

AIDS FOCUS

Be informed. Change your world.

June 2008

Youth Day June 16 2008



Those who died in the 1976 uprising did not lose their lives in vain as the event brought the necessary impact as it drew the world's attention and ensured students' voices were also heard.

There is a vast difference since then because young people then were very passionate about education and that is why they challenged the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction at black schools including learning it. It is important today that young people take their education serious and realise without it there is no better future.

The difference between today's youth and that of 1976 is that they use to respect thier bodies thus their health but can we say the same about today's youth? Maybe not because the youth today faces even bigger challenges than those of 1976.

There is a need to teach them (at school and at home) about the dangers of unsafe sex, teenage pregnancy and HIV and Aids.

Statistics to make you think

If you're still embarrassed, afraid or just feel you don't need to speak to your teenagers about sex, here are some facts and stats to help change your mind. Maybe you'll realise just how big a role you can play in helping your children make informed and responsible choices.

- 94% of youth agree that there is something you can do to prevent HIV infection.
- 62% of youth who are already HIV positive don't think they are at risk of getting HIV.
- 24% of youth have had sex under the influence of alcohol. Only 43% of youth are confident that they could use condom after drinking or taking drugs.
- 15% of sexually experienced young people (aged 15-24years) have had more than five sexual partners.
- Nearly two thirds of young South Africans (63.3%) say they receive no information whatsoever about sex from their fathers. Half (48.7%) say they receive no or very little information from their mothers.
- The greatest risks that parents see for their children are HIV/AIDS (44.9% of parents), teen pregnancy (45.7%) and sexual assault (39.9%). Despite these concerns, 40% of parents say they never talk with their children about who they date. Nearly half (46.5%) never talk about how to decide when you are ready to have sex, and a third (35.2%) never discuss physical relationships.

Every young South African (regardless of race or class) has a 50:50 chance of getting HIV/AIDS. Which half will your teenager fall into?

Inside this Issue

The History of Condoms

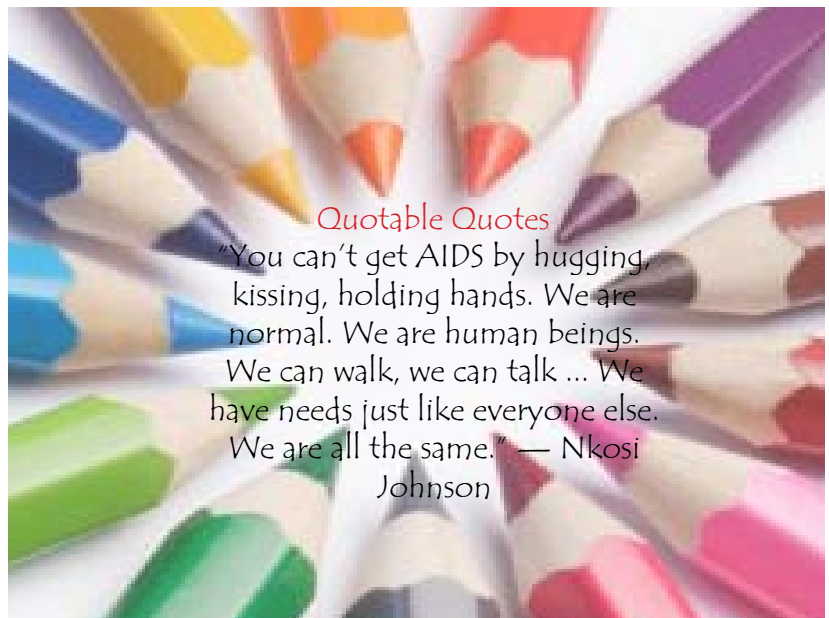
Know your facts and stats about teenagers.

Date-rape drug: How can I protect myself from being given these drugs?

Protecting your Teen

Quotable Quotes

"You can't get AIDS by hugging, kissing, holding hands. We are normal. We are human beings. We can walk, we can talk ... We have needs just like everyone else. We are all the same." — Nkosi Johnson



History of Condoms



Condom use can be traced back several thousand years. It is known that around 1000 BC the ancient Egyptians used a linen sheath for protection against disease.

1500's

The first known published description and trials regarding prophylactic condom use were recorded in Italy. Gabrielle Fallopius claimed to have invented a sheath made of linen, and conducted trials amongst 1 100 men using the condom, none of whom became infected with syphilis. Having been found useful for prevention of infection, it was only later that the usefulness of condoms for the prevention of pregnancy was recognised. Later in the 1500s one of the first improvements to the condom was made, when the linen cloth sheaths were sometimes soaked in a chemical solution and then allowed to dry prior to use. These became the first spermicides to be used with condoms.

1700's

Condoms made out of animal intestines began to be available at this time. They were manufactured from the gut of sheep, which was soaked, turned inside out, saturated in an alkaline solution, scraped, exposed to brimstone vapour, washed, blown up, dried, cut and given a ribbon tie. It was necessary to soak them to render them supple enough to put on. The labour-intensive process meant that the products were correspondingly expensive (though reusable) and thus only available to a limited proportion of the population.

1800's

Condoms made out of vulcanised rubber began to be mass-produced. Vulcanisation is a process that turns crude rubber into a strong elastic material. The first advertisement for condoms was published in an American newspaper. However, soon after, a law was passed making it illegal to advertise any sort of birth control, and allowing the postal service to confiscate condoms sold through the mail. The first latex condoms were produced in the 1880's, although they would not become popular for another 50 years. There remained a very pervasive feeling that the condom represented an immoral attempt to interfere with the laws of God and Nature.

1900's

In the 1920's there was a rise in the birth control movement and condoms became more discussed. They were not the favoured method of most birth control, being seen as unreliable, unaesthetic and requiring not merely co-operation but action by the male partner. However, since they could be purchased easily over the counter they were probably the most popular method of birth control until the 1960s. Technology improved further in the 60's and 70's and the latex manufacture process was simplified to the point where it could be automated, making the product cheaper. This created a thinner, more elastic, and more reliable condom. Since then, there has been little additional technical innovation, though some brands now include added lubricant or spermicide. Today, novelty condoms are produced as sex toys, in different colours, and even flavours.



WHAT TO DO IF THE CONDOM BREAKS

Follow these recommendations

- Stay calm, take a breath and relax. That will make it easier for you to make rational decisions.
- If the condom breaks while you're having sex and before ejaculation, stop immediately, pull out and apply a new condom.
- If ejaculation has occurred, pull out carefully
- Shower or wash your genital area thoroughly with soap and warm water.
- Have a discussion with your partner. Talk about how careful each of you has been in the past. Talk about possible HIV risk factors such as a history of IV drug use, unsafe sex practices, having sex with prostitutes, etc.
- Never douche after a condom breaks. This can force infectious microbes deeper in the vagina and also causes membrane irritation, increasing the risk of disease transmission
- Avoid using contraceptive foams such as nonoxynol-9. This can irritate mucous membranes in the genital area, increasing the risk of infection.
- Seek advice from a specialist who will assess your risk, do an HIV test and consider putting you on post exposure prophylaxis (PEP). PEP must be taken within 72 hours of the incident to reduce your risk of contracting HIV.
- It is also a good idea to visit your doctor if you want to prevent an unwanted pregnancy

The HIV test should be repeated at 6 weeks, 3 months and 6 months to allow time for the body to produce HIV antibodies if infection has not been averted.

Q

Question: How can I help my daughter protect herself from Date rape?

Answer: It's a sad fact that many rapes happen on what began as innocent dates. Teens need to know that any time they are forced into sexual act when they don't want to, or if they do the forcing, that's rape. Warn your child that sexual feelings can be very strong. When a date says, "I swear we won't go all the way. I'll stop whenever you tell me to," it may take a lot of strength to stop. Teens need to know that it's okay to stop at any time if they don't feel good about what is happening. A response to a date who complains, "You teased me and made me think you wanted to have sex, so now you have to," should be simple "I'm sorry, but I don't owe you sex. This is too important and I don't feel good about it. "It's particularly important for both boys and girls to understand that when a date says "no" it means "no," no matter what is happening.

Teen, Sex & HIV



The facts: Most of us are not sex experts. And the idea of talking about sex with our kids is, well, scary. Reading books or articles on the subject can be a good start. They will give you the facts you need to talk about the topics experts agree should be covered during the preteen and teen years.

- The reproducing system in both genders, including explaining about menstruation and ejaculation to both males and females
- Sexual intercourse and pregnancy
- Fertility and birth control
- Masturbation
- Other forms of sexual behaviour, such as thigh sex
- Differences in male and female sexual feelings
- Forms of sexuality: heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality
- HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and how to prevent them (check out the info on this site)
- The physical and emotional parts of sexual activity

Topics that should be covered during the talk with your teen

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TEENS WHY?

Why are teenagers so pre-occupied with sex?

- They want to feel accepted
- It feels good
- It's "cool" to have sex
- They want to feel close to someone
- They feel peer pressure
- They're in love
- They want to experiment
- They have raging hormones

Ten basic facts

1. AIDS is the last stage of HIV disease. AIDS stands for acquired immune deficiency syndrome. HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus.
2. Currently, HIV disease is ultimately fatal.
3. There is no cure.
4. There are only a few ways to get HIV. There must be an exchange of blood, semen, or vaginal secretions. The most likely ways are:
 - Having unprotected sexual intercourse
 - Sharing needles and other drug equipment
 - Being born with it; HIV can also be passed to an infant through breast milk
5. Most people with HIV don't know they have it. It can take more than 10 years before symptoms develop. Most people with HIV pass the virus to someone else without knowing it.
6. You can't get HIV by casual contact. There is not enough exchange of blood, semen, or vaginal secretions in casual contact — hugging, kissing, touching, swimming; or by sharing sandwiches, eating utensils, swimming pools, showers, towels, and gym equipment — to cause HIV infection.
7. The surest way to avoid HIV is not to use IV (intravenous) drugs or have anal, vaginal and oral sex.
8. Practicing "safer sex" reduces risk for sexually active people.
9. Satisfying sex lives are possible in the age of AIDS.
10. Getting HIV from a blood transfusion or medical procedure is highly unlikely. Donated blood has been screened for HIV antibodies since 1985 when the first test was developed. The chance of getting HIV from other procedures is less than 1 in 10 million.

Protecting your Teen

I'm worried that by discussing sexual health with my child, I will be encouraging her to have sex.

Teens who have an open relationship with their parents and discuss safe sex are less likely to make mistakes than teens who don't. Discussing sex with your teen does not make them want to have sex. Most teens report having sex due to peer pressure, trying to please their partner or because they were misinformed. Telling your child about sex is likely to curb their curiosity more than keeping it a "secret".

