

Positive Life



Aim

that participants understand the impact of HIV/AIDS on the health and well-being of young people

Age

13 years and older

Time

40 minutes

Materials

sets of impact cards, sets of role cards, flipchart, markers, blue-tack or sellotape

Action

Dance4Life actively inspires young people to take the lead in pushing back HIV/AIDS and to become leaders instead of targets. Young people in many countries worldwide, including South Africa, Indonesia, the Netherlands, Russia and Germany have participated and by 2012 the aim is to have at least one million young people around the world involved.

The first ever Irish pilot takes place in the run up to World AIDS Day on 1 December 2006. If you are interested in becoming involved in Dance4Life, email Kgriffin@ifpa.ie or visit www.Dance4Life.com.

What to do

Break into groups of four. Hand out set of cards on the impact of HIV/AIDS to each group. Explain that the cards describe the impact of HIV/AIDS on the health and well-being of young people. In groups, ask participants to rank the cards from biggest impact to least impact. Get feedback from the groups. Get agreement on the five biggest impacts for young people. Write down the top five on large sheets. Stick these up on the wall.

Give each group a set of role cards. If possible, use different coloured paper for each set or mark them A, B, C and so on. Allow the group ten minutes to discuss them. For each character stick the card on the poster which they feel will have the biggest impact on them. When all the cards are up, see if there was agreement between the groups. If not, why?

In a large group discuss:

- What were the similarities and differences between the impact of HIV/AIDS on young people in poor countries and young people in richer countries?
- What needs to be done to improve the health and wellbeing of these people?
- Who has the power to take action to improve the health and wellbeing of these young people?
- What can we do?

Alternatively simplify the case studies and turn the impact cards into statements and do it as a Giant Steps activity.



Positive Life



IMPACT CARDS

I get sick more often and miss a lot of school

I want to have a boy/girlfriend, like my other friends, but I'm too scared to tell someone

I can't afford the drugs that I need to remain healthy

Many of the teachers in my school are sick or have died of AIDS or are absent to take care of sick relatives. There is no one to replace the doctors and nurses who are sick or have died of AIDS

I don't get enough food to eat because there are so few people to grow it

I end up spending most of my time caring for my sick brothers/sisters/parents

My parents are too sick to work, so we have very little money

I get bullied by other young people because I am HIV positive

I often feel stressed, lonely, sad or angry

I have had to drop out of school to get a job in order to support my family

Because my parents and many of my aunts and uncles have died of AIDS, I have not had the opportunity to learn their traditional farming skills

ROLE CARDS



Maria

I live in London and found out that I was HIV positive when I was 9. When my doctor told me I felt both sad and angry but I was glad that she told me the truth. I take 15 tablets a day; some are the size of a 2p coin. They are difficult to take but I've got used to it. Even if I get the flu I have to be admitted to hospital because it could lead to something like a chest infection. I've learnt to live with my illness but now and again I do get down about it.*

Julia

I am 13 and live in South Africa. I have attended my local school since I was 5 and I like it very much. However over the last five years, 4 of the teachers in my school have died from AIDS and they are finding it difficult to replace them. Because of this the number of students in my class has grown and there are not enough teachers to have classes everyday.

Kate

I found out that I was HIV positive 3 years ago. I was put on medication shortly after I was diagnosed and I now look as healthy as any of my friends. Having HIV has changed my life but I think I'm a better person than before. I have travelled a lot and I am now training to be a computer programmer. I sometimes feel sad about my illness but I feel optimistic about the future.*

Paul

I was 14 when my uncle died of AIDS. When a youth leader asked me how my uncle had died, I smiled cheerfully and said "I don't really know". Inside however I felt really sad and angry and I had to fight to stop the tears. Deep down I felt that I couldn't tell anyone that he had died of AIDS. I think that children have a right to know about a relative's illness but that they need help to understand it and not feel afraid or sad.*

Ben

I thought that HIV and AIDS would never affect me. However when I was 19, my partner Dave told me that he had full blown AIDS. I did not get the disease but I have learnt how to protect myself from it and to treat people who have HIV with respect.*

Lena

I live in Addis Ababa in Ethiopia. Both my parents have died of AIDS. I have had to leave school and get a job as a domestic worker to help feed my brothers and sisters. I work long hours and my employers will not allow me to join a union. I tried to change jobs, but my employer refused to let me go.

Justina

When my mother became very ill with AIDS, I would help her to have a bath, eat, go to the toilet and do her hair. When she was in hospital, I took her breakfast in the morning at 7.30am and then left for school at 8.15am. When I came home from school my sister and brother would be waiting for me in the house. I made dinner for everyone and then took dinner to Mum in hospital.*

Yoweri

I am a 12 year old Ugandan boy. A lot of people in my village are living with, or have died of, AIDS. I take part in dramas and classes at my local church to teach me and the other young people in the village about the risk of AIDS. We also learn about how important it is to care for those in the community who are sick and to treat them with respect.

Kaliamani

I am 13 years old. I come from Mumbai in India. I live with my mother and three younger brothers in a slum shack. My mother has AIDS. Two of my brothers are HIV positive. I do the washing, caring and cooking for my family, while my mother works as a rag-picker. She doesn't get paid much but it helps us to buy food. My mother does not get medicine for her illness and I know she worries what will happen to me after she dies. I will probably pick rags like my mother or get married as soon as possible.**

Mint

I am 10 years old and I live in Thailand. I have HIV. I used to get upset at school because the older children would mock me and tell the others not to play with me. This has got better recently as people are learning more about the disease. My mother and I both go to the local hospital for treatment and we get free drugs specially made for our disease. This means that my mother is well enough to get a job.**

Charles

I live in the Chongwe region of Zambia. Both my parents died from AIDS so my grandmother takes care of me and my five brothers and sisters. Money is tight so I had to leave school to work on a local farm. A few months ago a volunteer from a local community centre began coming to our home to support the family. This has made things a bit easier. They also gave us food and seeds to plant so I am hoping to return to school soon. When I have the time, I like to take part in football matches with other young people in my village.

* Avert (1999): Why Me? Young people living with HIV and AIDS

** Observer Supplement (2004): Children and HIV/AIDS