

THE NEW FACE OF HIV/AIDS: WHAT NEW INFORMATION NEEDS TO BE GIVEN TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE

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Background

Since its outbreak in 1986, Uganda has registered a tremendous decline in the HIV prevalence rates from 15% in 1991 to 5% in 2002 though up again to 6.4% in 2006 (2006 UDHS) and 7.3% (2011 AIDS Indicator survey).

The symptoms that were common in the early days are hardly visible today, hence the phrase, “The new face of HIV/AIDS” and this literature on symptoms of the early days is still used in schools by these vulnerable children, so when they go out, they will come into contact with these HIV/AIDS patients who do not show the signs that they always read about and they will fall prey.

This is especially true because, usually, persons on Anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs) reach a stage when the HIV is almost undetectable but that does not mean that they are no longer HIV positive. This therefore calls for the need to modify and update information given to the young people.

Program Description

The program entails going out in the community advancing new information to these young and vulnerable people.

Making outreaches to schools. This is so because, schools are a highly effective and appropriate place to teach young people HIV prevention information and skills before they begin the behavior that put them at risk of HIV infection.

Lessons Learned

Stigmatization has reduced due to awareness and sensitization

These young people have become complacent, they do not mind about contracting the virus because they think it has been put under control. This is in the long run going to reverse the prevalence of 7.3% (HIV/AIDS indicator survey) to even dangerous statistics. Young people who are virgins guarantee themselves to be HIV negative forgetting to put forth the prospect of mother to child transmission.

There's clearly lay out it's dangers since most of the youths feel it is normal to have HIV/AIDS

They should be told that it is real and that it kills

Those who have it must be strengthened through intensive counseling since most of them are trying to revenge
Protective methods must be emphasized such as Condom use and abstinence.

Conclusion

Young people need to know that much as HIV/AIDS is under control, they are not supposed to put their lives at risk

When educating virginity to these young people, we should make sure that they get to know that being a virgin is not a guarantee that one can not be positive because one may have been born with the virus(mother to child transmission) So we should encourage them to always go for HIV testing.

Finally, beginning at the earliest appropriate age, young people should receive sexuality and HIV/AIDS education that is up to date as part of a comprehensive curriculum of health education.

Key words: New face, HIV, Young people