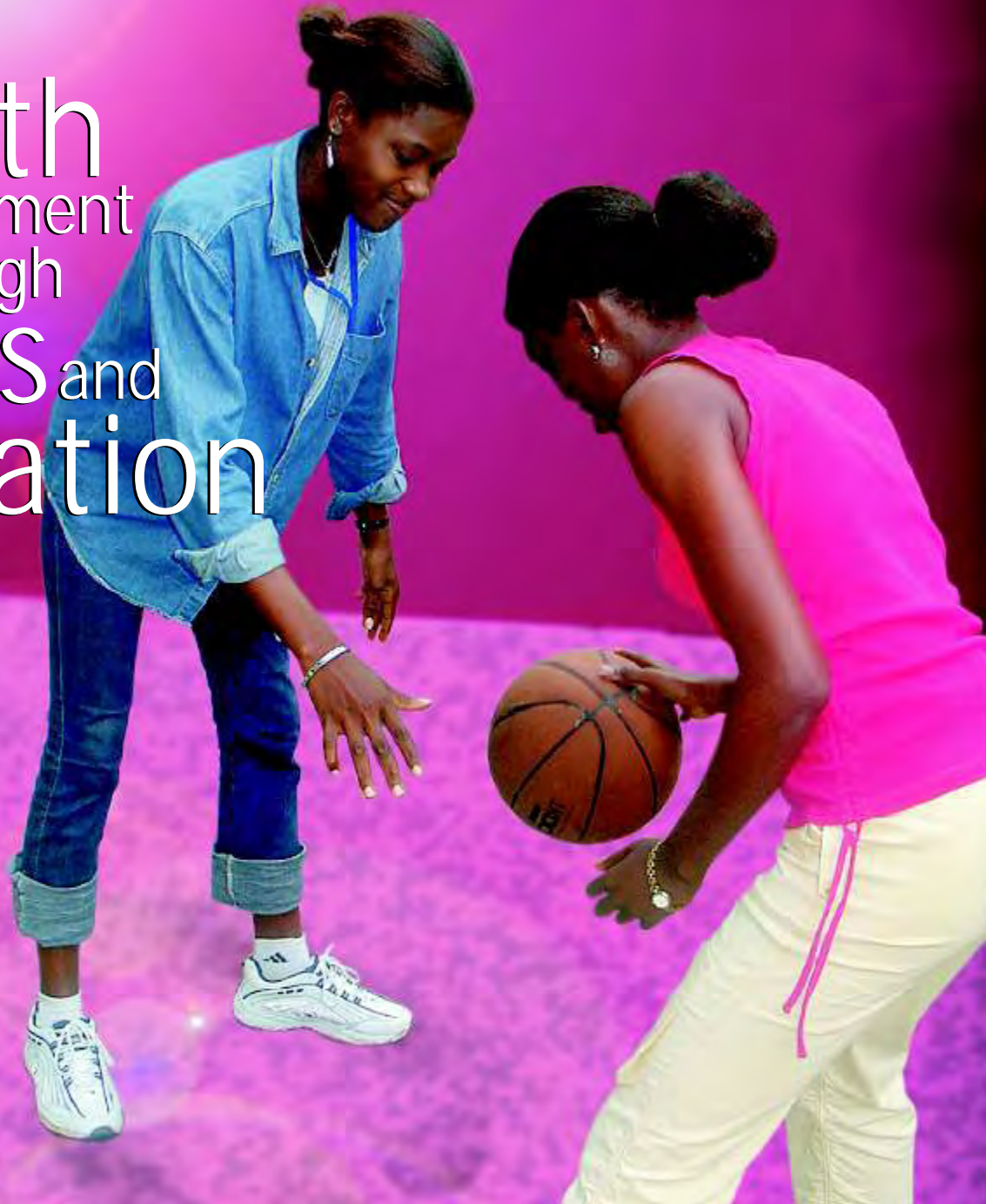


Growing Up

A NEWSLETTER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Youth development through Sports and Recreation



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In 2005 NGO
Summit On HIV/ AIDS



Jamboree
2005



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Cultivating A Reading
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For Total Development

Growing Up is published quarterly in Lagos, Nigeria by Action Health Incorporated (AHI). AHI is a non-profit, non-governmental organization dedicated to the promotion of adolescent health and development. We serve as an advocate and a catalyst for change in the present poor status of adolescents' well being by increasing public awareness and implementing innovative education, healthcare and youth development programmes.

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Youth Development Through Sports And Recreation

By Gbenga Awomodu

“My favourite sports and recreational activities are basketball, football, table-tennis, going to the beach, and playing ludo,” says Afadapa Christiana, a Senior Secondary 2 (SS2) student of Reagan Memorial Baptist Girls Secondary School. “My involvement in sports has helped me to stay fit. It has also helped me in terms of flexibility, endurance, strength and speed. I enjoy it a lot,” she adds. While she is quick to commend the quality of sports in her school, she refuses to give either the state or federal government credit for this. She is not alone.

Akinwunmi Jabar, an SS3 student of Ogudu Senior Model College enjoys playing football and basketball, aerobics, singing and listening to music. He rates sports and recreational activities in his school and in the nation as a whole, as very poor but thinks it is better at the state level. Like Christiana, Jabar has also benefited from sports and recreational activities. He says, “Apart from discovering my talents through sports, it has helped me improve my physical strength and flexibility”.

The last decade has been one of mixed blessings for Nigeria in the field of sports and recreation. From the 1996 Atlanta Olympics to Sydney 2000 and most recently Athens 2004, Nigeria's success in international competitive sports and recreation has not been consistent. Top on the list of reasons given for the nation's poor performance are dearth of funds and late preparation for various international championships. Yet, another major cause of the nation's sporting woes is the poor state of grassroots sports and recreation.

There is more to gain from sports and recreation besides fame and medals. This is where youth development comes in. Sport, according to the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, is an activity that one does for pleasure and that needs physical effort or skill; it is usually done in a special area and according to fixed rules. Recreation on the other hand, refers to the activities that people do for enjoyment when they are not working. It is a wide term that covers various sporting activities and games. Some of the popular sports and recreational activities in Nigeria include football, basketball, tennis, boxing, golf, athletics and volleyball. Others are cricket, judo, karate, swimming, cycling, hockey, chess, and scrabble, etc. Regardless of the sex of the child, both boys and girls enjoy these types of activities.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child declares that every child has the right to recreational opportunities. While some people believe that sports and recreation aid youth development, others are of the opinion that the two are like night and day. However, young people stand to gain a lot from participating in various physical and recreational activities because this lends itself to the complex process of “youth development”.

Recreation and sports have an obvious link to excellent physical growth



in children through the development of gross motor skills (running, jumping and other uses of large muscles), strength and endurance. Engaging in recreational activities like football and track events enables young people to use and develop certain (large) muscles that would have otherwise been rendered inactive. Over time, exercising and trying out new skills regularly help young people develop strength as well as physical and mental endurance. Some exercises and activities that help build strong muscles include push-ups, pull-ups, tug-of-war, and bike riding.

Participation in physical activities also leads to improved body image as well as physical health and well-being. It provides a means of relieving stress, reduces risk factors for certain diseases and offers the long-term prospect of healthier minds and bodies. When we do not exercise our bodies, some of our muscles and joints may become inactive and this usually has a resultant negative effect on us. Muscle cramps and joint pains are just a few examples of such effects. Excess fat that could have been expended during physical activities can accumulate in the body and result in obesity, a major health issue in the world today.

Physical activities also promote social and emotional growth. Participation in group sports can help cultivate team spirit in individuals which enables them get along better with others. When family members engage in sports and recreational activities together, it can foster a close and caring relationship within the family.

In addition, the mental endurance and determination required for some sports can build resilience. “Resilient individuals are those who have the capacity to cope, adjust and respond to the problems and issues they face in everyday life” (Search Institute, 1996). A physically active person who is fit and healthy is more likely to thrive, regardless of circumstances.

Furthermore, recreational activities and sports provide a safe environment for young people to explore their strengths, develop skills and test their abilities. In learning and developing new skills, young people are able to positively channel their youthful zeal and energy into developing their minds and bodies.

High self-esteem, stronger self-image and greater confidence can be developed through sports and recreation. “Self-esteem is how we judge our worthiness and indicates the extent to which an individual believes her/himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy.” (Coopersmith, 1967). Young people are more likely to have a positive opinion or idea about themselves and their abilities when given the chance to hone their sporting skills, and this gives them greater confidence. Self-esteem is nurtured by the mastery of age-appropriate skills and the achievement of reasonable goals. It leads to a higher level of motivation and can help young people resist adverse influence such as pressure to do drugs or engage in other risky behaviours. Girls who have high self-esteem are more likely to assert



themselves in sexual situations and leave abusive relationships.

Sports and recreation promote positive morals and values. Involvement in sports can assist individuals in learning right from wrong. Young people learn to give up instant self-gratification for a more sophisticated moral code based on fairness and mutual satisfaction. By learning to respect and apply the rules of the game, they learn to empathize with others and appreciate fair play. In a football game, for example, when an opponent is down, the player with the ball is expected to play the ball out of touch so that the injured player can be treated or attended to. This is also common in most other sports like basketball, volleyball and handball. The world soccer governing body, FIFA, in recent times, has intensified its campaign on fair play.

Do you know that you can improve academically through sports and recreation? Academic performance may be enhanced by an increase in a student's habitual level of physical activity. (Sheppard, 1997). Participation in extra-curricular activities lowers the rate of school dropout, especially among at-risk students. (Mahoney and Cairns, 1997). A Carnegie Corporation report confirmed that youth involved in organized physical activities fare better academically and interpersonally than those who are not involved in such activities. For example, Scrabble helps develop students' vocabulary and it is just one of the academic games that are now available. Some of the principles that lead to success in sports - practice, self-discipline, belief in oneself, responsibility, perseverance, and competence- if applied to academics, enhance academic excellence. Young people, through sports and recreation, are taught that a mistake is not synonymous with failure. Rather, a mistake means that a new strategy, more practice, and/or greater effort is needed to succeed at the task.

It is important that young people are provided the

opportunity to develop leadership skills by serving as coaches and team leaders. In this way, they are taught cognitive, leadership and life skills. Sports and recreational activities give youth something constructive to do. A game like Chess helps them to develop certain skills like goal setting, planning and strategizing for success, critical thinking and analysis, and decision-making. When these basic things are applied in their lives, young people are able to plan and critically think ahead before making vital decisions.

Sports and recreation also provide young people with positive role models. Over the years, different sports have produced role models from Nigeria, out of Africa and from other continents of the world. Hakeem

Olajuwon, who won the NBA's Most Valuable Player in two consecutive seasons (1993/94 and 1994/95) with the Houston Rockets, is one of them. George Weah of Liberia is another. He was named African Player of the Year three times (1989, 1994, and 1995) and was also named World Footballer of the Year (1995). There is also Tiger Woods, the current world number one golf player. Another good example is Edson Arantes "Pele" Nascimento of Brazil, who scored 1,280 goals in 1,360 games during his career, was the 1978 recipient of the International Peace Award, was named athlete of the century in 1980, and named second for the "Sportsman of the Century" award in the year 2000. The legendary Muhammad Ali got the honours. Ali's story is surely a topic for another day! These people are seen by many young people as positive role models.

Above all, sports and recreation enhance cultural awareness and provide an opportunity for ethnic and racial integration. Young people meet others from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds through sports and they get to know more about other people's culture and beliefs. This fosters friendship, unity, and peaceful cohabitation among them. If there is anything that brings Nigerians together, it is the game of soccer. The Olympic Games, the biggest sports festival in the world today, is an epitome of good sportsmanship, friendship, cultural and racial integration and world unity.

In order to facilitate youth development, a good sports and recreation programme should be effective and efficient. Below are some of the attributes of a good sports and recreation programme:

Active youth participation in decision-making processes: A good sports and recreation programme encourages participation by young people in planning, implementing and evaluating activities and gives them choices about what they can make, do or play.

A reasonable level of freedom: Play is the theme. The

programme gives youth enough time to do things they want to do and encourages imaginative, self-directed play within an environment of respect and fairness.

Hands-on learning: Young people learn by doing. A good programme gives them the opportunity to master new skills by providing developmentally appropriate opportunities for them to learn. It gives them challenges, and the leaders should not expect perfection. All youth are made to feel like winners because personal bests and improvement are stressed over winning. Youth's individual strengths are appreciated while they are encouraged through positive reinforcement. To encourage an experience of success, rules are often simplified for younger children.

Friendship building: The programme helps young people build friendship. Friends help introduce children to the world beyond their family. A positive relationship with a friend can help young people overcome other problems in their lives. A good programme is one in which youth learn to interact with each other in respectful ways. Teasing and name calling are not allowed and diversity is supported and celebrated. Youth are encouraged to share and cooperate with one another.

Adult supervision and support: Caring adults provide consistent support to the young people. A special relationship with an adult can help youth overcome adversity and provide a positive template for future relationships. In a good programme, the leader knows the young people's names, looks them in the eye, greets them on arrival and departure, smiles and talks with them.

Barriers to Effective and Efficient Sports and Recreational Programmes:

There are various stumbling blocks on the road to active participation in sports and recreation. Some of these obstacles include:

Low family income: This is a significant barrier to

participating in sports and recreational activities. In families where making ends meet is a struggle, most parents would likely not see any sense in their children engaging in physical activities. They may see it as a waste of meager resources to invest in games or sporting equipment. Children's leisure time may also be spent on income generating activities to help support the family.

Inadequate funding by the government: Decades of neglect and low priority given to sports have eroded the capacity of many public schools to provide supervised recreation, physical education, and structured after-school activities. Due to limited funds, schoolyards often have no adult supervision and little or no playground equipment because there is decreased spending on "non-academic extras" like sports and recreation.

Gender Discrimination.

Gender discrimination is a widely debated issue, not only in sports, but also in the education sector, at the workplace and in the society at large. Opportunities for girls and young women to participate in sports are much more limited than those for boys. However, the positive impact of youth development is gender neutral.

More than 550 women from 97 countries attended the 3rd World Conference on Women and Sport, held in Montreal, Canada, from 16-19 May 2002. The Conference, which had the theme, "Investing in Change", called for sustainable infrastructure and resources for sports and physical activity with regards to women and girls, including equal opportunity for competition and training, as well as, strategic approaches to ensure gender equity.

At the conference, participants requested the International Working Group on Women and Sports to address, among others, the following objectives during the next four year term, and to report back at the 4th International Conference on Women and Sports in Kumamoto, Japan in 2006:



- ◆ To recommend to the United Nations and to Conference participants that countries include sports and physical activity for women as a section of their reports to the monitoring group for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW);
- ◆ To develop and extend the availability of resources for people working on women and sports across the world;
- ◆ To read and evaluate examples of gender mainstreaming in sports and physical activity policy and provision;
- ◆ To encourage active cooperation between health, education and gender equity

(Contd on page 23)

POEMS



Sweet Times

Times are sweet
When all is well
Nothing to fret
Because all is right
And nothing is as right
As where you strive
To follow the rites
To keep things right.
And it all depends on your fate
To carry your faith
And drain the sweat
To keep times sweet
If you cherish sweet times
Follow the rhymes,
Get on your feet
And assert yourself. Sweet Times
Times are sweet
When all is well
Nothing to fret
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To follow the rites
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And it all depends on your fate
To carry your faith
And drain the sweat
To keep times sweet
If you cherish sweet times
Follow the rhymes,
Get on your feet
And assert yourself.

Peculiar Ediomu-Abasi (18 years old), Lagos.

I Believe

I can soar high and fly, nothing can limit me;
I believe in my dreams;
I can make it in life and realize my set goals;
I have potentials within me,
Step by step I will bring them all out and affect my
world.
Yes, I believe.
Have a focus, have a goal, and have a direction;
A goal will direct your steps in life,
It will renew your energy daily,
It will give you a sense of purpose
A reason for living,
A goal is like a bright light that keeps one from
stumbling.
Without a goal, life will be meaningless.
Tolulope Ojo, Lagos.

If only I had known

If only I had known
I would not have been their friend,
Now I just wish I had known.
If only I had known that sexual
Violence leads to nothing but
DESTRUCTION of the mind and dreams
I would not have been
A partaker at all.
If only I had known that sex
Is worth waiting for
I would not have indulged in it.
Now I am a disgrace to myself
And my family,
It actually is not worth it at all.
So young minds, be wise
Don't make the mistake
I made or else
You mess up your future.
Just focus on your goals
and you will get there.

Mercy Asuquo (18 years old), Lagos.

Infatuation

Love can be misinterpreted.
She gave him her heart
But her thoughts had faded from his dreams.
Distancing himself, he left her gradually.
This cannot be true love.
The agony and sorrow,
the pains of lost love.
He bruised her heart at such a tender age,
If only she knew about love and dating,
She would have known how to go about it.
This cannot be true love.
True love is mature and not a game.
It is for mature people only.
Love is infectious and can blossom
It can be ecstatic; it can also lead to agony.
Does love exist for young immature people?
It cannot be true love
It is infatuation.

Katherine Ogbanje, Gboko, Benue State.

PHOTO REPORT

ARFH'S PARTNERS VISIT AHI

The Association for Reproductive and Family Health (ARFH)'s medical personnel and partners from their project states, on July 13, 2005 embarked on a study tour of Action Health Incorporated (AHI). The tour, which took them to all the units of the organisation was aimed at incorporating the lessons learnt during the study visit into their project objectives, which among others include; contributing to the reduction of maternal morbidity and mortality in the project states through increasing access to and integrating quality reproductive health (such as family planning) into their existing services.

The pictures capture the study tour.



ASHOKA FELLOWS VISIT AHI

Action Health Incorporated on July 25, 2005 played host to Ashoka fellows from other African countries who were on a visit to outstanding fellows in Nigeria. This was part of the Pan-African Orientation and Induction ceremony for the newly elected fellows from East, West, North and South Africa.

Ashoka fellowship is a global association of leading social

entrepreneurs - men and women who possess the vision, creativity, and extra-ordinary determination of the business entrepreneur - who devote their exceptional talents and qualities to providing innovative solutions to societal problems.

The Executive Director of AHI, Mrs. Nike Esiet, herself a fellow, was on hand to welcome them. The fellows who came from various countries in Africa used the opportunity to share their experiences and also receive first hand information about the activities of AHI as they were taken round the various units. The question and answer session and the exhibition of AHI's publications were part of the activities lined up for the visitors.

The pictures tell the story of the study tour.



Cartoon

LET'S GO FOR
A GAME
OF TENNIS, SAM.

NO.



ALRIGHT, WHAT
ABOUT JOGGING,
SWIMMING OR
CHESS?

NO, THANKS. I'M
BUSY WITH MY
STUDIES. I WANT
TO BREAK THE
RECORD AS THE
BEST GRADUATING
STUDENT.



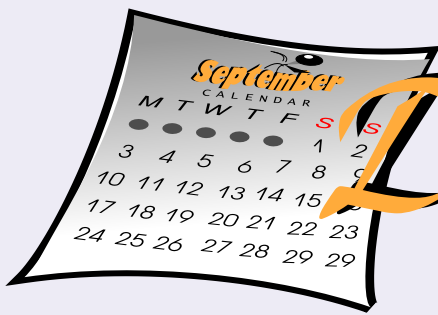
GOOD, BUT YOU MUST
STILL FIND TIME
FOR RECREATION
TO HELP YOU
RELAX, STAY FIT
AND DEVELOP
MENTALLY.

I HAVE NO TIME
FOR GAMES. I
JUST WANT TO
BREAK THAT RECORD.



I SEE. I HOPE
YOU WON'T HAVE
A MENTAL
BREAKDOWN WHILE
TRYING TO BREAK
THE RECORD.





Dear Diary

By Tosin Oyelade

Monday

I woke up early today and amazingly, I found that I was still disturbed by the events of yesterday. I was so surprised to see the person in front of me that my mouth was agape for several minutes. Eventually I found my voice and shouted the name Segun. This young man, dressed in the National Youth Service Corps (N.Y.S.C) uniform had been my friend in primary school - we were classmates - so I wondered how he made it while I was still struggling to gain admission into a higher institution. He explained that he gained admission with his General Certificate Examination (G.C.E) into a private University. When I got home, I told my mom and she advised me to see it as a challenge and put in my best in everything I did so that I could be successful in the long run. I made up my mind and promised mom and myself that I would work extra hard to make my upcoming University and Matriculation Examination (U.M.E).

Tuesday

I was still doing my usual house chores when I stumbled on a card, inviting me to a party, which was sent to me by a friend a long time ago. Oops! The party comes up 4:00pm tomorrow! I was very happy at the thought that I would have a place to go and have some fun. While I was wondering what to wear to the party and how to tell my mom, my dad came in. Later in the day, I finally summoned up the courage to tell her about the party. She was angry that I had waited so long to tell her, but after apologizing and pleading, I succeeded in persuading her. Reluctantly she gave me permission to attend and advised that I should not stay out too late.

Wednesday

I had a lot of things to do today, and because I did not want to get stressed before the party, I started early and tackled each task as it came along. Mom had to skip work to get a nice dress for my younger sister's graduation party. The day for me, went like a dream as I was excited about the party I would soon be attending. I finally left for the party at 3:30pm and was on the road for more than one hour as a result of the heavy traffic. Of course the party was in full swing by the time I eventually got there. Everybody was gorgeously dressed and looked nice. I didn't feel out of place as I was also looking great! It was all exciting for me.

As the party wore on, a guy who introduced himself as Olumide came towards me and asked for a dance. I politely turned his request down partly because he was a stranger to me and also because, I didn't feel like dancing. I was contented just listening to the music and watching others dance. However, as the guy turned to leave, he missed a step and down he went. He was totally embarrassed and I felt sorry for him. Could it have been my fault? I hope not!

Thursday

I was wide awake but didn't feel like getting out of bed. The previous day's incident came flooding back and once again, I felt sorry for the guy. Today is my younger sister's graduation

party, and there is a lot of cooking to be done. How I wish I hadn't gone to the party yesterday. There is so much to get through. First there is breakfast to get ready and I have to do that as quickly as possible, I don't want to ruin my sister's happy day. In fact she has done so well in her academic pursuit that she deserves to be happy. Mom and dad are very proud of her and when we went for the graduation, many wished she were their daughter. At the end of the event, the school principal announced a scholarship that the school had awarded my sister for her academic excellence and exemplary behaviour in school. We all felt honoured as we returned home.

Friday

We were still basking in the joy of my sister's scholarship. Dad was so happy that he called for a celebration and this meant that we were treated to a sumptuous meal. The award really made her popular and she was subsequently invited to various occasions and special events. I felt challenged, but definitely not envious and decided to work harder in my academic pursuit. The day however ended on a sad note as dad came back from work looking and feeling very low. Mom was naturally concerned and on further inquiry found out that dad's boss who was a friend of the family, had suffered a stroke. We were saddened by this news and decided that we would pay him a visit on Sunday.

Saturday

This ought to be an environmental day, but everybody was tired. Though I was also tired I had to get up from the bed as I had to get through my own assignment before every other person woke up. Apart from the usual dishes that I had to do, I also had to tidy up the entire house and its surroundings. I quickly got through it and had myself a nice siesta. When I woke up I decided to listen to the news on the television before settling down to my books. It was while watching television that I heard some noise outside and when I looked up, I saw a crowd in front of our neighbour's house. I made enquiries and learnt that the man was having a fight with his wife. I was disgusted and wondered why a couple would make their disagreements a public affair, and also in such a way that would attract a crowd. Can't people settle their problems amicably?

Sunday

I don't like rushing to get ready for church, I like getting there in a composed state of mind; as a result I woke up early to do my chores so that I wouldn't be late. It was in the course of this that my routine was disrupted as someone rushed into our house followed by a man who had a cutlass in his hand. My father tried to stop and disarm the cutlass-wielding man only to end up being at the receiving end. My hope of attending church was completely disrupted as my dad collapsed in a pool of blood. What happened next is better imagined. I will tell you in the next edition.



NEWSREEL

Jamboree 2005

Friday, August 12, 2005 saw 185 young people from various secondary schools in Lagos state coming together at the AHI multi-purpose hall to celebrate the Jamboree/Teens' Fiesta. Out-of-school youth were not left out either as the theme of the fiesta which was "Catch the Vibes: Revealing Young People's Talents" was all-embracing. The jamboree afforded the youth the opportunity to showcase their talents through presentation of songs, drama, poetry and dance.

Femi Oluwole thrilled the audience with his acrobatic dance. There was also a discussion on inappropriate or indecent dressing in the society. Some of the issues raised included whether parents should or should not be involved in deciding their children's style of clothing. Another area looked at was whether the choice of clothes should be determined by what was in vogue irrespective of whether it looked good on the wearer or not. Who should be blamed for indecent dressing in the society is it the parents, the media or the young people themselves? The consensus was that



A young person (Mr. Abraham Omotayo) keeping the audience spell-bound during Jamboree, 2003.

everyone had a role to play in curbing the menace of indecent dressing. The various presentations and entertainment ushered in a quiz contest to buttress the need for young people to strive at achieving intellectual prowess that would eventually lead to their success in life. The quiz focused on four major subject areas - Mathematics, Use of English, Sexuality Education and Current Affairs. Various prizes were given to winners at the end of the jamboree.

AHI Trains 72 Peer Educators

This year's training for peer educators took place between 8th and 12th August at the AHI multi-purpose hall.

The goal of the training was to equip participants with sexual and reproductive health information and life skills that would enable them to make responsible and healthy personal decisions and to disseminate such information to their peers. The participants also learnt and practiced facilitation techniques. This would enable them function effectively as peer educators. Some of their roles as trained peer educators in their respective schools include the coordination of the Health and Life Planning Clubs (HLPC) activities, mobilization of other students to become HLPC members, provision of factual information about adolescent sexual and reproductive health to their peers, provision of referral information about available healthcare and counseling services and organisation of adolescent reproductive health education programmes and activities.

A total of 72 students took part in the training, which covered topics such as Values/Values Clarification, Menstruation, Personal Hygiene, Sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS, Care and Support for People

Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs), Abstinence and Safer Sexual Skills, Body Image, Self-Esteem, Drug Abuse, Decision Making and Goal Setting.

Peer education is one of the strategies used by AHI to promote adolescent health and development. It seeks to increase young people's knowledge about sexual and reproductive health and facilitate the development of life skills necessary to make the transition to responsible adulthood.



Some of the trained peer educators pose for a group photograph

Commemoration Of The World Population Day

The 2005 World **Population Day** was marked at AHI on July 12.

The programme which had the theme, "Equality" focused on promoting gender equality in areas such as education, economic opportunities, reproductive health and rights, and participation in the decision-making processes at the various levels of governance. This year's event was attended by more than seventy (70) in and out-of-school youths in Lagos State. Highlights of the event included talk-shows, songs rendition and a drama presentation.

As part of activities marking the World Population Day, Action Health Incorporated took part in a live radio link programme in Abuja which was aired on the network service of Radio Nigeria. The call-in radio programme was organized by the National Population Commission, in collaboration with ENHANSE/USAID project.

The discussion panel was made up of the representative of the Chairman, National Population Commission, Mr. Samuel Ogunlade; the Director, Department of Women Development, Federal Ministry of Women Affairs, Hajiya Halima Lawan; the Director, Centre for Gender and Social Policy Studies, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Professor Olabisi Aina; and Action Health

Incorporated's Youth Staff, Mr. Olugbenga Awomodu. Mr. Zakari Mohammed of the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria anchored the programme.

In her brief remarks, Hajiya Lawan pointed out that though the current estimated population of Nigeria showed that there were approximately equal numbers of males and females, there were more females than males. In view of this, she said that women empowerment needed to be given priority. She supported her views with figures, which revealed that more than 70,000 teenage girls were getting married every day worldwide, nearly 40, 000 were giving birth and as many as one in every three women were being battered, coerced into sex or abused in some other way (most often by someone known to them).

The figures also revealed that 65 million of the estimated 121 million children currently out of school were girls, 600 million women were illiterate, compared to 320 million such men. She added that young women aged 15 to 24 in Sub-Saharan Africa were more than three times likely to be infected with HIV as young men.

Prof. Aina on her own part dispelled the notion that women in politics were arrogant, undisciplined and materialistic. She cited Dr. Dora Akunyili, Director General of

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AHI Participates In 2005 NGO Summit On HIV/ AIDS

The 2nd Lagos State NGO summit on HIV/AIDS was held at the Conference hall of EKO FM, Lagos between September 14-15, 2005. The two-day event with the theme, "Challenges of Combating HIV/AIDS in Lagos State: Appraising the Intervention of CSOs and the



Participants sing the National Anthem to declare the summit open

Government" was declared open by the representative of the first Lady, Lagos State, Mrs. Abimbola Fashola who called on all to join the fight against HIV/AIDS in the society. She praised the efforts of the Lagos State Action Committee on AIDS (LSACA) and the collaborating NGOs in this regard and called for more concerted action towards the realization of the set objectives.

The event featured various lectures and presentations titled, "Donors-CSOs Relationship in HIV/AIDS Programming: The donors expectations"; "Combating HIV/AIDS in Lagos State: The role of CSOs and government"; "CSOs participation in HIV/AIDS prevention and control activities in Lagos State" and "Caring for People Living with HIV/ AIDS, Orphans and Vulnerable Children: The Role of the Community and CSOs".

The summit aimed at identifying strategies for effective community and CSOs mobilization towards a participatory and sustainable HIV/AIDS programme in Lagos State. It also sought to promote networking and

(Contd on page 12)

Commemoration Of The World Population Day

(Contd from page 11)

the National Agency for Food/ Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC), and Chief (Mrs.) Rosaline Odeh, the Director General, National Film and Video Censorship Board (NFVCB), as examples of women who have brought about positive changes in Nigeria. She talked extensively on the various areas where gender equality should prevail in the development process. She urged men to change their perception of women to see their female colleagues at work as equals and accord them their due respect in view of their diverse talents and abilities.

Answering callers' questions about the forthcoming nationwide census exercise, Mr. Ogunlade said that the enumeration would hold from November 29-December 3, 2005 and that questionnaires for the census were printed outside the country because of the need to use optical characters and, most importantly, security reasons. He also stated that the federal government had decided to expunge religion and ethnicity from the census indices to avoid some imminent problems. One of the callers complained about the very poor publicity of the census exercise and advised the National Population Commission to mobilize town criers and volunteers in remote villages to help educate and disseminate accurate information

to the people.

Eloquently articulating the views of the youth, Olugbenga Owomodu said that as girls and women were being empowered, boys and men should also be educated about the roles they play in women empowerment and achieving gender equality. He said, "It would be disastrous if after we have educated, trained, and empowered our girls, they grow up to face an army of uneducated and uninformed men who do not know how wicked and illegal it is to batter their wives and other women".

He agreed with and supported the education of the girl child. "I would not want to marry a wife who cannot express herself in public, and who cannot work to help to financially sustain the family. Times have changed and gone are the days when women would just sit at home in the kitchen expecting the men to bring back their salary at the end of the month," he concluded.

The radio discussion programme was very educative, informative and participatory as it generated a lot of discussion and public interest. Most people who called in during the live programme expressed their support for women empowerment.

PTA HEALTH COUNSELORS TRAINED

The 2005 PTA Health Counselors' training took place between September 5th-7th at the AHI Youth Centre.

The three-day training aimed at enhancing the capacity of secondary school teachers to address sexual and reproductive health issues among adolescents in their respective schools. The trained teachers known as PTA Health Counselors, were provided an opportunity to deepen their understanding of adolescent and develop communication skills necessary to assist young people in dealing with social and health concerns. The teachers are expected to work with the Parent Teachers Associations of schools and the communities as Health Counselors, with support from Action Health Incorporated as well as coordinate and serve as resource persons for the Health and Life Planning Clubs.

40 PTA Health Counselors from Somolu, Kosofe and Mainland Local Education District took part in the training which focused on key concepts in sexuality education and other key adolescent sexual and reproductive health topics.

In her closing remarks, the Finance and Administrative

Manager, AHI, Mrs. Bimbo Jide Aremo enjoined the participants to use the knowledge they had acquired to educate the youth on the importance of making good decisions on matters affecting their lives.

Certificates were presented to the participants.



AHI Participates In 2005 NGO Summit On HIV/ AIDS

(Contd from page 11)

collaboration among state and community based organisation as well as promote a forum for participants to share and learn from experiences of organizations that have made significant contributions in the fight against the epidemic in Lagos State.

Top on the agenda of the event was the interactive/ experience sharing segment where various NGOs including AHI shared their experiences in the fight against HIV/ AIDS.

The summit also showcased drama presentations, song renditions etc, all depicting the ways and means of preventing and controlling the spread of HIV/ AIDS.

At the end of the programme, a communiqué was issued which, among others charged all stakeholders to

intensify and sustain collaborative efforts towards reducing the spread of HIV/AIDS in the areas of public education, youth empowerment, etc.

Also present at the two-day summit were the representative of the Lagos State Commissioner for Health, Dr. (Mrs). Bakare, Nancy Stewart of UNAIDS, Dr. Dayo Lajide of LSACA, Dr. Uba Kamma (Red Cross) Dr. Susan Kanu (FHI/GHAIN), Pastor Chibuke Amechi (CISHAN) and a host of others.

The summit attracted over 400 participants and exhibitors from civil society groups, private sector and government.

Nigerian Achievers In Sports



MARY ONYALI-OMAGBEMI (ATHLETICS)

Mary Onyali has truly made a name for herself in the track and field world, establishing several prestigious marks on the way. Popularly called the Queen of Nigerian sprints, Mary continues to hold the Nigerian 200 meters record, and is still ranked in the top 10 of the collegiate all

time list in both the 100 and 200 meters.

The sport of track and field was never a priority during her early years growing up in Nigeria. Her father passed away when she was a very young child and her mother was left to raise herself and her siblings - a sister and two brothers. As the oldest of four children, much of the responsibility of child-raising fell strongly upon Mary. Her mother constantly emphasized the importance of getting a good education and to her, everything else was of secondary importance. The social norms concerning females in Nigeria at the time did not encourage athletic pursuit. A woman was to go to school and eventually work and focus on marriage and having a family. Mary was not interested in this philosophy - she did not want to succumb to the pressures of marrying and having children. Her determination and strong will found her going against the social norm. Getting involved in the sport of track and field was mere coincidence for Mary. In elementary school, sports was part of the curriculum and she participated in everything there was, showing her competitive spirit and determination to be the best at what she did. In 1989, there was a lucky break for Mary Onyali. She went to Europe to compete and realized that there was money to be made. Soon after graduation, Mary dedicated all of her time to track; she trained diligently and entered every competition she could. In 1990, Mary won the Silver medal at the World cup in both the 100 and 200 meters and in 1991 won an

African Games gold medal in the 100 meters. She went on to become a world championships finalist in the 100 and 200 meter track events.

Mary has always embraced challenge, she refused to be discouraged and vowed not to listen to negative advice. Well, Mary struck again. She made the Olympic team. Better yet she made the 100 meters final, recording a running time of 11.15 seconds with only 5 months of training. In addition, she received a bronze medal in the 4x100 meter relay.

Mary Onyali is a fighter who does not give up, and she's a competitor who places extreme pressure on herself. All of these attributes brought her the bronze medal in the 200 meters final at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia, one of her most prestigious awards. This queen of the tracks is married and has a daughter.



SEGUN TORIOLA (TABLE-TENNIS)

Born on September 18, 1974 in Ilorin, Nigeria, 1.76m tall Segun Toriola started to play table tennis with his father and brothers when he was five years old. After winning various national and African titles over the years, he took the world by storm when he won the men's singles at the Commonwealth Games in Manchester, England, the first time in 20 years that a Nigerian player would win the same title.

However, before then he had led his team to their first ever gold medal by beating the hosts, India, 4-1, at the 2001 Commonwealth Championships. He also achieved the best result for an African player at the World Championships, when he reached the third round in 2001.

This young table tennis star plays an attractive open game and speaks English and Italian fluently. Apart from his first love, table tennis, he enjoys listening to music, watching movies, and playing football and basketball. He has a diploma in Physical Education and is still single.



True Life Story

“Rape Is A Terrible Crime”

I stared through the tiny window and could only catch a glimpse of the sky, and it was as if nothing else existed under the sky than a dejected me and my fate. I was being enclosed by the compartment I hated to see as a little child, especially after watching a film titled “hostages”

Tears rolled down my cheeks, juxtaposing my ambitious self as an innocent child against my likely hopeless future filled with lots of guilt. It was a real pain reminiscing over my life and how the trauma (that has trailed me all this while) began.

I was a bright child filled with great dreams, I was in fact the pride of my parents and of everyone in the neighbourhood, and I carried on that way, with hope, brimming with the ambition of becoming a pilot. Everyone, despite my mischievous tendencies, loved me. As a growing child who had whatever he wanted, I did almost everything at my free will. I attended a boarding school quite a distance from home, and this gave me the liberty to engage in all those unprintable acts that boys my age got involved in. At the age of fourteen sex was no longer a new thing to me. We all saw it simply as a fun thing to engage in.

During one of the long holidays, which I usually looked forward to because it meant being home and interacting with my friends, I visited some old friends and made some new ones. One of the new people I met was a girl who to all intents and purposes appeared very conceited. I hate it when I ask a girl out and she plays hard to get, and that was what this girl did. How I hated her for it! I decided to teach her a lesson. I called the guys and we made a plan to strip the girl of her pride. From the time the decision was taken, all that I dreamt of was the “D-day”.

Each time the thought of what we were about to do crossed my mind, I was filled with anticipation, imagining the satisfaction I would derive from having subdued yet another stubborn daughter of Eve. The day seemed very long in arriving and then the other guys seemed to be taking their time. I wondered what was keeping them. I was agitated and restless as it appeared that it was taking them forever. Just as I was contemplating what to do, they appeared, “Ooh!” thank goodness you are here already”, I exclaimed with a wicked smile on my face, I couldn't wait to get my hands on her.

We got down to business; I went straight to her compound and then to her apartment, passing through the front door, as if on a regular visit. The other guys lingered and later came in through the back door when I needed them. I had studied her schedule really well and being on holiday, I could tell what time I could get her alone in the house.

She welcomed me warmly, but did not allow me to sit

down before she began “hey Thompson” (not real name) if it is because of your request that you are here, I have made my stand clear, I do not want to be your date, girlfriend or whatever relationship you have in mind. I'm not interested”, she blurted out.

I moved a few steps to where she stood, held her face and told her to look into my eyes as she was then looking at the floor. I was happy because things were working out as planned. I had intended playing the whole game as if it was an outburst of emotion that caused the rape, so it wouldn't look as if it was premeditated. Besides even if it was considered rape, I made sure I wouldn't be the only one who would be blamed. At least she would be seen as having been a willing participant at the onset.

I got romantic and weakened her resistance with some sentimental words and before she knew it, she had succumbed to my kisses but she did not want or allow me to go any further. I then forced her unto the bed, but she resisted strongly. We struggled for a while and provoked by her refusal and what I felt was a waste of my time, I slapped her and began to beat her. She was still not ready to comply. I then whistled to the guys hiding in the wings, they came in to hold her down and helped me accomplish my mission. We walked out of the room leaving her crying and writhing in pain.

A month after the incident, I was chatting with my friends when one of them who had been wearing a long face all through the conversation, drew me aside and muttered, “We are in serious trouble.” I asked him how. When he replied, I could sense the intense fear in him. He tried to talk but his lips seemed to be very heavy. All he could mutter was “Jullieta” (not real name).

On hearing the name I began to laugh. My friend Oladotun (not real name) sounded really scared. “Is she pregnant?” I asked. “And even if she is,” I continued, “there is absolutely no problem, I mean, no big deal. Would she come to me and accuse me of impregnating her? Fine, even if it is certain that she would come, would you expect me to accept? I would surely deny. Thank God we met just before the incident, so nobody can claim to have seen me with her, let alone say that they are aware of any association between us.”

Tears were already rolling down Oladotun's cheeks as he tried to continue. “This problem is bigger than you think Thompson. Although it started as a rumour, Jullieta has now finally mentioned the name of her rapist. So now, it is no longer a secret, it is now out in the open and her uncle has really taken it upon himself to deal with the rapist”. I wondered how he was going to do it and thought “Boy, I'm in serious trouble!”.

And serious trouble it was! My parents got to know about

(Contd on page 16)



Dear Auntie

Dear Readers, the "Dear Auntie" column treats questions young people ask about their reproductive and sexual health concerns. You too can write in and let us know what your concerns are. You are assured of confidentiality, as your real names will not be published. Send your questions to: The Editor, Growing Up Newsletter (Dear Auntie Column), Action Health Incorporated, 17 Lawal Street, Off Oweh Street, Jibowu, P. O. Box 803, Sabo, Yaba, Lagos.

Q *What makes a poor person become rich and a rich one become poor?*

This is one of the dynamics of life. It is always a sad thing for someone who was previously rich to become poor but it is a good thing for some one who was poor to become rich. There can be a number of reasons for these changes in life circumstances. The type of life style that one adopts when there is money may be the reason for becoming poor. Some people do not save for the rainy day when things are going very well. They spend extravagantly and tend to forget that situations may change. At times, the misfortune of becoming poor may arise as a result of natural disaster or miscalculation. To become rich involves hard work, identifying opportunities, prayer and proper planning. Mother luck and providence may sometimes play a part but it is important to set life goals and work toward achieving them.

Q *I procrastinate and manage time badly. These traits affect me in school, at work, home, anywhere. I'm always putting things off till later, or I take an eternity to finish. I have made some personal efforts but they seem not to make any improvement on this bad habit of mine. Now I need practical suggestions on these problems. Could you please help?*

Many young people face the challenges of procrastination and poor time management. Procrastination can be a result of our own unrealistic expectations, self-doubt, or fear of change. It can also simply be a result of poor time management and ineffective studying skills. The good news is you can make a change by using the following strategies:

- ◆ Be realistic about what you can accomplish in a day. You can do this, by setting up a priority list and following it
- ◆ Schedule your activities for ultimate efficiency. Do the things that require more brain work during the day when your energy level is highest
- ◆ Divide your projects into small pieces. This will make your work manageable and as you achieve your goals, you get more encouraged and this makes you move ahead
- ◆ Make your schedule flexible and give room for distractions and interruptions. Add a little extra time for each activity because things always seem to take longer than you think
- ◆ Forgive yourself if you don't complete all of the things on your to-do list-you're only human.
- ◆ Look for ways to reward yourself positively when you accomplish a scheduled task. For instance, you may say "when I finish tidying my room today, I will finish that interesting novel I'm reading".

Q *I have an extreme problem with speaking in front of groups of people (especially speeches). I can't do them! My voice either isn't audible or it shakes like I am going to cry or something. I know public speaking is the most common fear, but mine is one I must confront. What kind of options do I have besides books? Any ideas?*

Public speaking is very important; research shows that a significant factor in people being promoted at work is the ability to effectively and concisely express one's self in public or at a meeting, no matter how large the gathering. You're not alone; actors with stage fright are coached to transform their feelings of fear into excitement and anticipation. They learn to use their fear to galvanize themselves into doing their absolute best. Do not criticize yourself for what you cannot do, or for what strikes terror in your soul. Think instead about the times you have spoken in public, or when you have told a joke or a meaningful story to a group of friends. These are positive experiences you can build on. Preparation is important. If you know you have enough information and background material on a particular topic, it increases your confidence to discuss it in public. Try and anticipate questions that may be asked so you are not taken unawares.

Take a course in speech communication to increase confidence and skill, and strengthen your public speaking and communication skills. Practice in front of a mirror until you feel more confident. You may also ask for feedback from trusted friends so you can improve your delivery skills.

Q *I am an adolescent. Whenever I feel down and very tired either due to frustration, disappointment or past failure, I think about how horrible my life has been and wonder what point there is in continuing living. Well, whenever these things come up, I think about suicide. When at home, I prefer staying in my room most times and imagine death, and then I forget about it out of disgust. I hope that you can help me and if you can, please hurry up. This is urgent.*

Please don't commit suicide. Your ability to express your thoughts is impressive. Maybe you could use this talent to talk with someone who is physically closer to you, or more accessible. Do this now without any delay. With help, the good judgment and caring of a counselor, and perhaps even medication, your feelings of hopelessness can be turned around positively. There are many trusted adults you can talk to including your parents, school counselor or religious leader.

(Contd on page 16)

Dear Aunty

(Contd from page 15)

Q *My cousin molested me when I was young. Now I'm sixteen and each time I see him my feelings towards him is that of shame. My parents do not know about this and that makes it more difficult to deal with as I hurt inside. However, I have stopped talking to my cousin, and I have resolved also that whenever I move out of my house, I don't plan to ever talk to him again. I don't think this is healthy, but there is nothing I can do about this terrible hate.*

You owe it to yourself to find someone you can talk to and work with to help you understand and resolve your feelings, as well as protect yourself. Clearly, you are angry, hurt, and, perhaps, fearful, and these powerful feelings are translating into hate. It is understandable, since your feelings are most likely the direct result of your molestation; however these feelings can be destructive to you. That is why it is so important to get the help you need and deserve so that this doesn't interfere with living your life in a rich and satisfying way. Many women and men have been molested by family members, and more people than we realize have been able to find the assistance they needed. This assistance has made a good difference in their ability to live loving, productive, and satisfying lives. Taking this step may also be helpful to you.

Q *I am an adolescent girl and a Christian. I love Jesus but I am unhappy now. Of recent, I found out that I develop interest in the opposite sex and there are certain features or characteristics that automatically make me have amorous feelings towards boys. I try to conceal these feelings because I lack the courage to express them, but it is mainly because I feel it is sinful. I feel I am becoming too pre-occupied with these thoughts and I am worried. Please I need your counsel.*

First, it is important to note that you are a normal person and these feelings are normal. It is good to appreciate people when you see good character in them and there is nothing wrong in expressing it. It makes the person happy and encourages him or her to maintain the positive traits. It is also a good way to develop friendship with other people. At puberty, one of the changes that occur is development of interest in the opposite sex and being more conscious of your body. Many adolescents face the challenge of infatuation or romantic crushes on the opposite sex. Coping with them can be easier if you have the necessary information and skills. Try and obtain books which educate you on the physical and emotional changes adolescents experience. You can also talk to a counselor or trusted adult to give practical guidance on how you can positively manage these feelings.

Q *If a virgin uses tampons, won't her hymen break?*

Many young girls start using tampons early on because they are swimmers or athletes. Some people are worried about inserting a tampon, thinking that it may cause trauma. The hymen naturally stretches. If it completely blocked the vaginal opening then the menstrual flow would not be able to leave the body. However, it is important to read and understand the instructions for insertion and safe use before using a tampon. If it is properly inserted, it may tear the hymen, though this is rare. Also tampons come in different sizes (slender, regular, super, etc). The very slender tampons are especially designed for teenagers and if used according to directions, will usually not damage the hymen.

True Life Story

(Contd from page 14)

it and before I knew what had hit me, I was arrested. While the case was on, I was confident that I would get away with it because of the fact that I was considered a juvenile and besides my parents were making every effort to get me out on bail. My dad had the money so I had no reason to panic. How mistaken I was. Unknown to me, there were forces working against me, even within my family.

I found that my days in the cell were getting longer and I did not understand the whole thing anymore. Later, I found out that there was pressure on my dad from his relatives urging him to let me bear the consequences of my misbehavior and after due consideration, he and my mum succumbed. It finally dawned on me that I was in a very precarious situation.

My life and dreams were crumbling before my eyes like a pack of cards and it seemed there was nothing I could do to save the situation; I was on my own. I spent the next few years wasting away, while my friends and classmates continued with their studies and moved on from

secondary school into various higher institutions of learning. I was left to rot in prison, being shuttled in Black Marias from one prison yard to the other.

I did not know that one could be made to pay dearly for rape when caught, especially as the focus and emphasis had always been on the females when it concerns the consequences of sexual violence. The problem, I think, arises from the fact that rape cases are rarely talked about even by the victims for fear of reprimand and further violence, and also for fear of being stigmatized by society. This makes men think it is something they can do and get away with. It is true a lot of them do get away with it, but obviously, I wasn't that lucky.

Now, with the benefit of hindsight, I can tell you that rape is a terrible crime and the consequences for men can be as traumatic as it is for the victim. I now undergo rehabilitation at the Pamidoo Clinic after having spent five years of hell on earth. Dear readers, please be very careful. Don't succumb to negative peer pressure. Let your focus be on achieving your educational goals.

TRIBUTE TO AN ACTION LADY



Mrs. Alice Y. Gadah

Mrs. Alice Y. Gadah was born to the family of Yamai Ariyak of Afana on 10th April 1960 in Kafanchan.

Always a brilliant student, her caring nature and determination to make a difference in her community led her to choose a humanitarian profession in the field of nursing. Mrs. Gadah graduated from the School of Health Technology, Kaduna with a National Diploma in Public Health Nursing as well as a National Community Health Practice Certificate.

Her dedication to public service and high performance standards were quickly apparent and she served in various health facilities before becoming the Matron of the Rural Hospital, Zonkwa, Kaduna State. Mrs. Gadah, due to her concern for the youths in her community, founded the Youth Team in Action Supporting Community Initiated Development (YOTASCID) in 1999.

YOTASCID is a youth-serving organization dedicated to improving the health and well being of young people. Under the dynamic leadership of Mrs. Gadah, the organization has become a well-recognized and credible presence in Zonkwa and neighbouring communities. Her organization's work has been publicly commended by agencies such as Action Aid and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

It was through this avenue that Action Health Incorporated came in contact with Mrs. Gadah while seeking to partner with northern-based NGOs on youth-targeted interventions. Mrs. Gadah, within the first few minutes of meeting, was impressive in her understanding of youth issues in her community and her determination to improve the quality of life of young people. Throughout the partnership with AHI and other northern based NGOs working on a youth project supported by the Packard Foundation, Mrs.

Gadah demonstrated a level of energy and enthusiasm which earned her the nickname of "Action" by her colleagues during training workshops and meetings.

Mrs. Gadah will be deeply missed but will be remembered for her legacy to the people of her community which includes a vibrant NGO working to meet the sexual and reproductive health needs of young people as well as, a thriving vocational skills training

centre.

The Management and Staff of Action Health Incorporated would like to join her friends and well wishers in commiserating with the Gadah Family and all her colleagues at YOTASCID.

Mrs. Gadah demonstrated a level of energy and enthusiasm which earned her the nickname of "Action" by her colleagues during training workshops and meetings.

TFL 2005
Teenage Festival of Life



Putting an
END to
**Sexual
Violence**

VENUE: Main Auditorium, University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos.

DATE: 10th November, 2005.

CATEGORIES: ■ Songs ■ Poems ■ Drama ■ Poster Design/Artwork

RULES

- Each school can only submit one entry per category and each entry must be type written. The school Principal must certify all entries.
- The song, poems, drama and poster design/Art work entries must be original and reflect the theme of the event.
- All participating schools must attend a one-day training workshop.
- The competition is open to all secondary schools in old Somolu, Kosofe and Mainland Local Education Districts.
- Submission of entries closes on Friday 5th August, 2005.
- A panel of judges will select winners in each category.

**WIN
Trophies and
other attractive
prizes**

Career Guide

DO YOU WANT TO BE A CHEMICAL ENGINEER?

Chemical engineers work on the design, development, installation, and operation of chemical production processes. Some carry out research on new process design; others plan the manufacture of new chemical plants or alter existing processes. These engineers manage chemical plants on a day-to-day basis.

THE JOB

Chemical engineers work on a variety of tasks concerned with chemical processes. They are employed in chemical and pharmaceutical, food and brewing, oil and related businesses.

Some work for contractors for whom they carry out the detailed design of new chemical plants, as well as commission and supervise its installation at a client's site. This type of project includes planning and scheduling, purchasing, the negotiation of contracts, the design, installation, and operation of the plant, and optimizing its working conditions to reach the production levels that are required.

Many chemical engineers are employed to research better processes for their employers, perhaps using cheaper raw materials or by reducing heating costs. They begin the laboratory with chemical equipment and scale up the chemical reactions to pilot plant stage, designed to manufacture small amounts of the product (but not full-scale production). When all the parameters for successful production have been quantified and production difficulties overcome, the process is eventually transferred to a production plant.

The continuous running of a chemical plant is also the responsibility of chemical engineers. They are concerned with the safe operation of the process and the safe disposal of waste that emerges as a solid, liquid, or gas from the factory. If the by-products are unacceptable, they will process these chemically to reduce the risk of contaminating the environment.

Chemical engineers optimize the operation of plants to produce products of the right quality and in sufficient quantity. This is achieved by having good raw materials and sometimes by making chemicals (intermediates) in one process that can then be used in the final production.

These engineers are concerned with the control of the process and use sensors and electronic equipment to provide information about what is happening, changing the conditions when necessary to keep it under control. Heat created by chemical reactions, which is either needed to make a process continue or must be dissipated, is an important factor. They are knowledgeable in the use of catalysts.

Health, safety, and possible damage to the external environment are major issues for these engineers, and explosive situations must be avoided at all costs in a chemical plant.

Chemical engineers use their technical knowledge every day. Their work directly utilizes the skills they have learned through their studies of the subject. They use computers to simulate process design and computer-aided design, and so must be computer literate. Those installing or operating process plants apply their problem-solving skills to situations so that they can overcome any difficulties that arise. Senior engineers lead project teams, often including engineers from other disciplines.

Chemical engineers working for contractors, and those involved in plant maintenance, have to plan ahead. International travel may be required when they are involved with the installation or optimization of chemical plants in other countries.

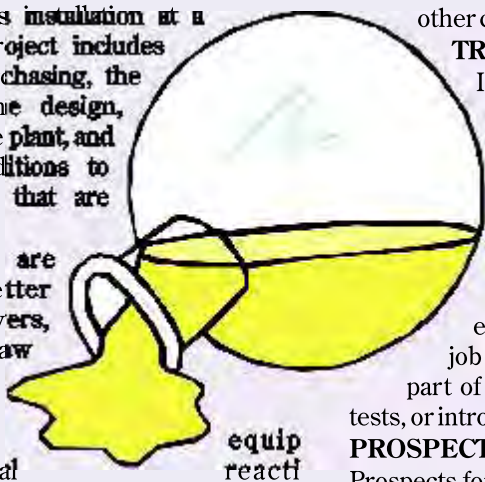
TRAINING

Industrial training usually includes working on a pilot plant, shift work on an operational plant, and periods in the design office. It usually takes at least two years to gain a thorough understanding of the risks involved in chemical processes and of all the relevant health and safety legislation.

To qualify as a professional engineer, chemical engineers also have to spend a period of time in a job with some responsibility, such as supervising part of a plant, taking a chemical through pilot plant tests, or introducing a new control system.

PROSPECTS / OUTLOOK

Prospects for chemical engineers are at present very good. Potential employers include the water industry, oil companies, food and drink manufacturers, and an increasing number of specialized biotechnology companies. Pharmaceutical manufacturers, chemical and agrochemical companies, and organizations that are involved in the manufacture of products such as soap, toothpaste, and perfumes, all need chemical engineers. In countries where mining for metals is an important industry, chemical engineers work on plants that extract the metal by processing the minerals. Petrochemical plant contractors who design, make, and install plants all over the world are also important recruiters of chemical engineers.



Skills and Personal Qualities

- * Communication skills
- * Computer skills
- * Confidence
- * Decision-making skills
- * Initiative
- * Leadership qualities
- * Problem-solving ability
- * Teamwork
- * Technical /scientific ability.

A small illustration of a person climbing a yellow ladder against a dark background.

For additional information, please contact:
The Nigerian Society of Engineers. 1 Engineering Close,
Victoria Island, Lagos.



Youth Skills Development Programme

The Youth Skills Development Programme was initiated by **ACTION HEALTH INCORPORATED** to afford young school leavers awaiting admission into institutions of higher learning, the opportunity to work within the organization and acquire skills in the following areas:

- **Micro-computer Operations**
- **Office Administration**
- **Public Speaking**
- **Community Development Activities**
- **Personal Health Management**
- **Self-Organization & Time Management**

Participants selected for the programme will have an opportunity to work for one year by the end of which, they will be more equipped to plan and take charge of their lives. Certificates will also be issued to successful participants at the end of the programme.

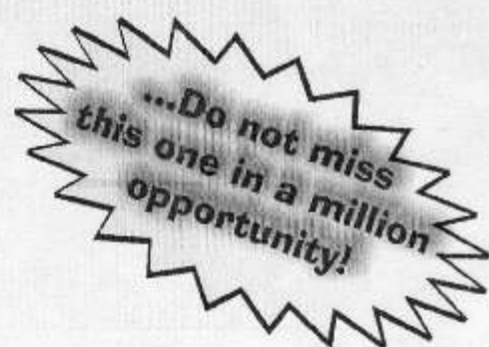
REQUIREMENTS

- ★ Applicants should be between 16 - 19 years
- ★ Should have passed their SSCE with a minimum of five (5) credits including Mathematics and English Language.
- ★ Must demonstrate creativity and ability to use their initiative
- ★ Must be committed to working full-time from November 2005 - November 2006
- ★ Membership of the Health and Life Planning Club while in Secondary school will be an advantage

To apply, write **"Youth Assistant"** on the top left corner of the envelope and attach photocopies of your credentials, a letter of reference from your school principal and submit your application on or before 30th October, 2005

SEND YOUR APPLICATION TO:

The Executive Director
Action Health Incorporated
17 Lawal Street Off Oweh Street
Jibowu, Lagos.
P. O. Box 803, Yaba, Lagos.



PROFILE OF A ROLE MODEL

Born in Enugu, Nigeria on August 14, 1973, and weighing 70 kg, this hugely skillful midfielder has played at the 1994, 1998 and 2002 World Cup Finals and many African Nations Cup tournaments.

Small and wiry, he is often described as an African "Maradona", as his style is similar to the Argentine superstar.

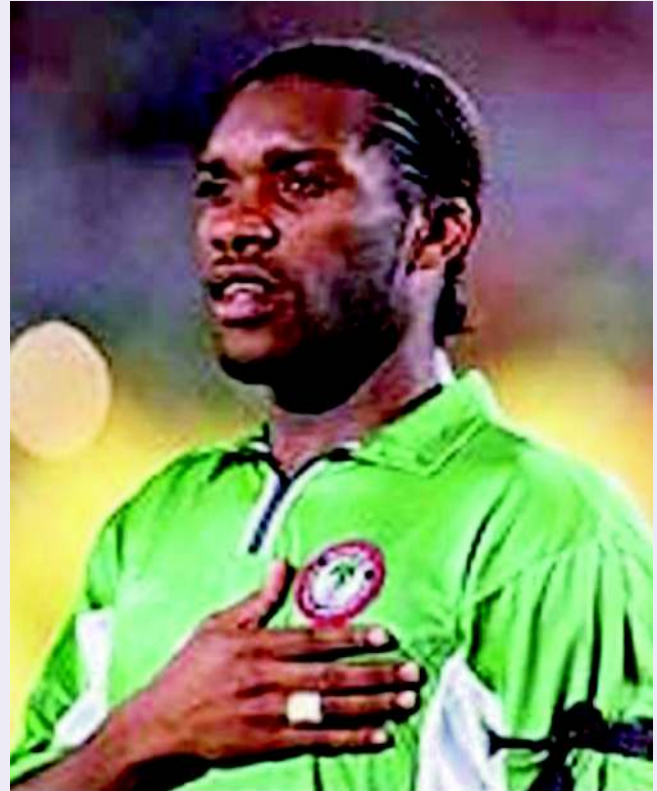
Augustine Okocha- nicknamed "Jay Jay" burst onto the international football scene in 1992. The then 19-year-old midfielder delighted the Eintracht Frankfurt of Germany fans with breathtaking dribbling, marvelous tricks and an incredibly cheeky style of play that often drove his opponents to distraction.

Okocha was an early developer, making the starting line up for his first club; Rangers International of Enugu at age 16. At 17, on a two-week holiday to visit a friend in Germany, he tried out for fourth division Borussia Neunkirchen and was promptly signed up.

The gifted Nigerian has set the Premiership alight and his inspirational skills have been a key factor in Bolton becoming a top-flight force.

He combines crowd-pleasing tricks and flicks with incisive attacking play. Sam Allardyce, his coach in Bolton signed him on a free transfer from Paris Saint Germain of France in 2002 and his flair and finesse have already made him a legend at the Reebok. He has written his name in gold at the Reebok having taken the modest club to UEFA championship in the 2004/2005 season. He had previously played for Paris Saint Germain of France Fenebahche of Turkey, and Eintracht Frankfurt of Germany.

Also known as "captain at home and captain abroad", he is presently the captain of the Super Eagles of



**AUGUSTINE (JAY- JAY) OKOCHA
(FOOTBALLER)**

"...gifted Nigerian has set the Premiership alight and his inspirational skills have been a key factor in Bolton becoming a top-flight force"

Nigeria and the captain of Bolton Wanderers of England. He has won Most Valuable Player (MVP) award in many tournaments and was a member of the Gold winning team (the Dream Team) at the Atlanta Olympics 1996, being the first African country to win a Gold medal in football at the Olympics. This feat was achieved with the help of his inspirational and captivating display. He is

married with children.

Reference:

2002 FIFA worldcup.yahoo.com



Cultivating A Reading Culture: A Reading Manual For Total Development

Background:

It has been said loud enough over the years that the standard of education in Nigeria is falling. The fact is indexed by the "half baked" graduates our tertiary institutions are producing. There is the syndrome of mass failure among school students. Other evidences are the phenomena of examination malpractices, certificate forgeries, hooliganism and cultism just to mention a few. The truth of the matter is that the devil finds work not only for idle hands but also for idle minds.

Reading is a veritable tool of education. Without personal reading, little or no education can be done. It is akin to taking a horse to the stream without getting the animal to actually drink the water. This is a disservice; it is responsible for the plague of mental laziness among youths. It also builds intellectual puppets: Students who cheat or fail in exams are those who lack the capacity to reproduce facts, generate useful ideas or embark on personal research. What does this trend portend for our education system?

Recommendation

Schools should strive to inculcate personal reading skills in their students, rather than the practice of teaching and re-teaching which has not yielded the desired results. One way of achieving this is to fix "a quiet hour" on the school time table during which students will be supervised by their class teachers to do some personal reading. Also home teachers should avoid over teaching but engage in appraisal and cognitive training of the child.

Scientific Importance Of Reading

Reading is a form of mental exercise. Failure to read amounts to a disuse which may cause the muscles, nerves and other tissues of the eyes to atrophy. Secondly, the brain can only be accustomed to the materials you read. If you read only art subjects, science may be alien to your brain. If you are used to English texts, Yoruba or any other language will be strange to your repertoire. In addition, reading is an elixir. Many youths who take stimulants and psychoactive drugs will get better result if they read motivational books instead.

Finally, reading brings to the fore the virtues, the aptitudes and the interests that are tucked away in the gray matter of the brain. For instance, several junior secondary school students who sit for aptitude tests each year end up with extremely low and unacceptable scores. This suggests that they don't have an aptitude. Yet, the truth is that they haven't

had sufficient mental exposures that could bring out their innate ability, for God creates no one without a talent.

Principles of reading

Every game has a rule. To enjoy and benefit from reading, one has to understand and follow the right principles. Proper reading involves the collaboration of the eyes and the mind. The eye decodes the letters and words while the mind receives and interprets the concept. In the process of reading, the eyes move forward and backward in a reflex action. This tends to slow down the speed but a good reader will control the movement of the eye according to the following rules. The acronym SQ3R remains the classical principle of reading:

S stands for survey: You examine the book to know its contents and the length of time you should allocate to reading it. Survey also helps you prepare your mind by acquainting your thoughts with the contents of the book.

Q stands for question: You ask such pertinent questions as 'what do I need from this book; Is it specific information/ facts or a general idea?

R1 refers to the first R: It stands for "READ". This first reading is done for general information during which your initial focus should be on sentence interpretation and meaningful decoding of paragraphs.

R2 refers to the second R: It stands for a triplet action:

RECALL, RECITE, AND RECORD. Those who read for fun or for the sake of reading don't usually reach this stage. But those who study (which is a higher degree of reading) have to recall, recite and

record cogent points for further storage into memory. When you read for a test or you read for an examination, you need to slow down your reading pace as you allow your eyes to rove back over definitions and keywords and thought units that need to be kept in memory. You recall by jotting down important facts and figures.

R3 stands for review or revision: It is a retrieval process, which consists of three sequential stages. The first is to attempt making a general mental note of your first reading. The next is to write down your definitions and key points that have been stored in your memory. The final stage of the review is to personally set questions. All this will go a long way to reinforcing the memory.

Items to be read

These include story books, lecture notes, text books, dictionaries, and encyclopedias, biographies, drawing

"...reading brings to the fore the virtues, the aptitudes and the interests that are tucked away in the gray matter of the brain"

books, map books, journals and official reports. Others are religious books, newspapers, and news magazines. Also included are specialized magazines such as those published by NGOs, health and financial institutions. Such materials as information bulletin and leaflets, letters, cyber news, internet/ website documentaries and comics also deserve your attention.

Merits of reading

- ◆ You will discover the secrets of life; they're hidden in books.
- ◆ It will develop your brain and increase your intelligent quotient.
- ◆ You will acquire academic skill, social skill and professional skill.
- ◆ No matter your vocation, you can discover ideas that will interest you.
- ◆ Reading quickens your understanding and helps in creative thinking.
- ◆ You will learn winning tips from those who have fought and won life battles.
- ◆ Reading may lead you into good health and longevity when you discover natural, orthodox and spiritual medicine.
- ◆ Rigors of reading will develop in you the virtues of discipline and diligence.
- ◆ Finally, reading brings about knowledge. Knowledge is power, knowledge is light and knowledge is life.

Demerit of reading:

A book-addict otherwise called a bookworm who spares no

time for physical recreation stands the risk of becoming a social misfit. All work and no play, makes jack a dull boy. Mental exercise without occasional physical and emotional relaxation may breed habitual laziness or stress.

Dos for reading:

- ◆ Read for at least one hour a day which may be broken into two or three sessions for a start.
- ◆ Have a time table to guide you on what, where and when you read.
- ◆ Be organised by keeping all needed reading materials nearby.
- ◆ Read one book at a time or one subject at a session.
- ◆ Read when you're mentally fresh such as in the morning or after a siesta or refreshment.
- ◆ Learn to vary your reading pace: High speed for casual reading and slow pace for serious business.

Don'ts of Reading:

- ◆ Avoid reading when you have a serious eye-problem. Meet an optician for correction.
- ◆ Don't read with a faint light. This has damaging effect on the eyes.
- ◆ Don't be a slave to your time table. Leave room for adjustments.

This piece was contributed by:

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Ministry of Education

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Youth Development Through Sports And Recreation

(Contd from page 5)

agencies, at national and international level; and

- ◆ To work proactively to encourage cultural and structural change among sports organizations, towards gender equality.

The Way Forward

From the foregoing, it is obvious that the benefits of sports and recreation are numerous and can facilitate youth development. The question then is how can we raise sports and recreation in Nigeria from the doldrums? It certainly has to be a collective effort and youths can play a significant role in this regard. Young people need to participate in sports programmes, youth camps and other recreational activities.

Parents need to be educated on the benefits of sports and recreation and the resultant positive impact on youth development. They should be assisted in making informed choices about their children's recreational activities.

There is also the need for the government, corporate bodies and NGOs to educate young people and their

parents on the need to participate in qualitative sports and physical activities. Also, government should provide adequate resources to rehabilitate and equip sports and recreational facilities in schools, stadia and other public institutions. The three tiers of government in the country should create an enabling environment for youth development through sports and recreation especially at grassroots level. We should not have such incidents as the recent sale of recreational parks in Festac Town, Lagos which resulted in public protest. Promoting youth development through sports and recreation is our collective responsibility and we must all ensure that we do our part to raise a strong and healthy nation.

References:

Web Resources-

www.liberiansoccer.com

www.latinosportslegends.com

International Working Group on Women and Sport Communiqué, www.canada2002.org, 19 May 2002

Resources

The materials listed here are resources on adolescent development. Although AHI does not distribute any of these materials, they are available for use within our reference library at the AHI Youth Centre located at 17 Lawal Street, Off Oweh Street, Jibowu, Lagos.

BOOKS

THE KID'S GUIDE TO SOCIAL ACTION.

By *Barbara A. Lewis*

The book, the kid's guide to social action helps young people in transforming their creative thinking into action/reality, which can as well make a difference in both their society and the world around them. The book also suggests skills and approaches to solving social/community problems. Some of the skills suggested by the book include writing resolutions/ letters, lobbying legislators for the support of one Bill or the other, passing petitions etc.

It also gives examples of kids who worked towards changing their environment e.g. the kids of Jackson Elementary School, who after studying the importance of underground water and the effects of hazardous waste, started their action by calling the community health department and their efforts later resulted to the general clean up of hazardous waste in their state and the passage of laws of the state superfund.

This book goes further to encourage kids to do things that will not only be felt in their homes or classrooms, but also in the 'real world'.

Finally, the book provides the kids with more important phone numbers and addresses of groups that young people could be part of, in bringing about changes in their various communities.

'DON'T SWEAT IT':

By *Marguerite Crump*

The book tends to teach the young ones how to take good and perfect care of themselves. It also gives them examples/tips on how to take care of their bodies. The book encourages kids at the pubertal age(s) to feel free with the changes they discover in their bodies during this life stage.

It also advises kids to accept their bodies just as they are, knowing that all bodies have different shapes and sizes and also different maturity rate; therefore they should not worry whether they measure up to their mates or not.

The book enlightens young people on the importance of rest and good sleep, and states that one tends to get tired easily and lose concentration when one stays up late at night to finish 'everything'. It also warns young people to desist from the habit of smoking, stating that smoking is expensive, addictive and dangerous to ones health.

Finally, 'Don't Sweat It' encourages kids to focus on their positive side of life and not the negative side or having a low self-esteem.

It also advises them to set goals for themselves and seek steps or ways of achieving those goals.

'FIGHTING INVISIBLE TIGERS'

By *Earl Hipp*

The book talks about the stress and challenges young people face in their daily lives, which to them look like invisible tigers.

It explains stress as the general feeling one gets as a result of different kinds of problems and challenges. It also gives tips/ways of developing 'early warning system' to help one know when to do something about the stress/challenges in ones life; and also gain control over ones life, face and fight those tigers.

Part one 'Life in the jungle' assists young people in recognizing several ways of dealing with stress/challenges; identify physical and emotional response to stress, etc.

Part two talks more on ways through which one could avoid being a source of stress to him/herself, learning to get assistance from people and maintaining contact with the right things when all seems to be wrong.

The last part talks about some skills required/needed to assist young people in mapping out strategies for physical health, building a high level of self-esteem and positive ways of expressing anger and grief.

Finally, the book encourages young people to make 'self respecting choices' and find a balance among all things that make up a successful life.

BOY V. GIRL?

BY *George Abraham and Sheila Ahlbrand*

It explores issues, examines facts and enables readers to make up their minds about gender. It is based on a nationwide survey of nearly 2,000 teens and preteens. It is an eye-opening, thought-provoking and life-changing book which looks at gender roles, stereotypes, media messages, double standards, puberty, body image, boundaries, friendships, role models, choices, myths and facts, harassment, sexuality and much more.



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