

Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), Day 3: HIV/AIDS - Its Impact on People

Grades 9 and 10, Lesson #26

Time Needed

One class period

Student Learning Objectives:

To be able to...

1. Recognize that teens and others *like* themselves can become infected with HIV, and understand how it can affect someone's life.
2. Explain that denial is a common, but dangerous, response to difficult issues.
3. Verbalize the importance/ worth of maintaining or adopting behaviors which minimize risk of giving or getting HIV and other STDs.

Agenda:

1. Explain the lesson's purpose.
2. Review and discuss yesterday's homework to reinforce the cognitive information.
3. Show the video to personalize and "make real" HIV/AIDS.
4. Use HIV/AIDS Transparencies 1-6 to guide a discussion about denial and the effects HIV has on a person.
5. Assign homework.

Materials Needed:

- One transparent set of Transparencies 1-6
- Appropriate audio-visual equipment
- VIDEO: Documentary film ***Blood Lines***

NOTE: This is the only lesson in 9/10 FLASH for which a video is essential. This 22-minute video is available from the producer at <http://www.blood-lines.org/>, at 503-239-0164 or info@blood-lines.org. Volume discounts are available; consider ordering with other teachers from your district or school.

CAUTION: There are 4 instances in the film when adult language is used. It is important to realize that the choice is not gratuitous; it reflects the speaker's reality at a moment when polite words seemed inadequate.

Activities

1. Explain the lesson's purpose:

Today we're going to briefly review what you learned yesterday. Then we'll see a video and spend the rest of the period examining people's attitudes about HIV/AIDS. Let's start with that review.

2. Have people get out last night's homework. Ask everyone to fill in or **correct** their papers as you go over the answers. Have volunteers take turns giving their answers aloud; discuss any where there is disagreement. The correct answers are:

A.

a. T	e. F	i. T	m. F
b. F	f. F	j. F	n. F
c. T	g. T	k. F	o. T
d. T	h. F	l. T	p. T

- B. People can **REALLY** reduce their risk by the following (these should be checked):

- a. Don't have sex.
- c. Don't shoot up drugs.
- d. Only have sex with one person in their lives, who also only has sex with them
- f. Always use latex condoms when they have sex.
- j. Always use a sterile needle if injecting medicine or other drugs or getting a tattoo or a piercing

None of the other items (b,e,g,h,i) should be checked; they would not influence a person's risk at all.

3. Explain how information vs. attitude affects behavior:

OK, you all know your information very well. But, you know that having accurate information, alone, doesn't necessarily affect people's behavior; their attitudes (feelings and beliefs) influence their decisions, too. Let me give you an example. How many people here have been told by your parents or your dentist that you are less likely to get cavities if you floss every day? (Notice the approximate number of hands: 1/2 the class? 3/4?) Now, how many of you have flossed every single day for the last two weeks? (Notice the difference: far fewer, probably.)

That may be because it feels like "too much bother" to floss, or because you don't really believe the advice, or because you don't think it will really happen to you, etc. The same principle applies to any health behavior-- including behaviors that put people at risk for HIV/AIDS and other STDs. The facts aren't enough. The video you are about to see focuses on people's attitudes: their feelings and beliefs.

This video, entitled "Blood Lines," is about how it feels to be a young person growing up

infected with HIV. In the video, you will meet sixteen young people whose lives have been changed by HIV infection. These are all real people, not actors.

4. Show the 22-minute documentary, "Blood Lines."
5. *After the video:* Have the students pair up with someone near them. Review how an active listener acts: eye contact, facing the speaker, engaged facial expressions/body language. Label students A and B. Give student A a minute or two to talk about feelings or thoughts provoked by the film while the other student actively listens without responding. Then switch the roles and then give student B the same amount of time to reflect on the film.
6. One at a time, put each of the Transparencies on the screen and have a student read the quote aloud. The questions below will help generate discussion. Depending on the size of the class, you may decide that discussions in small groups of 4 or 5 students will be more appropriate and/or productive. The first three Transparencies address denial; the last three speak more to behavior and decision-making. (You may not have time for all the transparencies if you have only one class period.)

NOTE: Talking points are included after some questions. They highlight key points, but you should not feel like they all need to be covered, as long as there is discussion.

Transparency 1: Jennifer, Lisa

Does HIV/AIDS seem very real to you when you read about it or hear about it on the news? In what ways?

How can you tell whether kids at our school really take HIV/AIDS seriously? Do they think they're invincible, as Lisa says, or do they really believe that they and their friends could catch the virus?

Transparency 2: Rebecca, Jasmin

In what ways do you think a young person's life changes when they test positive for HIV? Do you think it's harder or easier for these folks who got infected as teens than it would be if they were older when they got infected? Why?

(NOTE: They may be restricted in dating and/or sexually, they are tied to a regimen of pills, they must face mortality, their long-term goals may change—how? Help students figure out that it might be harder to talk about hard things with future partners if you haven't had a lot of practice in romantic relationships. Having to talk about it with your family might be more difficult too than if you were a bit older, not living under your parents' roof.)

Is it important for Jasmin to accept that she has HIV? Why?

(NOTE: She must accept that she has HIV in order to take care of herself, manage her health and practice good habits in terms of avoiding transmission of HIV to partners.)

Transparency 3: Jennifer

Why would any group -- Whites, Blacks, Hispanics, heterosexuals, teenagers -- want to think HIV/AIDS is not their problem? Why is people's denial so strong?

How do you convince people that HIV/AIDS is real, that it is potentially risky to anyone, regardless of race, religion or sexual orientation?

(NOTE: HIV does not discriminate based on who someone is, but what they do. It is all about behaviors, not personal characteristics.)

Transparency 4: Jody, Pamela

If someone at our school caught HIV, what would everyone think? How would people act? Why?

(NOTE: Discuss not ostracizing people, treating people with dignity, and acceptance of people that have made mistakes. No one deserves HIV. And remember, HIV cannot be transmitted through casual contact, like sharing desks, "giving 5," playing sports.)

What stereotype do people have about folks with AIDS? What do people expect when they hear there will be speaker who has AIDS? How are stereotypes dangerous?

Transparency 5: Rebecca, Joe

What do you think Rebecca meant that in order to protect yourself, you have to respect yourself? What are some specific ways you can protect yourself from HIV? What are examples of behaviors that show self-respect?

What might Joes have meant that he "slipped up" once or twice? How can that be avoided?

Transparency 6: Lisa

Lisa talks about living to see her son get married and other people in the film talked about getting old. How is this different from the prognosis they would have received 10-20 years ago, before effective HIV treatment was available?

(NOTE: With drugs to manage HIV, people in the US can expect to live much longer than if they had caught HIV 10-20 years ago. Before treatment was available, prognosis was much worse. Many people live with chronic problems, like diabetes, and they manage them and change their behavior.)

What are the options these days for remaining healthy? Does your generation have to give up the chance of ever loving?

These were all teens in the United States. If the film had been made, say, in Africa or Southeast Asia, how might the stories you saw have been different?

(NOTE: The US has many more resources than developing countries and can provide drugs to manage HIV. This is not the case in some parts of the world, so in those places, HIV/AIDS still has the same impact on a human life that it did in North America and Europe 10-20 years ago.)

Summarize by asking the class: *What is denial and why is it dangerous?*

Homework

5. Ask the students to write a half page to a page about the film and/or the discussion afterwards. This will help them process the information as well as their feelings and emotions.

HIV/AIDS Transparency 1

“This disease is real, it’s not going away. If you have it, you can live powerfully, but if you don’t have it, you don’t want it.”

-- Jennifer

“Young adults think they’re...we’re invincible. And that’s what does it. The fact that you think you’re invincible, it’s not going to happen to you. It happens to other people.”

--Lisa

HIV/AIDS Transparency 2

“Just like that...my whole life was different.”

--Rebecca

“I can't accept it...It's still hard for me to accept it. I've had it already 5 years. I still can't believe I have this.”

-- Jasmin

HIV/AIDS Transparency 3

“I thought that HIV only happened to people I didn’t know. I thought HIV only happened to gay men and people who used drugs, and I just didn’t think that it would happen to me.”

--Jennifer

HIV/AIDS Transparency 4

“Nobody ever told me when I was 14 that people might not like me, and not want to be in relationships with me, not want to hold my hand, let me cry in their arms... just because I have this virus.”

-- Jody

“I went to my room and I cried, and I didn’t cry because I was HIV positive, I cried because I had just been treated so horribly by my own parents.”

--Pamela

HIV/AIDS Transparency 5

“In order to protect yourself, you need to respect yourself. Maybe that will prevent another infection from happening.”

--Rebecca

“I had all the information, had all the knowledge, maybe slipped up once or twice, and ended up with an HIV status.”

--Joe

HIV/AIDS Transparency 6

“I’m gonna get old and gray,
I’m going to see my son get
married. He’s six months
old, and I’m gonna see him
get married. I’ll be here.”

--Lisa