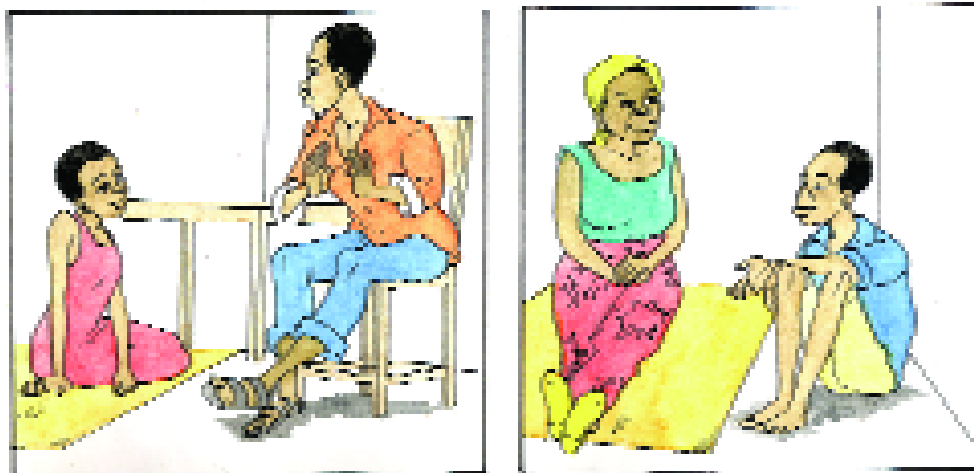


## ♠ COOL PARENTS GUIDE ♠

For parents of children from 7 to 11 years



### HOW TO TALK WITH A YOUNG CHILD ABOUT FORMING GOOD BEHAVIORS TO PREVENT HIV/AIDS:

1. Find a private and comfortable place (such as in the house after dinner at night).
2. Start by chatting with the child about any topic. Eventually, ask the child if s/he has ever heard of the killer disease HIV/AIDS.
3. If that is difficult, show the child this guide and read one of the questions to the child.
4. Advise the child on the points in this guide.
5. Ask questions to be certain that the child understands.
6. Encourage the child to comment on what you say and to ask you questions.
7. Agree with the child about specific actions she or he and you will try in the next week. Then, the next week discuss how well you and the child were able to do the actions. If there were difficulties, try to solve the problem in another way.
8. Always tell the child how much you love and care for her or him. Children want to please you when they hear nice things! Tell her or him that you advise to show your love and protect her or him from this killer disease.

### What are HIV and AIDS?

AIDS is a disease killing our communities. It is technically called HIV/AIDS. This is because HIV is a virus that gets into a person's body and destroys the immune system (the ability to fight off illness). Eventually, it becomes AIDS.

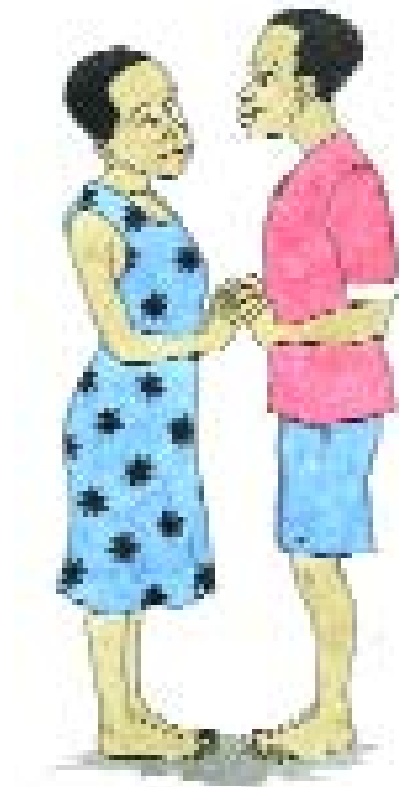
You can have the virus (HIV) for many years without people knowing it. When AIDS develops you become very sick. This is because the immune system can no longer fight off organisms, such as bacteria and viruses, which cause many diseases.

Medicines can treat the early illnesses that develop because of the virus, but there is no complete cure for AIDS.

### **How can the virus that causes AIDS infect a person?**

Because the virus is found in various body fluids, including the semen and blood of an infected person, there are many ways in which it can be transmitted to another person. The most common way is through sexual intercourse without a condom. Therefore, if your child has unprotected sex, he or she can get infected with the virus that causes AIDS.

The virus can also be passed through sharing needles or razors with an infected person (through blood transfusions, injections, or circumcision).



*Children should avoid sexual relationships*

The virus can NOT be passed through sharing utensils, sharing clothes, touching, shaking hands, sitting together with, hugging or kissing an infected person. Mosquitoes can NOT pass the virus.

### **What are the signs of AIDS?**

When a person first has the virus (is HIV positive), he or she does not show any signs of illness. In fact, infected people look quite healthy. Therefore, it is often NOT possible for a person to know that he or she has the virus or for someone else to identify a person with the virus just by looking at him. An infected person can only know if he has the virus through a blood test at the hospital. This is very important to know because a person with the virus can still pass the disease to other people, most often through unprotected sex.

When the virus in a person develops into AIDS, he or she gets very sick. S/he can suffer from different diseases such as diarrhea, pneumonia, tuberculosis and body sores (shingles). The person often loses a lot of weight.

### **How can a person avoid AIDS?**

#### *Abstain from sex until marriage:*

The best way to avoid AIDS is to abstain from sex until marriage. Abstinence means avoiding sexual intercourse. If it is not possible to abstain until marriage, then children should abstain until 18 years old. Once married, the husband and wife should only have sex with each other.

Abstaining from sex will help children stay in school and perform well in school by avoiding pregnancy and diseases. This will help to give children a brighter future as education is a key to success in earning enough money to provide adequate food and shelter for one's family.

If a person cannot abstain, he/she must use a condom each and every time to avoid pregnancy and AIDS. If girls get pregnant prematurely, they might face the following problems: complications and difficulties in giving birth, which may even lead to death, high blood pressure, being chased from home by parents, low birth weight, anemia, and denied educational opportunities.

Talking to children about condoms makes them realize that sex is not play and must be taken seriously. It makes children fear and delay sex; it does not make them practice sex.

*Avoid risky situations:*

To abstain, children must avoid dangerous situations. This means that they should not play outside at night without being watched. \*It is important for parents to arrange some alternative entertainment for children at night, especially on a full moon. For example, grandparents or others could lead fireside chats or games during each full moon.



*Supervise your children when they are playing at night*

Children should never go to the shops at night.

\*If possible, parents should not send children to the shop. If children have to go, they should go in daylight.

Children should avoid pornographic video shows. Even if a child sees a video, she or he should not practice what they see. They must understand that videos are not real life; characters on the videos are just actors, not real people.

Children should avoid *Mbwiza* and *Lyogo* dances. Young children should not be exposed or tempted by the dances. If children can stay healthy, they will be alive to enjoy them long in the future.



*How risky is a dance of this type to your children?*

Children should abstain from drug and alcohol use, as these contribute to loss of sense of judgment which may lead to the children having casual sex.

*Practice safe use of sharps:*

It is also good to avoid sharing needles or razor blades with other people. Bring your own packaged blade for circumcision.

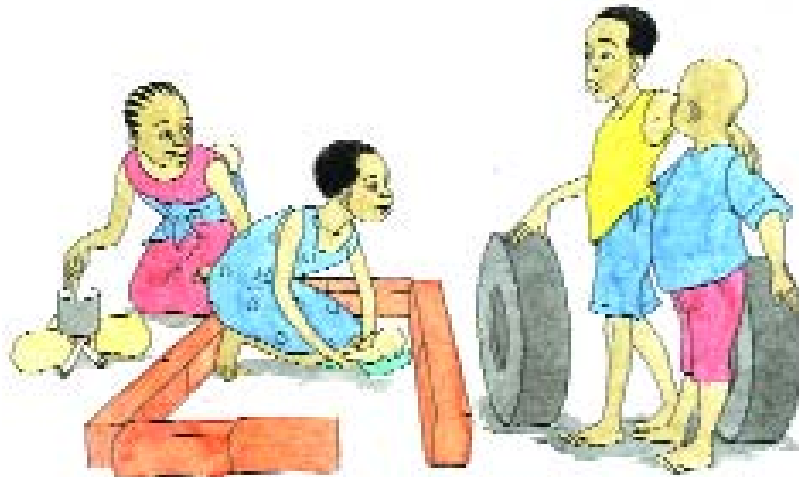
### **Other Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STIs)**

#### **What is the relationship between STIs and HIV and AIDS?**

The risks of HIV infection are always there in unprotected sex, but chances are much higher if the person has genital ulcers because these provide an entry point for the virus. Therefore, STIs increase the chances of one getting HIV.

### **What is the relationship between TB and HIV and AIDS?**

If a person has HIV, it is easy to suffer from TB because his/her immunity is low and the body can not fight disease easily. However it is possible to suffer from TB without having HIV as long as the immunity is low. Low immunity can also be caused by poor nutrition and stress.



*Healthy children mean a healthy nation.*



**Save the Children®**

**Thank you for discussing these important matters  
with your children.**