteem determined by others
- They form relationships in order to feel accepted
- They look at themselves in the way other people see and think about them.

Behaviour changes

- Many boys show interest in having a relationship with girls
- Some boys start to have sexual relationships with girls and this is not right at their age
- Some boys start engaging in risky sexual behaviours and this is not right at their age
- Some girls start to masturbate relieving sexual tension
- Many girls show interest in having a relationship with boys
- Some girls start to have sexual relationships with boys
- Some girls start to indulge in transactional sex and this makes them vulnerable to HIV
- Some girls start engaging in risky sexual behaviours and this makes them vulnerable to HIV
- Many girls get married, sometimes by choice, many not by choice especially in the rural areas and this is not right

All these changes may make you feel awkward, shy and self-conscious. Talking about these changes with family members and friends may help you feel better about them.

Being healthy during adolescence

During adolescence, it is important to:

- Wash your hands after using a toilet or touching anything which could be harmful to your health,
- Clean your bodies regularly
- Eat clean food etc.
- Wash the armpits, private parts and the area between the legs well to avoid bad smell from sweat of body fluids.

Hygiene for boys

- Boys need to make sure that they open the foreskin of the penis and wash inside.
- They should also wash the area between their buttocks.

Hygiene for girls

- Be gentle with vagina when washing especially during puberty because it is very sensitive and you don't want to cut or bruise it when washing.
- During menstruation, personal hygiene is key to remaining healthy (see below on menstruation)

Nutrition

Because of the rapid growth, adolescents need to be careful about their eating habits. When you are at this stage, make sure that you eat three basic food groups.

Risky behaviours at adolescence

Adolescence is also a time when the choices you make can strongly affect your health for the rest of your lives.

- Having sex at an early age can make it easier to be infected with STIs and HIV, which will also affect your mental and social health.
- Girls may get pregnant which will affect all aspects of their health as they are not mentally and socially ready to have babies
- Some young people start drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes or abusing drugs. All of these can badly affect your physical health as well as your mental and social health.

Therefore, as you grow up, you need to make choices that lead to your overall health and well being.

Sexual and reproductive health (SRH)

Because the majority of the physical changes that take place in adolescence are related to the genitals (the sexual parts) and enable boys and girls to produce babies, sexual and reproductive health is a very important part of the life of adolescents and young people. In addition, the changes taking place in your bodies also affect your desires to have sex or not, and can lead to risky behaviours which will have a permanent effect on your lives when it is too late for you to change. You don't want to spend the rest of your life saying 'ah! If only'

The first aspect is for you as a young person to know your body, particularly those parts related to SRH and how they change, and how those changes affect your health as a whole.

Our bodies

Female External Genitalia

- The clitoris is the area of sexual arousal for a woman. About the size of a pea, it enlarges during stimulation.
- The vaginal opening is where:
 - a) menstrual blood and tissue leave the body
 - b) the penis is inserted during sexual intercourse
 - c) expansion occurs during delivery, to allow the birth of a child

Female Internal Genitalia

- Ovaries contain thousands of immature egg cells
- Monthly, the ovary releases a mature egg, which travels through the fallopian tube to the uterus
- If an egg is fertilized by sperm, the fertilized egg generally attaches to the wall of the uterus, which supports the growth of a foetus. If the egg is not fertilized, the egg, tissue, and blood are shed during menstruation.

Male External Genitalia

Males can be circumcised or uncircumcised. In circumcised males, the foreskin of the penis is removed, exposing the tip of the penis. In uncircumcised males, the foreskin covers the tip of the penis. It is now recommended that boys be circumcised to reduce the chance of getting STIs and HIV (see section on male circumcision).

Male Internal Genitalia

- Testicles produce sperm. Males have two testicles, which are contained in a sac called the scrotum.
- The vas deferens carries sperm from the testicles to the penis during stimulation.
- Sperm and fluid are ejaculated from the penis through the urethra.
- Beginning with his first ejaculation, a man is fertile for his whole life.

Questions and Answers on our bodies and puberty

There is something wrong with you if one testicle is smaller than the other

False: It is in fact common. One testicle, usually the left one, normally hangs lower than the other one. This is the way that the body protects the testicles from being painfully pressed together.

What are erections?

Erections take place when the penis fills with blood and stands up straight.

- Erections begin in infancy; younger boys do not have control when erections occur. As they grow older, boys learn to control them better
- Erections in young boys can happen for no reason at all or as boys develop sexual desire and think about sexual things.
- It is common for a boy to wake up with an erection. This is healthy and normal

Wet dreams:

It is when a milk-like fluid comes out of a penis when boys or young men have sexual dreams. This is natural and happens to nearly every boy so it is nothing to feel ashamed about. You can talk to someone you trust to get more information about this if you want.

If a boy has an erection it is a sign that he must have sex or masturbate, otherwise his health will be affected

False: An erection can be controlled by doing something that will occupy the mind and once you do that the erection will go down on its own without causing any harm. He will not be able to urinate easily during the erection because a muscle blocks off the bladder but once the erection goes down he can urinate easily.

Masturbation is a form of safer sex

True: Masturbation can be a safe alternative to acting on sexual feelings, preventing early sex, or abstaining until marriage.

Big breasts show that a girl is sexually active

False: Some girls have big breasts, others have small breasts.

Menstruation

A menstrual period is the normal, healthy shedding of blood and tissue from the lining of the uterus through the vaginal opening. It starts when a little blood comes slowly out of the vagina and is absorbed in the panties

It:

- Is the first visible sign that a young girl can become pregnant
- Is often irregular in the beginning but will become more regular with age
- Can start as early as age 9 or as late as age 16
- Can last from three to seven days and happens about once a month for most girls

If you are a girl and start your menstruation, talk to the adult that you trust about it.

Common physical symptoms associated with menstruation:

- Cramps and stomach pains
- Bloating (feeling full)
- weight gain,
- special appetite for certain foods,
- swollen or painful breasts,
- swollen hands or feet,
- skin problems,
- headaches,
- dizziness,
- changing moods

NB. Relief can be found with pain relievers, hot water compresses, herbal teas, or other local remedies. If these do not help, she should visit a health provider (clinic nurse or doctor) to discuss the matter.

Personal hygiene is very important during menstruation. There are different products that can absorb blood, such as sanitary pads, tampons, clean rags, or towels. It is important to change the pads regularly to avoid odour or itching. This means that girls should carry pads/rags with them even when going to school so that they can change when necessary.

Menstruation shows that a girl can become pregnant, but only if she has sex.

True: Menstruation is a sign that the ovaries have started to produce eggs which can be fertilised by a male's sperm

If a girl has sex when menstruating or just after finishing menstruating she cannot get pregnant

False: A girl who is menstruating can get pregnant as long as they have unprotected vaginal sex with a male who produces.

Under normal circumstances menstruation stops when a female is pregnant. It starts again some time afterwards.

True: Failing to have a period is often the first sign that a girl/woman is pregnant

Menstruation should be kept secret because it is a private matter.

False: It is important that girls understand what is happening to them so they should ask an adult they trust

During their periods, girls cannot do everything that they normally do.

False: Menstruation is normal. Some may need pain relievers to relieve their discomfort.

Sex and sexuality

Adolescence is the time when you become more aware of your sexuality, which includes sex.

Sex refers to the biological and the physical differences between males and females.

Sex refers to:

- The physical characteristics that make a person male or female
- The action of having sexual intercourse or other pleasurable sexual activities like fondling, kissing etc. but in your case, it is too early and can be very risky.

Sexuality It refers to all the things we enjoy and feel as males and females, including our bodies, our clothes, the way we look, walk, talk, dance, sing, think about boys and girls, men and women and express our sexual feelings.

Many things can happen to young people which strongly affect their sexuality and their lives such as sexual abuse. They need to know how to protect themselves and society has to ensure a strong protective environment for them.

As your body and feelings are changing so fast, you should talk to parents, or other adults you trust. This is often better than just asking peers who may be as confused as you are inside.

Part Two 2

developing lifeskills

Skills that individuals use to deal with challenges that face them in life. In using Lifeskills, you consider your values and knowledge so as to avoid risk taking behaviours and protect yourself against HIV. Lifeskills help us to protect ourselves and others from getting HIV, know our HIV status, make healthy choices in relation to our sex and sexuality and support those who live with HIV.

The life skills can be divided into three main categories

1. Skills of knowing yourself

a). Self awareness

As you grow up, you need to know yourself, your interests, your talents and strengths as well as your weaknesses so that you can challenge them. You need to ask yourself:

- Who am I?
- What do I like to do and why?
- What things can I do?
- What things am I not able to do?
- What things in life do I not like and why?

Once you have understood who you are and your good and bad qualities, you also have to learn to appreciate them so that you can manage them well. Then other people will not have much control over you by using your weaknesses or your strengths.

b). Self esteem

Self esteem is about the way you look at yourself as a person. Some people have a very low self esteem about themselves because they compare themselves with others. In our country in particular, your people can have a low self esteem if they:

- Come from a poor family
- They do not wear designer clothes like their peers

- Are not good in sports
- They have been told that they are not beautiful or handsome
- They are not very good in class

However, we need to recognise that we are individuals who are:

- * *Unique*- no other person is like you. There is only one you with the talents that you have
- * *Special*- You are not just a useless person. You are very special to your family, friends and the people around you because you have something good to offer
- * *Precious*- If we lose you to drugs or HIV and AIDS, or anything at all, we have lost a very important person. You are important.
- * *Born for a purpose*- You are not here because you were born accidentally! No, you are here because you have special talents and abilities that will help others in this world. Make sure that you discover those talents and use them well for the benefit of yourself and other people around you.

Exercise:

Write down some of the good things that you do for others in the family and at school. For example, "I am a very important person because I help my parents by going to the shop for them"

c). Coping with and managing emotions

You also need to know how to manage your feelings. It is very important to learn to manage very strong feelings such as anger, sexual feelings, or jealousy.

Exercise:

You are a boy/girl and you have strong sexual feelings but you don't want to have sex. Write down five (5) things that you would do to deal with the sexual feeling.

d). Goal setting

A goal is something you want to achieve in life. For example, "I will get a first class in Std 7". Strong positive goals will help you to avoid risk taking behaviours.

Exercise

Write a goal about what you will do to avoid getting HIV infection if you are negative. If you are positive write a goal about what you will do to protect others from getting HIV from you and also protecting yourself from getting reinfection. Keep this goal for yourself and make sure that you reach it.

e). Decision making

Once you have set your goals, you need to make the right decisions to be able to reach those goals. If you have to make an important decision, you have to ask yourself the following questions:

What is the problem that I have to make a decision on?

What are the choices that I have?

Which of the choices will be good for me?

Which choices will give me bad results?

Do I know enough to make that decision?

Do I have enough information?

If I don't have enough information, where can I get it?

Where can I go for guidance?

Exercise:

What would you do if your boyfriend/girlfriend told you that you have to make sex with them if you love them?

f). Resilience

Resilience is the ability to bounce back. You will definitely face problems and challenges in your life but if you are resilient, you will remain determined to reach your goals and not be discouraged by such setbacks.

Exercise:

You want to become a doctor and you fail your class 7 final examination. What would you do? Would you leave school? Would you repeat the class and work hard? Or would you just do what your parents tell you to do? Why?

g). Values and attitudes

The way you make decisions is also influenced by your values and attitudes.

Values refer to what you like and what you don't like in life. The overall set of values that you have is called your value system. The values that you have influence your feelings, your thinking and your action. That is why they are so important.

Attitudes are generally good or bad opinions you have towards a place, thing, issue, or event.

You need to understand:

- What your attitudes and values are?
- Why you hold such values and attitudes?
- How they affect others?
- Who or what influences you to have such attitudes and values?

Exercise:

What is your attitude towards sex before marriage? Why do you have this attitude?

2.Relationship skills

Our lives are built on relationships. We need to understand how we form relationships and to develop skills which will help us decide how to choose wisely in relationships, how better to associate with others and deal with the challenges that arise while relating to others.

For relationships to grow, respect, care and responsibility are all important.

g). Friendship

The time of adolescence and youth is a time when young people are very strongly influenced by their peers and their friends. The friends we have show a lot about what kind of person we are.

This is why you need the skills of choosing the kind of friends who give positive pressure to set and follow positive goals. You need to understand why and how you make friends. Below is a definition of who a friend is:

- A friend is a person you can trust and with whom you can share common interests, beliefs, or values.
- A friend is someone who is prepared to advise you wisely to avoid risky or harmful behaviours such as drugs and alcohol, early sex or unsafe sex etc.
- A friend is someone who always encourages you to remain true to your positive values.

Exercise

Write down the name of your friend (s) and then ask yourself the following questions about them:

- Do they like you for who you are or do they want to change you to be what they like?
- Do they take your opinion as important?
- Do they speak and do things that make you feel important?
- Does your relationship with them make you a better person?
- Are things that you do together helpful to other people?
- Are they people who encourage you to think well of other people?
- Do you share the same interests with them
- Do you find it easy to think about good things when you are with them?
- Do you enjoy being with them
- Are you free when you are with them?

If your answer to these questions is yes, then you have good friends. If your answer is no, your friend is not good and it will be good to change such a friend.

h). Peer pressure

Peers influence your life, even if you don't always realize it. You learn from them, and they learn from you. Sometimes peers influence each other in bad ways. For example, a few friends in school might try to get you out of class with them. When peers influence you to do bad things you have to be able to say "no".

Sometimes you may find that the only way to say "no" to peer pressure is by changing your group of friends or peers and here are some practical tips of doing it:

- Gradually pull out of their group once you have decided to leave them
- Find another circle of friends that fits in with your values
- You can start the new circle of friends with one or two people
- Start spending more and more time with the new group
- Never hold grudge against any of the old group members
- Be friends with people that build you up
- Make an effort to build the new group.

i). Assertiveness means telling someone exactly what you want, in a way that does not seem rude or threatening. It includes looking the person in the eye when speaking and sticking to your position.

Some practical ways in which you can be assertive

Steps/Description

You can say....

Explain exactly how you feel, explain how the problem or the behaviour of the person has affected you and how you feel about it.

"I feel....."

Explain exactly what aspect of the person's behaviour causes problems for you
Explain the behaviour of the person that causes you a problem and why it is causing you a problem

"I am not happy when you....."

Accept the person's problem, put yourself in their shoes and try to show understanding of why they behaved the way they did.

"I understand that you also have this problem.....But....."

Make a specific request, show them specifically what you want

"I would be happy if you could....."

Ask for the person's opinion on what you have said, ask this person to respond to your request.

"I would like to hear your opinion on this issue....."

Listen to the person and then summarise, listen to this person and then summarise what they have just said.

"If I hear properly you are saying....."

If you agree with one another

Accept If you agree together, thank them. *“Thank you for understanding.....”*
In order to be assertive, you need to practise standing up for yourself, to be able to say ‘no’ in a strong voice, looking the person in the eye even if s/he is your best friend or boy/girlfriend.

Exercise

Your friend advises you to steal a pencil from your classmate and you don't like it. What will you do and say to show them that you don't agree?

j). Negotiating skills

Negotiating means discussing an issue with the other person to reach an understanding or agreement for your own good or for the good of both of you. As you negotiate be aware that people use pressure tactics to get you to do what they want. They may:

Argue/Reason: For example they may say, “Why not? Everyone’s doing it!”, “What do you think can happen?” “You’re old enough now”, “Just this once.”

Reassurance (no problem): For example they may say “Nothing will go wrong”, “I’ll take care of everything”, “You can’t get pregnant if you have it just once/the first time”, “But I love you, Do you think I’d want to harm you?”

Put down: For example they may say, “You’re just afraid”, “Don’t be childish”, “I thought you were a man”

Threaten: For example they may say, “Do it or goodbye”, “I’ll find someone else who will”, “I can hurt you if you don’t”.

The main ways of negotiating are as follows:

Delay: It means not being quick to make a decision until you have had time to think seriously about the issue. You might say, ‘I need time to think about it/talk to a friend’, ‘Can we talk about it later? I am not ready to make a decision now’. What’s the hurry?’ That gives space for thinking and deciding. Delay also gives space for bringing in others to support you.

Bargain. It is trying to find a solution both sides can accept, for example, suggesting a different activity. You may say, “Can we do... instead of...”, “How about if we try...?” “What can make us both happy?”

Refuse. Say ‘no’ clearly, and if necessary, leave. This is the easiest but sometimes that is not the best answer. For example, in real life many men/boys

do not take no for an answer from a girl and they can threaten, insult, even rape to prove they are the boss.

3. Effective communication

One of the keys to good communication is when we listen carefully to others. Listening to others requires a decision to pay attention and reflect on what a person is hearing. If we do not listen carefully communication with others may breakdown.

For example, instead of listening carefully:

- People think about what they are going to say so they do not pay attention to what the other person is saying.
- People are just looking for something in what the other person says in order to express their point of view.
- People listen selectively – they hear only what they want to hear.
- People interrupt and finish the other person’s statement, changing it for their own purposes.

So you need to practise active listening. This includes the following:

- Paying full attention to another person.
- Maintaining eye contact and using facial expressions and other signs to show that you are interested in what the person is saying.
- Not interrupting the speaker.
- Asking relevant questions but not too many.
- Paraphrasing skills; for example “if I understand correctly”, “so you were saying that”, or “are you saying”

Remember: when others speak, listen. Don’t think of what you are going to say next because you will miss the content of their message.

Exercise:

Think about the time when you were talking with someone recently. Did you listen carefully or not? What will you do in the future to make sure you listen carefully?

4. Thinking skills

As we saw earlier, making decisions is important to reduce and avoid risks in life. In making decisions, we need to think thoroughly about issues. This means

- Using your head to think carefully about things and making decisions based on such thinking
- Seeing in advance the potential risks of certain actions
- Being able to manage your emotions

- Being able to respond quickly and appropriately to whatever situation or pressure you are facing including solving new challenges.

Exercise:

Think about a very important decision that you made recently. Did you use thinking skills in making that decision or did you do just as others told you. What will you do to improve your thinking skills in making decisions?

Questions and Answers on life skills

Life skills education is just another phrase for HIV prevention

False: Life skills are very important for HIV prevention because they enable people to put their knowledge into practice but life skills are important for all other aspects of youth development including democracy and governance and avoiding other risky behaviours such as substance abuse, entrepreneurship, leadership etc.

It is good for boys to be assertive but not girls

False: Many girls have been abused or destroyed their lives because they lacked assertiveness

You cannot abstain without having life skills

True: life skills are very important for resisting partner or peer pressure to have sex or take part in other activities which might lead to sex. You need assertiveness, negotiating skills, to be able to cope with your emotions etc.

Sometimes the best life skill is to run as fast as possible

True: in some situations the person pressurising you is so aggressive and dangerous that it is impossible to negotiate. The only safe method is to run away as fast as possible and scream or shout to alert other people

Self esteem means you think you are better than everyone else

False: Self esteem means knowing your strengths and talents as well as your weaknesses but being proud of what you are and what you can contribute to society

Having clear goals in life is a very good way to resist pressures from others

True: If you have clear goals in life, you have a strong reason for resisting

Love and sex

What does Love mean?

Love is a good thing for all people and we need to be able to deal with it so that

we have healthy relationships with others. Some young people confuse love with other intense emotions such as sexual attraction, lust, infatuation, jealousy and control. At your age it is not wise to start love relationships. It is important that you use your energy and time on your studies. When you grow up, you may begin to be attracted to the opposite sex and you should not confuse strong emotional feelings (infatuation) with love. Below is a chart which helps you to try to think about your relationship and whether it is really love:

How do I know it is love?

Love is:

Patient
Kind
Fair
Accepting
Giving
Honest
Long-lasting

Infatuation is:

Quick, looking for instant acceptance and affection
Hurtful, can damage self-esteem
Selfish, focusing on one person's needs
Demanding, can try to change someone
Jealous, can limit other friendships and relationships
Deceitful, can hide the truth
Short-term, based heavily on immediate emotions and feelings.
Wants instant gratification.

Benefits of abstinence

You may be in a boy/girl relationship but it is important for you to abstain from sexual intercourse at your age. Abstinence has the following benefits:

When you abstain you:

- Are completely protected from pregnancy and STIs, including HIV
- Show that one can resist peer or social pressure
- Are without worry, guilt, or shame
- Respect God's gift of sex within the covenant of marriage
- Preserve virginity for the sacrament of marriage
- Honour your body
- Can concentrate on personal goals and desires

Since at your age you should abstain from sex, here are some practical tips on avoiding getting involved in sex before marriage:

- Decide in advance that you will not have sex at your age
- Control your thoughts by not watching, listening to and reading pornographic and erotic stuff
- When you have strong sexual desires (and they are natural) stand up and do something to distract yourself
- Remember that the most important sexual organ that you have is your brain and what you think about is what you do, so take control of your thoughts when it comes to sexual desires

You must also take care that you are not raped whether in a relationship or not. Here are some practical advices on how you can protect yourself:

1. Trust your instincts.

If someone makes you feel uncomfortable or threatened, pay attention to your feelings and act on them. Keep away. Try not to get into dangerous situations.

2. Do not be alone with someone whom you do not know well enough to trust.

Go out with a group of trusted friends or stay with the group.

3. Do not go to someone's house if no one else is at home.

Do not go to places where no one else is around.

4. If you are going out, make sure other people know where you are going and when to expect you back home.

These could be friends, parents, or other family members.

5. Know your own limits.

If you do not want to have sex, say so clearly from the very beginning.

6. Always have money when you go on a date.

You can get home safely on your own if necessary.

7. Share the costs of things with friends.

Do not let him or her think that you owe any sexual favours in return for money spent on you.

8. Do not take alcohol or drugs.

Alcohol and drugs can make it difficult for you to be clear about your limits. They can make it hard for you to explain yourself.

9. If you are pressurised, do not be afraid to say "no" and mean it.

Give a firm, strong refusal. Look at him or her in the eye. Do not smile or look away shyly. Do not give the person the impression that you want to be coaxed or convinced.

10. If someone tries to force you, try to run away and scream for help loudly and continuously.

It should also be pointed out though, that even if a young person has entered a dangerous situation because of not following the above, there is no excuse for rape or abuse.

11. Avoid getting involved in unhealthy Relationships

In an unhealthy relationship you increasingly feel scared, confused, and insecure.

- Your partner constantly criticizes you and puts you down
- Your partner is jealous and controlling and may use violence
- You never know where you stand.
- You feel pressured into things you don't want to do including sex.

12. Be careful of relationship with older persons?

Some of the unhealthy relationships involve sexual relationships between adults and adolescents. These are called intergenerational relationships because they involve two generations of people (young and old). Such relationships at your age are not healthy because

- They are completely not your age. They have different interests, friends etc.
- Once you become involved, you lose the chance to mix with your peers. They often want to turn you into their own property and are jealous of any other relationships you may have
- They just want to use you for their sexual pleasure
- They are often married and want to keep the relationship hidden.
- They are more likely to be infected with STIs and even HIV and may infect you

When you have had sex before and you want to stop

Sometimes we can find ourselves having engaged in sex and may feel that we want to stop and start all over again. It is important to know that although this may not be very easy, it is possible for both boys and girls to decide to stop having sex before marriage

If you decide to stop and start all over remember the following:

- It is not too late to change your lifestyle now and it is possible to change it because you have inner strength in you to do it
- No matter what you have done in the past, you are still an important person
- No matter what you did in the past you can still have a good future
- You can learn to say "No" to sex

Some practical advices on what to do

- Decide not to do it again
- Leave the company of people (male or female) that cause you to engage in sexual activities

- ❑ Be friends with other people who have the same goal as yours so that you can support one another
- ❑ If possible find an elderly respectable person who can continually counsel you and discuss your struggles, challenges and sexual desires
- ❑ Avoid watching and reading pornographic erotic material

Protecting yourself against Rape

Rape is when someone forces you to have sex with them when you do not want to have sex. You have every right to say “no” to sex anybody who rapes you is doing what is against the laws of Lesotho. Rape can cause us trauma and we can also get HIV from a rapist if they have it. It is therefore important for us to know how to protect ourselves from rape including knowing what to do if raped.

How you can prepare yourself against rape

- ❑ Bear in mind that you can be raped anytime. Never think it will never happen to you
- ❑ Avoid walking in places like back roads and short cuts where rape is likely to happen
- ❑ If it is someone you have an affair with and you suspect something wrong may happen,
 - Tell them to leave or you leave. Do not worry about hurting their feelings.
 - Let your “no” be strong and firm and if they insist, tell them you realise they want to rape you
- ❑ Be careful of what is happening around you and if you realise somebody is following you, go to the nearest shop or house if you think it is safe
- ❑ Don’t ask for lift from people you are not familiar with
- ❑ Avoid walking alone. Have someone to travel with if it is possible
- ❑ Avoid walking alone at night

What you do if you are faced with a rapist

Sometimes we can try to avoid being raped but we may find that we still need to get prepared if we find ourselves faced with a rapist. We should try not to panic and do the following:

- ❑ Examine the situation and if it’s possible run away
- ❑ Fight, scratch, and shout out for help instead of asking for mercy from the rapist. However be careful that they are not having dangerous weapon on them or they may harm you.
- ❑ If it is somebody you know,
 - Refuse very strongly and firmly. Make it clear to them that you

- are refusing
- o Don't hesitate to ask them whether they are really raping you
- o Don't smile if it is somebody you know. Don't even bother about the relationship that may be spoiled because it is your body that you must protect

What you do if you are raped

Hopefully with the tips given above you should be able to avoid being raped. However if you find yourself raped, you need to know what to do.

- Report rape immediately. It is a criminal offence. The report must be made to the police who will give you a medical form to take to the doctor
 - o Samples of sperms must be taken for examination
 - o Explain everything that has happened to you to the doctor so that the doctor can write everything
 - o The doctor should write on the form bruises, harms, bleeding whether inside or outside
 - o The doctor should examine you for sexually transmitted diseases and pregnancy
- Explain everything to the police that happened to you, what the rapist said and how they said it. This may lead to the arrest of the rapist
- Show the police where the rapist has harmed you even if it looks like it is small scratches
- Do not wash because you may remove signs of rape
- The police may ask you to give your clothes as a testimony

Remember that if you are raped it is not your fault. You may feel embarrassed but it is still not your fault because nobody has a right to rape you regardless of circumstances. You should also get help from other people like counsellors, pastors and priests, teachers and other people in your community who can help you.

Part Three

3

prevention of Sexually transmitted infections and HIV

Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)

STIs are passed on by any type of genital (penis and vaginal area) contact with another person. The penis does not have to enter the vagina for some of these infections to be passed on. But there may be contact between these parts of the body during which an infection can spread.

If you are concerned about your sexual health after having unprotected sex you should go for STI testing. Most STI tests are simple involving a urine or blood test.

STIs often do not show symptoms.

Signs of STIs in males include:

- A wound, sore, rash, or blister on or around the penis
- A discharge, like pus, from the penis
- Pain or a burning feeling when passing urine
- Pain during sexual intercourse
- Pain and swelling of the testicles
- Abnormal swelling or growths on the genitals

Signs of STIs in females include:

- A discharge from the vagina that is thick, itchy, or has an unusual smell or colour
- Pain in the lower abdomen
- Pain or a burning feeling when passing urine
- Pain during sexual intercourse
- Abnormal, irregular bleeding from the vagina
- Itching in the genital area
- Abnormal swelling or growths in the genitals

- Sores around the genital area

Questions and Answers on STIs

What is the best way for young people to protect themselves against STIs?

For young people, the best protection against an STI is to choose not to have sex at this time in their lives (abstinence). Young people who do choose to have sex must use condoms consistently and correctly.

What should young people do if they think they have an STI?

They should go to a clinic or see a doctor. Many STIs are caused by bacteria (e.g. syphilis, and gonorrhoea) or parasites (e.g. pubic lice and scabies) and can be cured with no permanent damage, if they are treated quickly and properly. Some, however, are viral (e.g. herpes). While they cannot be cured, they can be controlled.

Don't just hope the STI will heal by itself. The symptoms may go away but the disease is still there. Untreated STIs make it easier to be infected with HIV.

If you have an STI don't have sex again until your treatment is completed and all the signs are gone. You also have to tell your sexual partner(s). If they aren't treated, they will infect you again and/or can spread it to others. If possible, you should also bring your partner(s) along to the clinic, so that you both get treated.

This can be summed up by the word ACT.

(A) – attain prompt medical care and if infected follow instruction.

(C) – contact sex partner (s) to seek medical care.

(T) – talk with qualified health professional about prevention.

STIs are not a problem for young people in Africa.

False: In Africa, up to one in four sexually active youth between the ages of 13 and 19 are infected with an STI each year. HIV infections are more frequent among those under 24 than in any other age group.

STIs can cause serious health problems, especially if not treated.

True: Many STIs, if left untreated, can cause serious reproductive health problems for men and women. Gonorrhoea may lead to sterility in men and infertility in women (the inability to have children). Syphilis or HIV may lead to death.

It is easy for young people to know if they have an STI, because they will

experience uncomfortable symptoms.

False: Only some STIs show symptoms. There are often no symptoms or it may take years before symptoms appear.

Having an STI puts people at greater risk for contracting HIV.

True: Some STIs cause sores around the genitals, mouth and anus. Sores, even very small ones, make it easier for HIV to enter the body.

Biologically men and women have equal chances of being infected with an STI

False: Women are more vulnerable because their mucous membranes are larger and more sensitive, therefore they are more easily injured.

A person with herpes can infect her/his partner even if s/he has no visible sores

True: Especially just before an outbreak, when there is itching or pain. It is also possible to infect a partner even after the sore has healed.

Gonorrhoea can be cured with antibiotics

True: Bacterial infections can be cured with antibiotics.

Herpes cannot be cured

True: Viral infections cannot be cured by antibiotics but they can be controlled.

HIV and AIDS

HIV is one form of STI. Although it can be transmitted in other ways, in the vast majority of cases, HIV is transmitted sexually.

What do the words mean?

H = Human (only found in humans)

I = Immunodeficiency (weakens the immune system)

V = Virus (a type of germ)

A = Acquired (to get something that you are not born with)

I = Immuno- (the body's defence system, which provides protection from disease)

D = Deficiency (a defect or weakness, lack of or not enough of something)

S = Syndrome (a group of signs and symptoms in a disease)

HIV and AIDS are not the same. HIV is the virus; having HIV means that the person is infected with the virus. AIDS is a syndrome of symptoms and diseases that result from a weakened immune system caused by the virus. A person can be infected with HIV for a very long time before developing AIDS.

HIV Transmission

You can get HIV:

- When having unprotected sexual intercourse with an infected partner
- During delivery when the mother is HIV positive
- During breastfeeding when the mother is HIV positive
- By sharing needles or sharp objects with someone who is HIV positive

HIV can be transmitted when you come in contact with infected:

- Blood
- Semen
- Vaginal fluids
- Breast milk

You cannot get HIV by:

- Hugging or shaking hands with an infected person
- Eating with or sharing utensils used by an infected person
- Sharing toilets used by an infected person
- Having an infected person kiss, spit, sneeze, cough, breathe, sweat, or cry on you
- Being bitten by insects like mosquitoes

What is the risk?

Increasing the risk

Many young people know by now that having unprotected sex is the biggest risk. However, there are two factors which put them even more at risk.

Early sexual debut

Girls and young women have much higher levels of HIV infection than boys and young men. But boys are more sexually active than girls.

Why are girls more infected?

Early sexual debut is particularly dangerous for girls because:

- Their genitals are not fully developed so the likelihood of tearing or causing a cut in their vagina is much higher.
- Girls and young women tend to have sex with older partners. These older sexual partners are likely to be infected. Thus when they start having sex at an early age, girls and young women are more likely to be exposed to HIV from their partners (husbands, boyfriends, sugar daddies) at a time when their bodies are not fully developed.

Boys and young men are also at risk every time they have unprotected sex and, given the information above, they should not think that by having sex with a young girl they are safe.

Multiple (and concurrent) partners (MCP)

MCP means having more than one sexual partner at the same time. Having more than one partner during the same period of time is more dangerous and it contributes a lot to the spread of HIV.

We should understand that one of the reasons why Lesotho has one of the highest rates of HIV infection in the world is that Lesotho also has one of the highest rates of MCP in the world.

Questions and Answers on HIV

In Africa half of all new HIV infections occur in young people under the age of 24.

True: Girls and young women are at greater risk of HIV infection than boys and men for biological, social, and economic reasons.

HIV and STIs affect people in towns more than in villages

False: HIV and STIs can infect people anywhere they have unprotected sex.

Having sex with a virgin can cure AIDS.

False: Such a statement is often an excuse to have sex with young girls (and infect them). There is no cure for AIDS to date.

You are most likely to infect someone else with HIV just after you have been infected yourself

True: It is during the window period (the 3-6 months) that you are most likely to infect others as the virus is very active.

Once a person has the virus which causes AIDS, they are infectious for the rest of their life

True: Once a person is infected they will always be infectious.

HIV destroys the body's defences against infections and diseases

True: But this can take many years if a person takes care of their health, and starts to use ARVs at the right time.

HIV is mainly transmitted by sexual intercourse with an infected person

True: In most (80%) of the cases

People with HIV and are using ARVs cannot transmit HIV

False: Medicines have been developed that prolong the life of people infected by HIV, but people taking these medicines can still transmit it.

HIV can be transmitted by donating blood.

False: The blood donation system uses a new needle for every person who wants to donate blood

You can get HIV by playing football with someone who is HIV+

False: You can get infected only if you come in contact with blood of infected player.

You cannot get HIV if you are a virgin or have sex with a virgin

False: A person may have been born with the virus or acquired it through unsafe injections, injecting drug abuse or sharing of a razor etc.

There are ways of preventing transmission from mother to child

True: If she takes the right drugs and breast feeds as advised by doctors and nurses the chances of the child being infected are very small.

Forced sex makes it easier for you to get or transmit HIV

True: Because it increases the risk of cuts or scratches which allow the virus to enter the blood stream

The more sexual partners you have, the more likely you are to be infected with HIV

True: Especially when you don't know their status and you engage in unprotected sex

Even if you test negative once for HIV, you may still have the virus

True: That is why it is important to take a second test 3- 6 months after the first one with no risky activity in between to be sure

If you test positive for HIV, it means that you have AIDS

False: Testing HIV positive only means having the HI Virus unless you have been very late in going to test and already have the symptoms of AIDS.

If you have bad diarrhoea or TB, it means you have AIDS

False: Diarrhoea does not mean HIV/TB does not necessarily mean presence of HIV. Only testing for HIV can confirm whether you have HIV or not.

You can tell just by looking who is living with HIV

False: Someone living with HIV can be extremely healthy. Only testing for HIV can confirm whether you have HIV or not.

ABC

In order to protect yourself against HIV, you have to adopt behaviours which do not put you at risk. This is normally summed up by the letters ABC.

A= Abstain

It means not engaging in sexual intercourse. Abstinence is the only 100% prevention method.

Questions and Answers on abstinence

Once you start having sex, you cannot stop

False: Anyone can stop having sex any time they want; they only have to use self-control.

If you remain a virgin too long, you will get sick.

False: Remaining a virgin will not affect your health. Remaining a virgin can allow girls to live healthier lives until they are ready for marriage and a family.

B= Be faithful

When young people are in a relationship, they should remain faithful to each other.

Questions and Answers on faithfulness

See section on The Family

C= Condomise

Young people in sexual relationships protect themselves by using condoms every time they have sex.

Condom Facts

Condoms are tested to make sure they are safe. Condoms made of latex or polyurethane block HIV, STIs, and sperm. Though very small, bacteria, viruses, and sperm cannot pass through them, whether they are male or female condoms.

Questions and Answers on condoms

You cannot get or transmit HIV if you use a condom during sexual intercourse

True: If condoms are used properly and consistently the chances of infecting others or being infected are minimal.

Condoms are only for HIV prevention

False: Condoms were in use long before HIV appeared. Their first role was to prevent unwanted pregnancy and that is still their role.

Condoms break easily and have holes in them.

False: Latex condoms are very strong and can expand without breaking.

Using two condoms at once provides more protection

False: The friction between the two condoms can cause them to break. One condom is adequate protection.

Condoms are not always effective in preventing Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)

True: HPV can be transmitted by touch (hand to genitals or genitals to genitals, and not all the genitals are covered by the condom

Education

Young people can protect themselves from HIV infection if they have correct and accurate information about sex and sexuality including Lifeskills. They should therefore feel free to talk about their sexuality with adults at home, in the community and in schools. These adults can be parents, guardians and teachers.

Male circumcision (MC)

It involves the removal of all or part of the foreskin (the tissue covering the head of the penis).

Relationship between male circumcision and HIV:

MC is considered to reduce the risk of HIV by 60% in heterosexual circumcised men. This is probably because:

- HIV targets cells which are in high numbers in the inner foreskin and removing it also reduces the chances of HIV infection because of the absence of these cells around that area.
- Small tears can take place in the inner layer of the foreskin during sexual acts which could allow HIV to enter the blood.
- M/C reduces the risk of some STIs, especially genital ulcers that are associated with an increased risk of HIV infection.

Other considerations:

- M/C is not a cure for HIV and AIDS. It only reduces the risk of HIV infection for men during sexual intercourse.
- A circumcised man should still use condoms if he has sexual intercourse

- M/C does not prevent female partners from getting HIV and other STIs if they have unprotected sex with circumcised males.

Male circumcision reduces the chance of being infected but it does NOT prevent HIV infection. You must practise! ABC!!

Knowing your status and living positively

Knowing your status is a key aspect of HIV prevention. This can only be done by being tested by nurses or doctors for HIV.

HIV Counselling and Testing

HIV Counselling and Testing is an important part of HIV prevention. Testing is free in most health centres, including government hospitals.

HIV Counselling and Testing centres can help you:

- Be tested and know your HIV status
- Receive counselling on the results of your test
- Plan for healthy living, whether you test positive or negative
- Build a relationship based on knowledge of your status

Benefits of testing for HIV

HIV testing is voluntary not forced, but it has many benefits

- If you know your HIV status, you can plan your life accordingly
- You can live your life without the stress of uncertainty
- If you are HIV negative you can protect yourself better in future
- If you are positive you can live positively and access free ARV treatment when your CD4 count goes too low

Stigma and Discrimination

HIV stigma and discrimination is when people living with HIV are treated differently in a negative way and they are also denied their human rights because of their HIV status.

Stigma is expressed in a variety of ways, including:

- Isolation, rejection, and avoidance of people with HIV or AIDS
- Violence against persons who are perceived to have AIDS or to be infected with HIV

If you live with HIV you can deal with stigma and discrimination by:

- Knowing that people who stigmatise and discriminate you lack enough knowledge about HIV and AIDS.

- Knowing that people are not stigmatised only because of HIV. You can be stigmatised because of your appearance, disability and so on
- Realising you still have abilities and talents that you should share with others even though you live with HIV
- Deciding to spend your time and energy on doing good and positive things
- Getting support from people and organisations that can help you
- Realising that fear of stigma can be worse than stigma itself so stop stigmatising yourself. Love yourself

Young People Living with HIV

Living with HIV is similar to living with any other chronic disease. You need to take care of your own health by:

- Taking your medicines as prescribed
- Making sure you do not re-infect yourself, especially through unprotected sexual intercourse.
- Exercising your body
- Eating three basic food groups
- Being in a group of people who support you

Remember: You can continue to lead a normal life for many years, studying, working, playing, setting your own goals and working to achieve them, living with your families until you become old

Some of the major causes of HIV

Sometimes risk taking behaviour is strongly influenced by the situations in which young people live. This does not mean that young people are allowed to have bad behaviour but it means that all people including young people must be careful about the way young people grow and the environment in which they grow, affect their behaviours.

Poverty and inequities in wealth

If young people come from poor families they may be vulnerable to HIV infection. In particular some girls may provide sexual favours to older men in exchange for school fees, food and material goods.

Migration and adolescents in schools

When they reach class 7 many young people often have to move from their homes to attend secondary school in a different place. Many have to stay in what are called “hostels” where they live with no parental protection, guidance and supervision.

- Girls in particular are exposed to boys and men who take advantage of

their situation. Many of these girls will have sex with the men and boys just to feel protected and safe. When this happens the young girls often have no chance to negotiate for safer sex and are therefore exposed to HIV.

- Some have to travel long distances everyday to attend a secondary school. They have to leave home very early and get back very late and in the process they are abused by boys and men. This is particularly the case in the rural areas
- Many of them are leaving home for the first time and they need protective measures such as tailored life skills programmes and access to information and counselling

Adolescents in these situations can also protect themselves by:

- Applying the Lifeskills they have learnt in this handbook like assertiveness, self-confidence
- Applying the skills of protecting themselves against rape
- Reporting any form of abuse to the relevant authorities like parents, teachers, chiefs and councillors.
- Joining youth groups in schools for support and a safe and supportive environment in the school and community.

Orphans and vulnerable children

Many young people in schools have lost one or both parents. These young people become (officially or unofficially) heads of households themselves and look after their younger siblings.

- This makes these children vulnerable because many will lack protection and guidance.
- Many have their parents' properties grabbed by relatives
- For many the death of a parent can mean that they will not have somebody to provide food and many times girls have to engage in sex work to get some money
- Many of these girls are even trafficked to become slaves for others

Adolescents who are orphaned can protect themselves by:

- Applying Lifeskills as taught in this handbook
- Reporting cases of property grabbing to relevant authorities like Child and Gender Protection Unit, Master of the High Court and by using Child Helpline
- They should report all cases of ill-treatment
- They should approach the relevant offices like Bursaries Office of MOET, Department of Social Welfare and Social Services Councillors for assistance

Part Four

4

sex, gender and HIV

Sex describes the physical and biological differences between males and females. For example, females have a vagina and breasts; they can become pregnant, give birth and breast feed. Males have a penis and testicles.

Gender describes the way we are brought up, the opportunities and roles we are given at home, in school and in the community as a whole. For example, girls are encouraged to play the main role in household activities, and to prepare themselves to be carers of their family in future. Boys on the other hand, are encouraged to be physically “tough” and hide their feelings ‘Men don’t cry’.

Vulnerability to HIV

Gender can make both boys and girls vulnerable to HIV in the following ways:

Boys

They experience peer and social pressure to be sexually active

They are often expected to show that they are ‘real men’ by having lots of girlfriends and not using a condom.

They are taught to dominate and control, which can lead to violence and force

They do not feel comfortable using reproductive health services

Girls

They are not always assertive enough to say no when they do not want to have sex.

In the rural areas they are vulnerable to early marriage which puts them at great risk of HIV infection and have little control over their own lives.

They engage in “sugar daddy” or intergenerational relationships

They are often pressurised to prove their fertility by getting pregnant

Suffer more from sexual violence, coercion, and exploitation and therefore are often unable to effectively negotiate condom use

Signs of a child suffering from abuse

Below are some signs that show that a person may be suffering from some form of abuse, .

- Unexplained injuries
- Lack of trust in other people
- Low self esteem, depression, anger, shame
- Sleeping and eating disorders
- Isolation from family and friends
- They wet themselves

If one of your friends or classmates is showing some of these signs, be supportive and find out why and help them report if they have been sexually abused.

Question and Answer on abuse, gender and HIV

Some girls are to blame for being raped because of the clothes they wear or because they take a man's gifts

False: Rape is wrong and against the law. It must be reported immediately.

It is better to keep quiet about a case of sexual abuse in the family

False: Sexual abuse in the family is wrong and it is against the law. It must be reported immediately. If it is not reported, the person doing it may do it to many other children in the family.

Often when deciding on sexual abuse cases, people pay more attention to the feelings of the family than of the girl (or boy) who has been abused

True: People talk about the family's honour etc and once they are paid some compensation they are satisfied. However, sexual abuse whether done by a family member or a stranger, is against the law and it must be reported.

Girls need to be taught assertiveness and negotiating skills to be able to resist sexual harassment and abuse

True: Many boys/men may think that a girl agrees to sex if she does not say no to sex in a very strong way, and the more she knows how to respond to unwanted advances; the more she will be able to protect herself.

If a girl agrees to have sex once, her boyfriend can have sex with her again, even if she refuses

False: Even if a girl has had sex with her boyfriend in the past, she can always refuse sex later. Sex should not be expected, forced, coerced, or pressured.

Date rape is common

True: Many boys force their girlfriends to have sex even when they don't want to do it. If you are a girl, don't allow your boyfriend to touch you on your genitals, breasts, chest, thighs if you don't like it. It is wrong and against the law.

School girls/boys should agree to have sex with their teacher when the teacher asks for sex

False: It is wrong for anybody older than you to use their position to have sex with you. They should not even hug or kiss you whether they are a relative, a teacher or a stranger if you don't like it. If older people do this to you or your friend, you must report it immediately because it is against the law.

All the above are against the law in Lesotho and should be reported. You can tell your parents; close relatives; church leader; chief; community councillor; police; and to report to the organisations that protect children in Lesotho. Find their contacts in the handbook. You can also call Child Helpline number for free to report a sexual abuse by calling from any Telecom phone including Telecom public phones.

Cases of sexual abuse of boys are increasing

True: The problem is that boys are reluctant to report when they have been abused.

Having sex with a girl/boy below the age of 16 is sexual abuse because she is too young to be held responsible

True: It is wrong and against the law.

Part Five

5

substance abuse

Drugs and alcohol have many bad effects on your health and they also make you more vulnerable to HIV infection.

Alcohol

Alcohol is an active ingredient in wine, beer, distilled spirits, and local brews.

Alcohol can affect young people (as well as adults) by:

- Impairing decision-making abilities
- Giving them a false sense of confidence

Long-term alcohol use can cause:

- Addiction
- Cancers and diseases of the liver, stomach, colon, breasts
- Impotence and infertility
- Birth defects, including retardation and low birth weight

Drugs

1.Marijuana

Marijuana (matekoane) is a plant. Its leaves are smoked. It makes you feel high and lose control of your decision making ability

Marijuana can affect young people by:

- Slowing brain function, such as memory, judgment, perception, and motor skills
- Impairing concentration and overall performance
- Causing breathing problems

Long-term marijuana use can cause:

- Lung cancer
- Increased blood pressure
- Mental problems

2. Stimulants

Stimulants are drugs that often make you feel high, give a temporary rush of energy and artificially good feelings. After use, you often feel depressed or sad, making you want to use more.

Common stimulants are cocaine, mandrax, and heroin. Adolescents also use products such as glue, paint or benzene.

Stimulants can be taken in the form of pills, or by being inhaled, or injected. Injecting drugs is especially risky when needles are shared. They are also addictive in that once you have taken them a few times, your body feels that it cannot live without the drug and you experience strong physical withdrawal symptoms.

Stimulants can affect young people by causing:

- Addiction
- Hallucinations, nightmares, or mental illness

Long-term stimulant use can cause:

- Heart attacks, stroke
- Brain damage

3. Tobacco

Tobacco is a plant; its leaves are smoked as cigarettes or chewed. The nicotine in tobacco makes people feel relaxed or more alert.

Tobacco can affect young people by:

- Causing addiction, often quickly
- Reducing lung capacity thereby slowing breathing ability

Long-term tobacco use can cause:

- Cancers of the lung, throat, mouth, stomach, and cervix
- Poor blood circulation
- High blood pressure, heart attacks, stroke
- Impotence
- Low birth weight in babies born to mothers who smoke
- Discoloration of teeth
- Lilatsoa

Questions and Answers on alcohol and drugs

Why do youth use alcohol and drugs?

- Peer pressure, to fit in with friends
- To feel like an adult, grown up
- To relax or feel good, avoid problems or reality
- Because they are bored, lonely, or angry
- Because they want to experiment
- Because they do not know another way to deal with social situations or stresses
- Because they copy the behaviour of family members or other adults

Why is drinking alcohol dangerous?

- Young people are unable to make clear decisions
- They may have a false sense of confidence.
- Alcohol slows the mind,
- It can affect performance in school
- It can cause long-term disease.
- Alcohol is one of the major causes of many accidents.
- It can make people to be violent

When is it acceptable to drink alcohol?

Never, our religion does not allow it and it is against the law for children below the age of 18 to drink alcohol

Why should you not use drugs?

- Because they are illegal
- Because they are unhealthy and can cause severe illness or death
- Because they are often addictive
- Because they make youth act in ways they would not when sober

How do drugs and alcohol affect decision-making?

Drugs and alcohol reduce your ability to think clearly and critically and make informed and healthy decisions.

How do drugs and alcohol influence sexual behaviour?

By affecting the ability to make informed and health decisions, drugs and alcohol:

- Can cause people to engage in sex more freely
- Can cause people to have unprotected sex
- Can cause people to force sex on other people

Using marijuana makes you perform better.

False: Physically, marijuana makes the body perform slower. Although young people may perceive that they are more productive, reality is just the opposite.

Part Six

6

teenage pregnancy

Pregnancy is the period when a girl/woman carries a foetus in her uterus, usually for nine months.

Signs of Pregnancy

The most common sign of pregnancy is a

- Missed menstrual period for girls or young women.
- nausea,
- fatigue
- more frequent need to urinate
- mood swings
- cravings

Preparing for a Baby

Young people may not be ready to have babies because:

- They are not emotionally ready for a baby: A child needs attention 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It takes much patience and attention from both the mother and the father.
- They are not financially ready: Parents need to have a source of money to pay for the baby's daily needs — food, medicine, clothes, and childcare
- They should not compromise their future goals: It can be very difficult to raise a baby while going to school. Many young girls find that they have to drop out of school and ultimately give up their plans for the future after having a baby.
- They may not have partners they trust to be good parents: Raising a child alone is very difficult. Single parents often struggle to support themselves and their children at the same time.
- Culture may not allow a young woman to have a baby: A young unmarried or divorced woman with a child can be discriminated against or even banned from the family.

Question and Answers on Teenage Pregnancy

A girl can become pregnant even if she has never had a menstrual period

True: Before her first menstrual period, she has already released her first egg which can be fertilised even before the first menstruation. Menstruation is a sign that the egg was not fertilised.

A girl cannot become pregnant the first time she has sex.

False: It is possible for a girl to become pregnant the first time she has sex.

Pregnancy is not medically risky for girls under the age of 16.

False: Girls under 16 often have more complications and need more medical attention than older women during pregnancy and birth.

A girl can become pregnant even if her partner withdraws before ejaculating

True: Even before ejaculating, the penis has begun to 'leak' some sperms which are sufficient to make the woman pregnant

If you urinate after having unprotected sex, you cannot become pregnant

False: Urine passes out of the body through a different opening than the vagina. Washing your vagina will also not prevent pregnancy. Sperms are very tiny and once they are in the vagina, water and soap cannot wash them completely.

You cannot get pregnant if you have sex standing up

False: The sperms will still remain in the vagina

Abstinence is the only 100% method of not getting pregnant

True: Abstinence is 100% safe.

Using Contraceptives

Contraceptives are a method of reducing chances of getting pregnant.

The methods most recommended for young couples are:

- Male or female condoms
- Oral contraceptive pills
- Hormonal injections

1. Male and female condoms

Condoms are soft, thin sheaths, made of latex that provide a barrier to prevent pregnancy and protect against STIs, including HIV by preventing the sperm and other body fluids from entering the vagina. To be effective, condoms must be used correctly and consistently every time a couple has intercourse.

2. Pills

Pills are another method of preventing pregnancy. When taken as prescribed by a provider, every day at the same time of the day, pills are very effective. However, if a woman misses more than one day, she may be able to become pregnant. Pills do NOT protect against STIs or HIV.

3. Injections

- Injections are another method of preventing pregnancy by using injections. However, injections do NOT protect against STIs or HIV.

Emergency contraceptive pills (ECP)

They are a method used when people have had unplanned unprotected sex. They work best if taken within 3 days (72 hours) after having intercourse. They are particularly recommended for people who have been raped. Remember, delaying sex until you are ready is the best option.

Questions and Answers on using contraceptives

Deciding to use condoms or any other contraceptives is the responsibility of males only.

False: Both males and females are responsible in preventing unplanned pregnancy.

Contraceptive pills cannot terminate pregnancy.

True: Pills and other chemicals like meth

Fabric softener, essence of life and laxatives cannot terminate pregnancy. Instead they can put your life in danger (death)

Girls who take contraceptive pills are protected from HIV and pregnancy

False: Contraceptive pills do not protect against HIV infection

Part Seven

7

taking action

Young people should learn to be responsible for their decisions and actions:

- Consider your needs and situation as a person
- If there are unusual changes in your body ask an adult you trust
- Report cases of rape and abuse to the police, child helpline, a trusted teacher or adult as soon as it happens
- Say “No” to actions that will destroy your future
- Avoid accepting unnecessary gifts from adults
- Use rubber gloves every time you touch blood or bodily fluids of other people

Assessing your risk

Sexual activity has emotional risks too. You risk getting your feelings hurt or your heart broken. You could also find that your love life is a hot topic for gossip and people turn against you for irresponsible behaviour

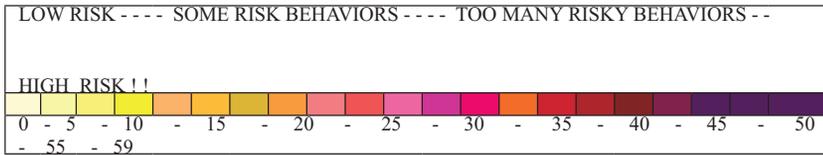
Assess your risk by reading each question and choosing the number below the response that most closely matches with your opinion or behaviour. Then, write your score on the right of for each issue. This is for you, so be honest with yourself.

Refer to tables below

- Consider your needs and situation as a person
- If there are unusual changes in your body ask an adult you trust
- Report cases of rape and abuse to the police

Do you have a girl/boyfriend?					
	No	Yes	Don't know		
How many boy/girlfriends do you have?					
	0	1	2-3	4-5	6+
Does your boy/girlfriend (s) have other lovers?					
	No	Yes	Don't Know		
Have you ever had sex?	0	1	2		
	No	Yes	Don't know		
Do you receive money or gifts for sex?					
	No	S/times	Yes		
Do you use condoms?					
	Yes	S/times	No		
Have you ever used alcohol and or drugs?	Always	S/times	Never		
Have you ever made actions that you regret after using alcohol?	No	Yes			
Have you ever been tested for HIV?	Yes			No	
Have you ever talked to someone about HIV?	Yes			No	
Have you thought of your risk for HIV infection?	Yes			No	
TOTAL SCORE					

Scoring



Take this self-assessment again after several months or after you have changed your behaviours to see if your risk score decreases. Keep track of your scores and see if your scores change over time.

Action Plan: Risk Reduction Strategy

Reduction of sexual partners:	
Talking to your partner about sex and sexuality:	
Using condoms – properly and consistently:	
Making it better with your spouse/partner	
Alcohol, drug use and sex:	
Transactional sex and sex for money:	
Other:	

NOTES (for yourself to evaluate) _____

You can also develop other tools to assess yourself about other aspects of your life

Collective action

As shown in this handbook, many of you are exposed to many pressures to start engaging in sexual activity or get involved in other risk taking activities, pressures which can be very difficult to resist. Some of you are also subjected to abuse by adults or your fellow young people.

Addressing vulnerability

You need to work together with other students in your school to make sure that young people in your school are protected from getting HIV. You and your schoolmates will need to ask yourselves the following questions:

- What are the main factors that make young people in your school vulnerable?
- Why is this happening? What is the behaviour of the young people themselves?

Once you have answered these questions, you may decide to start or join a youth club at school or in the community that deals with the same issues.

Developing your youth group in school

The youth group in the school belongs to you. You can work with other adolescents in the school to develop it as a place of education, recreation and entrepreneurship. You can elect your leaders and play a key part in the school. But this needs hard work on your part to create a real space for all young people

Peer education and outreach

The youth groups are also the centre for reaching out to all young people in the school with this important information about themselves as young people and how to avoid risk taking behaviours. You need to ensure that you look at several things

- Who —If you want to reach all the young people in your school and make them feel that they all belong to the youth group, you have to make sure that you include:
 - o Different ages. For example, you can divide the youth into four different groups (10-14, 15-19, 20-24, 25+) Each age group can choose their leaders who will belong to the governing committee of

choose their leaders who will belong to the governing committee of the youth group but who will work with their own age group

- o *Gender.* Youth groups are often dominated by boys unless a specific effort is made to ensure that girls also participate and are leaders in the group.

- *When* —It is good for the youth group to develop an action plan to ensure that all young people are covered. Peer educators can divide up their school into classes with each peer educator being responsible for a certain number of classes/young people. Then you meet with your group at planned intervals (e.g. once a week etc)

- *Where* —Where the group will meet. Classrooms can be used with support of teachers.

- *Key information and skills*— The outreach group of peer educators should meet every week to discuss what are the key information and skills they are going to impart for the following week, and what participatory methodologies to use. They should also assess how successful they were the week before and what further actions need to be taken

- *How* – The essence of this programme is participatory methodologies. It is not the job of the peer educators to lecture or preach but to use participatory methodologies to make people do their own analysis and come up with their own solutions.

WE WISH YOU ALL THE BEST IN YOUR EFFORTS TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM HIV INFECTION AND OTHER PRESSURES AND TO BUILD STRONG YOUTH GROUPS THAT CAN WORK TO ENSURE A GOOD ENVIRONMENT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Part eight

8

important words

Abstinence: Choosing not to have any kind of sexual activity or any kind of misbehaviour.

AIDS: Acquired immune deficiency syndrome

ARVs: Antiretroviral. Medicines used to make lives of people living with HIV long.

CD4: White blood cells which help the body to fight diseases

Cervical mucus: Clear, sticky fluid that is produced naturally by the cervix.

Male Circumcision: The surgical removal of the foreskin—the loose skin covering the tip of the penis.

Discharge: Any fluid, mucus or other substance that is released from your body. A discharge from the vagina or penis can be a symptom of an STI.

Ejaculation: What happens when a male releases semen from the penis as the climax of a sexual activity. This is called an orgasm.

Erection: What happens when a male is sexually aroused. An erection occurs when blood rushes into the penis and it becomes erect—larger and harder.

Hallucinations: Seeing things that are not there because you are ill or have taken drugs

HIV: Human immunodeficiency virus, the virus that causes AIDS.

Sterility: Being unable to reproduce. This is also called infertility. For women this means being unable to get pregnant. For men it means being unable to father a child.

Sterilization: Sterilization is a surgical procedure that makes a woman unable to get pregnant or a man unable to father a child. For males, sterilization surgery is called a vasectomy. For females, it's called a tubal ligation (getting your tubes tied).

STIs: Sexually Transmitted Infections. Infections transmitted through sexual intercourse

Transactional sex: Exchange of money, gifts and favours for sex.

Unprotected sex: Sexual activity without using some form of birth control to prevent pregnancy and/or without using protection from STIs— like a male or female condom.

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