

# SESSION 4:

## What do I need to know about HIV and AIDS?

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### Objectives

1. Participants will become familiar with HIV and AIDS terminology.
2. Participants will acquire a basic understanding of HIV and its transmission.
3. Participants will acquire a basic understanding of AIDS.
4. Participants will understand how the immune system and HIV interact.
5. Participants will identify common myths about HIV/AIDS held by youths.
6. Participants will learn about HIV testing and the possible consequences of positive test results.

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### Rationale

A basic assumption in this session is that knowing the facts about the HIV/AIDS phenomenon is essential because from this knowledge comes what an individual can do to protect her/himself and what a community or group can do to support safe behavior and AIDS prevention activities. Furthermore, understanding HIV and AIDS allows the group and the individual to monitor their own effectiveness.

Even though many adolescents are now quite well informed about HIV/AIDS, group leaders need to know their groups' misinformation and lack of information on this topic. Leaders need to assess their group's knowledge early, both to guide their interventions enhancing the group's understanding and to assess how well the group sessions are progressing.

In providing an opportunity to learn more about HIV and AIDS it must be stressed that a straight lecture presentation of the facts is likely to have little impact. Therefore the training here relies on active participation, interaction, using the facts in a practical manner, and fun.

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### Procedures

1. Introduce members and encourage them to be future oriented by asking them to indicate what they want to be (job or role) seven years.
2. Review homework on steps they plan to take shortly to get them to their goal and review safe actions taken between sessions. Also have participants rate themselves on the Feeling Thermometer.
3. Role play a Blackout scene on misinformation and then play the "Don't Be Stupid About AIDS" game which consists of two teams trying to answer basic questions about HIV/AIDS which are on cards. The back of the card has the right answer.
4. View the video "The AIDS Antibody Test." Have the group discuss the video.

5. Divide the group into two small groups and have them identify "misunderstandings and myths" that other less well informed youth have about HIV/AIDS.
6. Assign homework of teaching friends about HIV/AIDS.
7. Build group support through giving strokes to each other.
8. Take a reading on the Feeling Thermometer.

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## Materials

Tokens

Feeling Thermometers

Scripts for Shorty and Sue

HIV/AIDS Facts Cards - questions on the front; answers on the back.

A copy of the text of the HIV/AIDS cards

Newsprint and marking pens

Video - "The Aids Antibody Test"

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## ***Exercise 1: Introducing and reviewing***

### ***Leader says***

Welcome back to Stay Safe where we are working on protecting ourselves against HIV and on leading the kind of life we want for ourselves.

Let's go around. Tell your name and what kind of job or role you would like to have in seven years.

What do you want to be doing?

Don't make it long: just say "I'm Jack and I want to be a lawyer."

I'll start. I'm \_\_\_\_\_ and in seven years I want to \_\_\_\_\_.

***Have everyone give their name and what they want to be.***

Very good.

How are you feeling right now on the Feeling Thermometer?

***Encourage answering and pass out tokens for participation and tokens for the group members to use.***

Remember how important it is to stay in touch with how much discomfort and comfort you are feeling and what those feelings are.

At the end of the last session I asked you to think of one step you are going to take right away that leads you to your goals.

What did you come up with?

***Ask everyone what they came up and use tokens.***

I'm glad to see you are all future oriented.

What did you do since we last met to stay safe and make your life better?

I'm interested in even the smallest thing you did because I want to see you stay healthy.

So what did you do?

***Encourage sharing and give out tokens. Catch someone doing something good.***

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## ***Exercise 2: Learning the facts about HIV/AIDS***

I know that many of you already know a lot about HIV and AIDS.

So today's goal is making you even more of an expert.

First, I want your opinion about this scene.

Who will play Shorty and who will play Sue?

***Select volunteers and give them the script.***

### Shorty and Sue

SHORTY: Hi, baby. Give me a kiss.

SUE: Are you kidding? I'm not going to get AIDS.

SHORTY: What are you talking about? Are you bugged?

SUE: You get the AIDS virus from body fluids, so you can stop kissing me. None of your saliva is getting in my mouth.

SHORTY: Baby, baby. I'm hot for you.

SUE: That's another thing. Your sweat. You keep your sweat off my body. Sweat is a body fluid. I'm not getting no virus from your sweat.

SHORTY: Hey! Baby, you are making me cry.

SUE: That too. Tears. Tears are a body fluid. Don't drop no tears on me. I'm not getting AIDS from your tears.

SHORTY: What is left?

SUE: Give me a call on the telephone some time.

THE END

That was great!  
**Give out tokens.**

What about those AIDS facts?

Was their truth or falsehood in what you heard?

**Discuss and relate to the fact that there is HIV in saliva, sweat, and tears but not enough to pass on. Also HIV must come in contact with a passage into the blood - not just on the skin.**

Let's move from Shorty and Sue to the facts about HIV and AIDS.

When it comes to HIV and AIDS the more you know and understand, the more you can make smart choices and control where you are going.

We are going to play "The Don't be Stupid About AIDS" game.

There will be two teams.

**Divide the group into two teams and have them line up facing each other.**

I'll give a card to the first member on the team.

That person will read the question on the card to the first person on the other team.

You try to answer it.

You can ask your team members for help if you want to - that's up to you.

After you give your answer, the person who has the card will turn it over and read the answer on the back.

Then it will be your turn to read a question to the other team.

Each team has a turn at asking a question.

I'll give tokens for good answers, good tries, and good support of each other.

Has everyone got the idea?

**Pass out the first card to the first person in line on the starting team. Have the first person in line on the opposite team answer the question. Make sure the question side is up. Don't let anyone turn the card over until the other team has answered. Keep going down the line so that each individual has to answer questions. Play until all the questions have been used up. Give out tokens as the teams play.**

That was great!

Has anyone got a question that you would like all of us to try and answer?

**Have the entire group try to answer the questions. If you don't know the correct answer, say so and indicate you will find it out.**

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**HIV/AIDS fact cards**

*What follows is the text of the cards. You want to make cards two sided so that participants don't see the answers until the cards are turned over. The easiest way to make cards is to place "1 front" on the top half of an 8.5 x 11 piece of paper or card stock, and then "2 front" on the lower half of the page. Xerox on the back of the piece of paper "1 back" on the top half and "2 back" on the bottom half. Then cut the paper or card stock in half, and you have two cards each with a back and front. Continue in the same manner.*

**1,Front**

**What causes AIDS?**

**1,Back**

**A virus called HIV - Human Immunodeficiency Virus**

**2,Front**

**What does the "A" in AIDS stand for?**

**2,Back**

**"Acquired" - people are not born with it. They get it. It is passed from person to person.**

**3,Front**

**What does the "I" in AIDS stand for?**

**3,Back**

**"Immune" - the immune system is the body's defense system. It protects the body from disease.**

**4,Front**

**What does the "D" in AIDS stand for?**

**4,Back**

**"Deficiency" - to lack something. In this case to lack defenses in the immune system.**

**5,Front**

**What does the "S" in AIDS stand for?**

**5,Back**

**"Syndrome" - a group of signs or symptoms which when they occur together means a person has a certain disease.**

**6,Front**

**If someone is infected with HIV, will they get sick right away?**

**6,Back**

**No. They usually carry the infection for many years before they show signs of being sick. Many show no signs for five years. After 10 years, about half of the infected people show signs.**

**7,Front**

**Can you name at least three signs of AIDS?**

**7,Back**

**Unexplained weight loss. Night sweats. Swollen glands. Fevers. Severe and long lasting fatigue. Unexplained bleeding or rashes.**

**Chronic diarrhea.**

**8,Front**

**Who gets AIDS?**

**8,Back**

**Anyone can get the virus under the right conditions.**

**9,Front**

**What does the HIV test look for?**

**9,Back**

**Antibodies in the blood that attack the HIV.**

**10,Front**

**If a person gets infected with HIV, how long might it take before the HIV test shows up positive?**

**10,Back**

**Six months.**

**11,Front**

**Can you get HIV through a knife and fork, dishes, or toilets?**

**11,Back**

**No. HIV is not transmitted through causal contact.**

12,Front

Does HIV live in the air?

12,Back

No. HIV dies easily when it comes in contact with air or water.

13,Front

What bodily fluids does HIV live in?

13,Back

Blood, semen, vaginal fluids, urine and feces.

14,Front

Why can't you get HIV from tears, saliva and urine?

14,Back

Because there are not a high enough number of viruses in these fluids.

15,Front

Can you get HIV through oral sex?

15,Back

Yes, if semen or vaginal fluids get in your mouth. There are not a lot of cases where HIV was passed through oral sex, but there are some.

16,Front

If HIV lives in blood, semen and vaginal fluid, how do you usually get it?

16,Back

Vaginal intercourse, anal intercourse, oral sex, shared needles for drug use, and infected mother's passing it to unborn babies through their shared blood supply.

17,Front

What are the illnesses that affect people with AIDS?

17,Back

Most common for men are a skin cancer and an unusual pneumonia. We don't know what illnesses usually affect women.

**(Kaposi's sarcoma is the skin cancer, and the pneumonia is pneumocystis carinii pneumonia - called PCP.)**

**18,Front**

**Does everyone with AIDS die?**

**18,Back**

**Yes, so far.**

**19,Front**

**What is the longest someone with AIDS has lived?**

**19,Back**

**A few cases have lived four years or more. Most people die within 6 months to 2 years after having been diagnosed.**

**20,Front**

**Is there a vaccine that can keep you from getting AIDS?**

**20,Back**

**To date no vaccine has been developed, and the guesses in 1991 are that it will be 10 years before one is developed.**

**21,Front**

**Can people get AIDS from insect bites?**

**21,Back**

**The best answer to date is "no" because there is no evidence that where lots of mosquitos live there are many AIDS cases. Also mosquitos suck blood out not put blood in. There is not enough blood in the mosquito for the virus to live in.**

**22,Front**

**When did we first realize AIDS was a problem?**

**22,Back**

**AIDS was first recognized as a disease in 1981.**

**23,Front**

**How fast is AIDS spreading?**

23,Back

Very fast. In 1981 there were 316 people in the U.S. with AIDS. By January of 1990 there were 120,000 cases in the U.S.

24,Front

Can heterosexuals get HIV?

24,Back

Anyone can get HIV if he or she engages in unsafe sex and shares IV needles.

25,Front

Can lesbians get HIV?

25,Back

There are a few cases where HIV has been passed along sexually between lesbians.

That was a great game.

Here are some copies of the questions and answers which were on the cards.

*Pass out copies of the text of the cards*

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### **Exercise 3: See the AIDS Antibody Test<sup>®</sup> Video**

I want you to take a look at a video on the AIDS Antibody Test.

When it is finished, I will want to know what you thought about it.

As you watch it and learn about the test, ask yourself, "Does it makes sense for me to take this test?"

Knowing about the test is fine, but what does it do for you personally?

**Show the video called "THE AIDS ANTIBODY TEST."**

What did you think of the video?

In Session 15 we will work on whether it is wise to be tested.

After having seen that video, would you want to be tested?

**Encourage discussion. Elicit pros and cons, but keep the issue uncertain at this point. Participants are in no way prepared to give a wise and serious answer to the question at this stage of the training.**

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### **Exercise 4: Myths about AIDS**

There are lots of young people out there who don't have your understanding and knowledge about HIV and AIDS.

What do you think are some of the misunderstandings and myths that they have about AIDS?

I would like you to get into two groups and come up with a list of the misunderstandings and myths that they have about HIV and AIDS.

Put your list on newsprint, and we'll go over it when you are finished.

***Divide the group into two small groups and give them marking pens and newsprint. Allow five minutes to work on the lists. Then have them come back and report.***

So let's hear what you wrote down.

***Go over the list and discuss.***

That was very good.

We are at the end of our time for today.

For homework I would like you to select two different friends and explain three things about HIV and AIDS to these friends.

What does HIV mean?

How are HIV and AIDS related?

In other words, what is the connection between HIV and AIDS?

Last, how do you get HIV and give it to someone else?

Are there any questions?

***Answer questions.***

OK, so next time I want to hear about how your efforts and explaining HIV went.

Let's take a moment and give some appreciation to everyone here.

How about some strokes for the folks.

***Encourage giving compliments to the participants.***

Before we end - how are you feeling on the Feeling Thermometer?

***Have participants share feeling levels. Give out tokens for self-disclosure.***

Thanks for working so hard today.

I'll see you on \_\_\_\_\_ (date) and \_\_\_\_\_ (time).

**END OF SESSION 14**

