



HIV/AIDS 10 messages for children to learn & share

1. Our body is amazing. We have an immune system and this protects us from germs that cause diseases.



2. Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is a virus that weakens our immune system and stops our bodies protecting us well from everyday germs. If HIV is not treated, it can lead to AIDS (Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome).



3. HIV lives in the blood and other body fluids and is invisible to the eye. It can be passed on (1) through sex, (2) from HIV positive mothers to their babies during pregnancy, delivery or breastfeeding, (3) in needles or syringes, and (4) through blood transfusions.

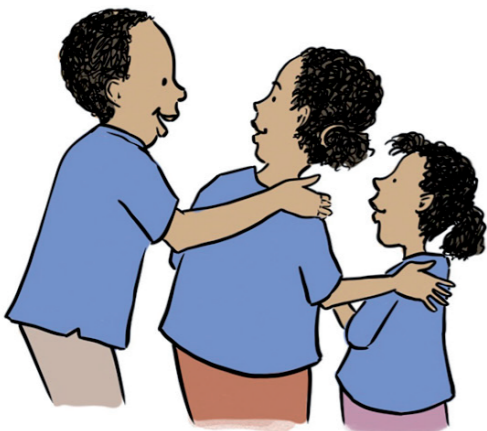


4. Medicines called antiretrovirals (ARVs), keep HIV levels low so a person can live a long time. ARVs prevent the spread of the virus to others.



= LONG LIFE

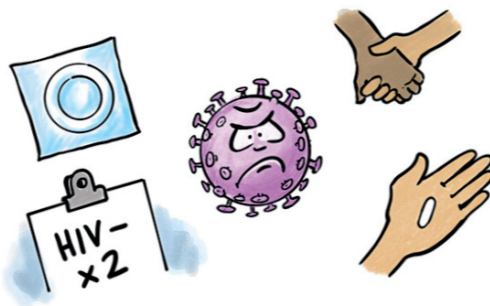
6. People with HIV can play, share food and drink, hold hands, kiss and hug other people. People do not pass on HIV this way.



7. A medicine called PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) helps protect people who are at risk of getting HIV.



8. People protect themselves from getting HIV from sex by (1) having sex using condoms (protected sex) (2) being in a sexual relationship where both partners are HIV negative and do not have sex with others (3) taking Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP).



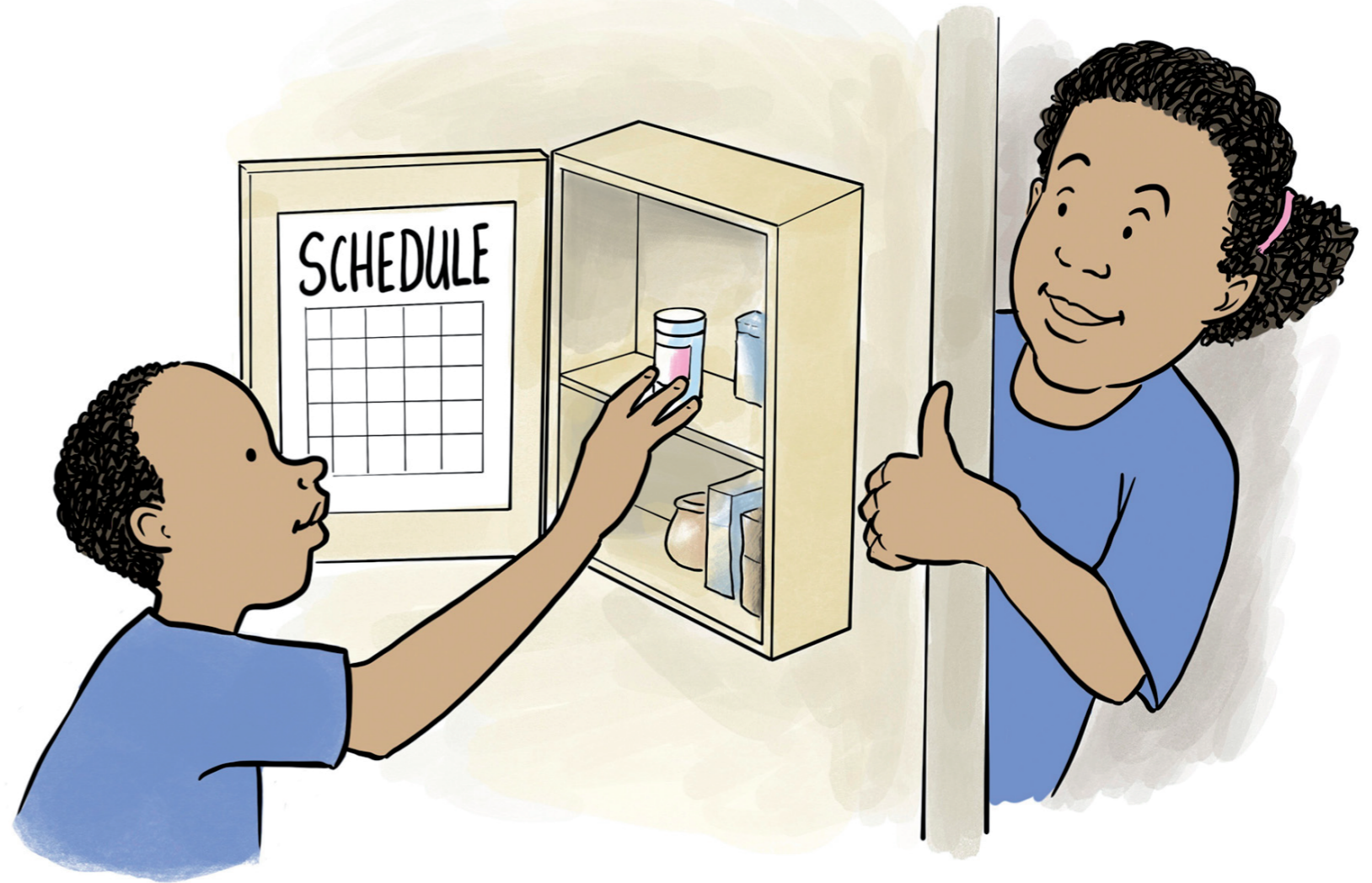
9. To help themselves and others, adults who think they may have HIV can do a simple test at a health clinic or with a self-test at home.



10. Pregnant women should be tested for HIV at the antenatal clinic. If positive, they should get treatment to keep them healthy and stop HIV passing to their baby during pregnancy, delivery and breastfeeding.



5. Children with HIV need strong support from their family, friends and teachers and encouragement to keep going with their medication to stay healthy.



Frequently Asked Questions About Our Posters

- **Who is the poster for?** Educators of many kinds, parents & children aged 10-14.
- **Where might it be used?** Schools, at home, health clinics, children's clubs, religious groups, etc.
- **Is it enough for children to learn the messages?** The messages are designed as 'doorways' to children's discussion & action. They are to understand & use, not just to memorize.
- **Why are the faces of the people on the poster multi-ethnic?** Children for Health has a global audience, so we use multi-ethnic faces on our posters.
- **How do I use the messages?** Be creative! Focus on one topic for a week, month or term!
- **What is the Rainbow Stick?** When a child learns & shares a message & returns with a story about how they shared that message, a teacher or other adult rewards the child with a strip of coloured fabric to tie to their stick. Children for Health has 100 messages & every child can leave primary school holding their Rainbow Stick with 100 coloured 'ribbons' tied on it showing everyone that they know 100 health messages.
- **Why is one picture bigger than the others?** It's the Children for Health 'key' message.
- **Can I add to, change, adapt, translate or simplify the messages?** YES! BUT check with experts that your new or revised messages are accurate.
- **Are there other important messages you have not mentioned?** Our messages are short & simple. You may want to add other short & simple messages in your program and that's fine.
- **Some of the words and concepts on this poster are too hard for children.** Children love to learn new words & ideas. Take time to ensure they understand words, acronyms & ideas of lifelong importance like PrEP, ARVs, ART (Anti-Retroviral Treatment), VMMC, germs.



More Information on Preventing HIV/AIDS

Lack of knowledge about HIV/AIDS still exists. Lack of testing and treatment allows HIV to spread. Evidence shows that if someone with HIV is stable on ART, their life expectancy is the same as someone who does not have HIV. On the poster we use the phrase 'through sex', and this is sex with penetration (vagina/oral/anal). Please adapt this message so it's right for the age group you are teaching. Children need to understand and share the facts. There is often a lot of local, slang and other words around aspects of sex. It's important for children to understand what these words mean. Being informed of the meaning of these words protects children.

Male circumcision is the surgical removal of the fold of skin that covers the end of the penis. In countries with high levels of HIV there are programmes to encourage men aged 10 years and over to go for voluntary medical male circumcision (VMMC). This reduces female-to-male sexual transmission of HIV by 60%. VMMC is cost-effective and should be part of a comprehensive HIV prevention plan.

Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) is a course of HIV drugs taken by HIV-negative people to prevent infection. Taking it correctly will prevent the risk of getting HIV to almost zero. It won't protect against other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). PrEP is taken for short periods when a person may be at higher risk of HIV infection. A few days before starting to work with children on the HIV topic, educator should explain, "Next week we'll be talking about HIV & AIDS. This affects millions of people and their families. If there is anyone in the class who wants to discuss anything before these sessions, then please come to talk to me privately." (Give a specific time and place.) In addition, educators should assume that some of the children in their class may be living with HIV, even if they are keeping it secret. They need to respect the pupils emotions.

Additional useful information and activities are available on the Children for Health website in the HIV/AIDS topic.

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Ideas for Activities

1. MAKE our own HIV/ AIDS messages using our own words!
2. MEMORISE the messages so we never forget them!
3. SHARE the messages with other children and our friends, family and community.
4. COLLECT leaflets and information about HIV/AIDS and share these with our community.
5. INVITE a health worker to our school to answer our questions about HIV/AIDS.
6. FIND ways to help all of us who are affected by HIV/AIDS.
7. CREATE and PLAY a True and False Game about the ways HIV can pass from person to person.
8. LEARN life skills to help us talk about special friendships and our feelings about sex.
9. THINK of all the challenges that those of us with HIV have had to face and the many skills and qualities we have developed to face them. What can others do to help? What would you say to someone if you wanted to share that you have HIV? Why do you think some people do not want to share this? How can we help them?
10. LISTEN to and discuss stories about people who are living with HIV and the many ways they face their challenges.
11. MAKE a quiz to find out what we know about HIV/AIDS.
12. START an anonymous question box in our class for our questions on HIV/AIDS. (could we have a sketch of a box with a hole in the top?) The educator or nurse can help answer the questions.
13. MAKE a poster for our school about HIV/AIDS.
14. MAKE a drama about (for example)
 - A girl and her mother who has HIV and how she persuades her mum to go to the clinic to get ART (anti-retroviral therapy) medicine.
 - A boy who has HIV and needs to take his ART every day.
 - A family who overcome the stigma they feel towards a neighbour where one of the family members is HIV positive
15. START an HIV/AIDS Action club to raise awareness in our school and with our families.
16. ASK how does our immune system work? What is HIV and what is AIDS? What do the letters stand for? How is HIV spread? How is it not? How are people tested and treated for HIV? How can medicines help reduce the risk of mothers passing HIV to their babies? When and how do our friendships become sexual relationships? What do those with HIV suggest are the best ways they can be supported friends and family? Where is the closest clinic that helps people with HIV? Where is the nearest antenatal clinic and at what times can pregnant women go and visit the clinic? Where can family members get HIV self-tests? Is PrEP available in our community?
17. Have a special HIV/AIDS week in the club or class or school. Have a question box where children can write their questions anonymously into a box.