



Resources



The materials listed here are resources on adolescent development. These are some of the books published by AHL. One can access these materials in our reference library at the AHI Youth Centre located at 17, Lawal Street, Off Oweh Street, Jibowu, Lagos

BOOKS

YOUTH MAKING A DIFFERENCE (A HANDBOOK FOR SCHOOL-BASED ANTI HIV/AIDS CLUBS).

BY Action Health Incorporated
Section A of the handbook discusses the reasons for establishing Anti HIV/AIDS clubs in schools, how to prepare for club activities, what the club is all about and what must be done during club meetings. Section B gives the meaning of abstinence and outlines abstinence skills as required by young people. It also discusses the basic facts and tips about peer education and how it can benefit young people.

PROGRAMMING FOR ADOLESCENT SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH IN NORTHERN NIGERIA.

BY Action Health Incorporated
This publication is an attempt to share with programme planners and implementers, one of the most important activities carried out before the commencement of the programme, 'Expanded Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health Information and Services for Youth in Northern Nigeria'. This documentation attempts to assess and describe the conditions, events and demographic characteristics of the adolescent target populations from eight project communities in four northern states of the country - Borno, Bauchi, Kaduna and Nasarawa. The aim is to create a better understanding of the context in which programming occurs in the region. It is hoped that the document would create a better understanding of these factors and would assist stakeholders in designing more effective programme implementation and evaluation strategies that would lead to more sustainable programmes in Northern Nigeria.

A UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP FOR ADOLESCENTS' WELL BEING IN NIGERIA

BY Action Health Incorporated.
This book documents AHL's experience with adolescent

sexual and reproductive health programming since its inception in 1989. It is a documentation of the process that led to the convening of the first National Conference on Adolescent Reproductive Health, Abuja, Nigeria, in January 1999. The conference was a significant milestone in the development of adolescent reproductive health programming in the country and the first initiative where civil society organisations creatively collaborated with government and the international donor community and multilateral agencies in a process aimed at high-level advocacy and policy intervention in the country.

MEDIA RESOURCE HANDBOOK ON FAMILY LIFE AND HIV/AIDS EDUCATION (FLHE) IN NIGERIA.

BY Action Health Incorporated
The media Resource Handbook on Family Life and HIV/AIDS Education (FLHE) in Nigeria provides relevant information for practitioners in the media about the FLHE Programme, which is one of the education sector's strategies for improving the sexual and reproductive health of in-school adolescents in Nigeria. The handbook presents statistics on the adolescent sexual and reproductive health in Nigeria. It highlights some national and international programmes aimed at improving the well being of young people. It also presents key concepts and messages, myths and facts about FLHE, background to the development of the FLHE curriculum, the mode of delivery as well as challenges for implementation. The document concludes by enumerating the expected roles of stakeholders, giving a glossary of definition of FLHE terms and sources of information.



Media Resource Handbook on Family Life and HIV/AIDS Education (FLHE) in Nigeria

ACTION HEALTH INCORPORATED



Growing Up

A NEWSLETTER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



Youth Skills Development Programme

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EXCELLENCE AND DEDICATION TO DUTY EXTOLLED Page 21

The Youth Skills Development Programme: 13 Years of Shaping Lives

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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Adolescence is a period characterized by rapid changes and the need to achieve many significant developmental tasks. It is the time when young people develop knowledge, attitudes and skills that become the foundation for a psychologically healthy adulthood. Successful transition from adolescence to adulthood requires the integration of physical, psychological, socio-cultural, educational, economic and spiritual factors.

Unfortunately, the vagaries of growing up in socio-economically and politically unstable society of ours do not make this integration easy for Nigerian adolescents. Transitioning from the completion of secondary schooling to tertiary education or commencing formal employment is one of the most challenging periods for Nigerian adolescents. Not only are there too many applicants applying for too few spaces in the limited higher institutions, the competition is not also "not-so-straight forward".

Therefore one finds that many teenagers complete secondary school and spend several months or sometimes years trying to figure out how to move ahead with their lives.

Thirteen years ago, Action Health Incorporated (AHI) recognized this challenge and initiated the Youth Skills Development Program (YSDP) to guide young people through this transitional period and prepare them for future endeavours as well as improve their sense of responsibility towards themselves, their communities and the world.

WHAT THE PROGRAMME OFFERS?

The YSDP is a one-year programme during which fresh secondary school leavers are engaged to work within AHI as Youth Assistants.

While introducing them to the adult world of work, the programme provides young people the opportunity to learn about themselves and develop their own personal identity.

The scheme offers them support and guidance to explore and affirm their own values as individuals and members of a community.

The beneficiaries of the programme receive a lot of mentoring from the adult staff who head the various departments in the organization. This in turn helps them to cultivate responsible behaviour and work ethics.

The programme provides them an opportunity to develop responsible decision-making skills and a wide range of competencies.

THE COMPETENCIES INCLUDE:

Reading, Writing and Communication Skills:

The Youth Assistants learn to read for details and respond to mails effectively as they attend to incoming and outgoing mails in their various departments. They also develop report writing skills as they participate in various training programmes geared towards improving their communication skills.

COMPUTER OPERATIONS:

All the participants in the programme are expected to take part in the basic computer training carried out by the organization. This makes it possible for them to have the basic knowledge in such computer software like Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

OFFICE ADMINISTRATION:

Various administrative skills such as telephone etiquette, programme planning, filing, office correspondence and database collation are acquired by the participants during the one-year programme.

PUBLIC SPEAKING SKILLS:

The beneficiaries of this scheme develop public speaking skills as they take part in

various interactive sessions. They facilitate programme and also represent the organization at various events. These help to build their ability to articulately address small and large groups of people.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SKILLS:

Youth Assistants interact with other young people in the communities, market groups and churches through sensitization and outreach programmes. These activities help to influence people at the grassroots positively, hence community development.

PERSONAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT SKILLS:

The participants in the programme learn appropriate health-seeking behaviour and develop skills to take charge of their lives. They are exposed to information on personal hygiene, good nutrition, physical and psychological well-being.

SELF- ORGANIZATION AND TIME MANAGEMENT:

Programme participants are required to report to work early, attend to official duties and meet deadlines for various activities. In the process they learn to manage their time and be more organized.

ELIGIBILITY

An applicant for the YSDP must possess the average requirements for admission into a tertiary institution in Nigeria. That is, the applicant must have passed Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination or its equivalent with a minimum of credit passes in at least five subjects, including Mathematics and English Language. This is because young people are expected to move on to a higher institution of learning after the one-year training in YSDP. Such an applicant must be between the ages of sixteen and nineteen years.

APPLICATION PROCESS:

The YSDP starts in January and application letters from intending participants are submitted by September. The application letters are screened and successful candidates are engaged to start work by January.

MEET THE BENEFICIARIES:

YSDP has impacted the lives of many young people in the country since its inception. Some of the beneficiaries have graduated with excellent results from tertiary institutions and are bringing the skills gained in the YSDP to bear in their various endeavors. Some have even taken up the responsibility of affecting the lives of other youths by establishing youth serving organizations.

PARTICIPANTS' TESTIMONIES:

Emmanuel Ehinmero -1993

Mr. Ehinmero participated in YSDP in 1993. Though a science student during school days, he was trained by AHI as a peer educator and became very creative in visual art. In 1991, he won multiple prizes at the Poster Designs Competition organized by AHI. He is a graduate of General Arts, Yaba College of Technology and now the founder of Distincttouch, a design and printing company.

"Back then, many people saw us as bad eggs and had the erroneous impression that we were all sexually active youths



who were not going to be successful in life...I met my wife eight years before marriage and we were virgins until marriage. Ten years on, haven become a professional Artist, husband and father; I still have a good relationship with AHI. Working with AHI was the best experience I had as a young person"

Adeola Olunloyo 1997

Ms. Olunloyo was part of YSDP in June 1997 to December 1998. She is a Mass Communication graduate of the University of Lagos, Akoka and now a Programme Assistant with COMPASS Nigeria, Abuja. AHI gave her the unique opportunity of anchoring 'Youth Forum', a television programme for youths on Lagos Weekend Television, LWTV, during her YSDP year.

"My personal values became clearer and I was able to become not only organized, but also disciplined with time. My relationship with people at home, work, and society improved



greatly. I also served as an advocate at various National

and International events on Reproductive Health and HIV/AIDS as they affect the youth. With the skills and competencies acquired, I started an organisation called 'Youth-to-Youth Initiative' with three other Peer Educators trained by AHI and in our own way; we are making our own contribution to youth development. I encourage

intending participants of YSDP to embrace the opportunity and give all their best"

Tunde Osideko -1998

Mr. Osideko took part in YSDP from November 1998 to July 1999. He is a graduate of Mathematics from the University of Ibadan. He is an author, and a business development consultant

"The Youth Skills Development Programme has contributed in every way to my success in life. The deeper and stronger the foundation, the higher the building; AHI deepened my foundation and now I can fly higher. I am the author of two books, "Flames of Passion", a book on relationships, and "Beyond the Grip of Limitations", a book on personal

development. I have also been able to found "Leaders and Builders International" (LBI), an organization, which runs an



Inspirational Institute, and a private publishing consulting firm. I work at present with Visible Improvement in Performance (V.I.P.) Consulting Ltd. as a business development, training, and strategy consultant"

Sola Fagorusi 2001

Mr. Fagorusi was a participant of YSDP in the year 2001. He is now

studying Agricultural Economics at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. With the experiences gained at the programme, he is involved in writing for editorial boards in his school and also one of the pioneers of "Campus Health Rights Initiative", a Non-Governmental Organisation.

"My experience during the YSDP year was WONDERFUL! Though, I must confess that at the end of the first two weeks, I was putting my resignation letter together because I thought I could not cope with the stress. Interestingly, a programme came up around that time and I met the then Commissioner of Education, I saw this as a great exposure for my young mind and I waited for more...Other exposures came, I got familiar with places in Lagos, Oshodi



especially. I am able to combine academic stress with journalism and NGO work because YSDP has built me".

Feyi Fowowe 2001

Ms. Fowowe is a final year student of Economics at the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. She is one of the writers of the lead stories of AHI's newsletter 'Growing Up'

"I read about the YSDP in one of the newsletter editions and I will for ever be happy that I was a part of it. When I first started with AHI, I had the challenge of separating my personal values from the organisation's work. As I continued to interact with adolescents that came for our programmes, I became open minded and was able to accommodate other peoples' values as well as believe in AHI's stand on issues. I had the opportunity of assisting Adeola Olunloyo to anchor the 'Youth Forum' on Lagos Weekend Television this indeed is one of the wonderful things I cannot forget. At AHI, I discovered myself and explored the potentials in me. Intending YSDP participants should learn to be committed"

Eunice Aghete- 2003



Ms. Aghete is presently a student of Industrial Relations and Personnel Management at the Lagos State University (LASU). As a Youth Assistant, she represented Nigeria at the Global Youth Forum, organized by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) between September 15-19, 2003 in New York, U.S.A. She now coordinates the Global Youth Partners, a youth

initiative funded by UNFPA.

"My stay at AHI was interestingly challenging. Every minute I spent was worth it because I developed several capacities and these made all the difference in my studies, work and life in general. At the Information, Education and Communication unit, I learnt how to write reports; how to manage programmes and how to write proposals. These skills have been very useful in coordinating Global Youth Partners... There could not have been Global Youth Partners without these skills", she concluded.

Chidinma



Ogbonna -2005

Ms. Ogbonna was one of the 2005 beneficiaries of YSDP. She worked in the Health Services unit as well as the Information, Education and Communication (IEC) unit, and was one of the comperes at the Teenage Festival of Life in 2005. According to her, "my work at the Clinic necessitated my having to read extensively and researching adequately

on various topics so as to be able to answer the numerous questions asked by facility users. Furthermore, I learnt telephone etiquettes, proper filing methods and how to attend to facility users.. At the IEC unit, I facilitated daily sessions and represented AHI at some programmes outside the organization. These helped me in many areas as I'm now more focused and equipped for future challenges. I must say that this programme is laudable".

Christopher Adeboye -2005

Mr. Adeboye is a 2005 alumnus of YSDP. He moderated the Chevron Adolescent Reproductive Health programme that was designed for the children of Chevron staff, was a comperes at the Teenage Festival of Life 2005, and also participated in the



14th International

Conference on AIDS and STIs in Africa, (ICASA) 2005, among other programmes.

"Opportunity, they say, comes only once. I had to grab the opportunity and not let it go. I am glad I did, because I have found out that AHI not only promotes adolescent sexual and reproductive health, the organisation builds youths

into capable leaders by giving them factual, accurate and age-appropriate information. Through the programme, AHI has prepared me for the future. At the IEC, I experienced a great improvement in interpersonal relationships and communication, believed more in my abilities, and was able to know a lot of places. While at the reception, I related well with the young people and discovered that they do not like to be given orders or be bossed around. Moving on to the Resource and Documentation unit, I learnt documentation and classification of books"

Kudirat Isiaka -2005

Ms. Isiaka YSDP alumnus 2005.



"It has been a great experience, though

challenging, to work with other young people from diverse background and with different character, orientation, and beliefs. At first, it was not easy mingling freely with my colleagues, but with time I learnt how. The first unit I worked with was the IEC; the exposure made me a less rigid person.

I became more skilled on the computer as I had to write reports and proposals for special programmes. At the reception, I became more efficient and relaxed, as I had to extend equal courtesies and respect to both young and adult visitors and facility users. I had to learn some specific statements and lines to use in asking questions and also met so many people with different status, from different countries, and with different languages. I learnt not to be forgetful and to monitor movement around the reception area. Having passed through the YSDP, I hope to apply the various skills learnt to achieve my goals in life"

Olugbenga Awomodu -2005

Mr. Awomodu, ex- 2005 YSDP participant, is now a student of Chemical Engineering at the University of Lagos.

"I can't just believe this is I! The first time I was asked to introduce a drama presentation in my church about seven years ago, I dropped the microphone and ran out of the auditorium! I was so terrified that I thought the congregation was going to eat



me up. I almost got a heart attack that Sunday. What has that got to do with the Youth Skills Development Programme? you would ask. A lot! The YSDP has finally opened my mouth. It has greatly boosted my self-esteem and confidence. How else could a young man like me have garnered such life transforming experiences without being part of a programme like the YSDP?"

The Youth Skills Development Programme has continued to impress on my mind the fact that, in addition to bagging First Class degrees and certificates, there is the vital need for one to build and develop a 'First Class' personality. It is the latter that makes the difference and, in the long run, determines the height we get to and our achievements in life"



POEMS



Forgive, Don't Forsake

Can you imagine how the world
Would be without a word
From someone you could call a friend.
Who could always stand by you as a friend?
It is like staying without a light
Just alone in pity of your plight.
It is like sitting above a tower,
Waiting for the eleventh hour.
When your fear of the unknown might become a
reality.
It is like being an alien in an unfriendly society,
Where the atmosphere is tensed,
Condensed with suspense.
Friends are invaluable jewels.
It takes you to discover the treasures in their wells.
Never forsake a friend because he's hurt you,
FORGIVENESS is the word. It is what keeps you
two.
If you let your friend walk away that way
You would regret you did that, someday.
Because your family doesn't alone maintain order.
They are the sun in your life,
But your friend remains the moon in your life.
When the sun is not around to light up your life,
The moon is always at the corner of your life.
Never forsake a friend,
But ever forgive a friend,
Because that and any other
Helps to maintain the order.

By Peculiar Ediomomo-Abasi

Child Abuse

Child Abuse in our society today
Is a wide and rapid range
In which children are denied their rights.
Children, they say, are the leaders of tomorrow.
But why deny us our tomorrow?
Why deny us our rights?
Let's join hands together
To stop this inhuman treatment,
Stop child abuse.
Empower us to make informed choices,
So that our future remains bright.
Please parents, give us the chance
To realise and achieve our dreams
Encourage us to be focused,
And successful in life.
Friends, we have the right to be educated
So, be up and doing.
Let's join hands together
To stop this craze called child abuse.

Arevore O. Wilberforce
Orishigun High School, Ketu.

What Life Is About

We have all come into this world to stay
So shall we all grow and change day by day
And if we all want our lives to be meaningful
Then we need to have been optimistic.
Though life itself is juxtaposition
What is seen is sometimes what it really is
Life is endlessly fraught with opposition
But good vision and hard work make you a success.
Caring for and supporting others,
And giving life a meaning,
Makes life more interesting and appreciated.
Notwithstanding the bushes along the way
Start now because it's never too late
To be your brother's keeper.
And with time, you'll know it's worth it.

By Helen Brown

PHOTO REPORT

THE VICE PRESIDENT OF MACARTHUR FOUNDATION VISITS AHI

On 2nd March 2006, Action Health Incorporated hosted a team from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. The team, which comprised Mr. Gary Samore, Vice President and Dr. Kole Shettima, Country Representative, Nigeria, visited AHI during Mr. Samore's first trip to Nigeria and had the opportunity of touring the AHI facility. Some MacArthur Foundation Grantees were also present at the meeting, namely the Campaign Against Unwanted Pregnancy (CAUP), Community Life Project (CLP) and BAOBAB. Each organization, including AHI, made a brief presentation sharing their programming experiences and progress made in implementing projects supported by the foundation. These presentations gave the MacArthur Team the opportunity to ask questions related to project implementation and thus gain a better understanding of the socio-cultural and political contexts that influence programming in Nigeria and how grantees are addressing challenges that these may pose.

In the afternoon, the MacArthur team also met with

teachers and students from public Junior Secondary Schools in Lagos State to discuss the implementation of the Family Life and HIV/AIDS (FLHE) Curriculum. Lagos state is currently implementing the FLHE curriculum in all its 304 public Junior Secondary Schools. The teachers were very enthusiastic about the positive effects that the curriculum is having on students. They observed that students were able to express themselves better and readily discussed sexual and reproductive health concerns that they might be having. They were also more assertive and able to resist negative peer pressure. Students also confirmed that FLHE topics were being taught in class. Some of the topics mentioned included Abstinence, Body Image, Sexual Abuse, Friendship.



Cartoon



Dear Diary

Monday

I got out of bed at 6.00am in order to have enough time to prepare for school even though I was still groggy from sleep. I headed for the bathroom to brush my teeth but decided along the way to get to the kitchen first and heat some water for my bath. I didn't bother to switch on the light, as I thought I could find my way around perfectly. I reached for the kettle to fill it with some water...CCRAASSHH! I ran back to turn on the light only to discover that I had just broken a set of plates my mum received only last week, as a wedding anniversary gift from Aunt Dora, her best friend. Sleep cleared from my eyes instantly and I became alert. Grabbing a broom, I quickly cleared up the mess and neatly disposed of it so no one else would know. What and how was I going to tell mummy? I decided it was best to keep quiet about it since no one else in the house had heard the sound.

Tuesday

It was break time at school. Stephanie and Olivia (my best friends) and I were in the lunchroom. We were eating and discussing the forthcoming party. I had planned to ask my mum for permission to attend the party but I wasn't sure she would grant my request. And now that I have broken her wedding anniversary plates, I couldn't summon up the courage to go to her. When my friends urged me to tell her about the broken plates and then seek permission for the party I decided I would do so that evening.

Mum wasn't back from work when I got home from school so I had to wait; and the waiting was unbearable! While waiting, my conscience did a dirty job on me...it pricked me seriously. I should have told her before now...I shouldn't let her find out by herself...if she does, she wouldn't be happy with me and...she wouldn't grant my request to attend the party. While still in deep thought, mum walked in and immediately noticed my troubled look. She smiled, hugged and asked me what the problem was. Rather than tell her what was bothering me, I worsened the case by lying that I was tired after having a long day in school. She smiled again and handed me a white paper bag. She had stopped at "Chicken Republic" to buy me pizza. I took the bag from her with gratitude, left for my room, feeling very unhappy with myself for really making worse, with my lies, an already bad situation.

Wednesday

Today isn't any better than yesterday. Of course I couldn't tell mum last night, but I made up my mind to tell her tonight. Stephanie and Olivia brought their party clothes to school for me to see and were surprised I didn't bring mine because they expected I would have told my mum and she would have consented to my attending the party. They encouraged me to tell her about the party now and leave the issue of the broken plates until later since she had not yet missed them. That gave me the courage and encouragement to decide that I would tell mum unflinchingly tonight. She came back late and tired but I had spent the day building up my courage...I had my heart in my mouth as I walked into her room. I knocked and entered...

Thursday

Stephanie, Olivia and I agreed to meet at Olivia's house today after school to discuss and plan how to get my clothes and things out of the house on Saturday. Again, my courage failed me yesterday and I ended

up not telling mum. Meanwhile, Kaine, my younger sister came home from school and informed us that she had just been elected one of the acting prefects, to replace those in my set who would soon be graduating.

Friday

I woke up bright and early so that I could pack my clothes and accessories and take them to school for Olivia to take home. We had planned to meet at her place and take off for the party from there. I got down stairs only to meet mum in the sitting room. I was taken aback because she hardly got up that early. I returned to my room before she saw me; I wondered if God had started punishing me for Monday's incident. I put my things together and tucked them neatly into my school bag closed it, then checked to see if there was any bulge...none. I got ready for school only to discover, when I got downstairs, that the driver was not yet around. No! Mum wanted to drop me at school. My God! Is this judgment already? Thirty minutes later, I was in school. Wow...I made it without mum noticing anything. Tomorrow is the D-day, but now there's another problem to be solved. Where would I tell mummy I would be during the duration of the party? The answer came as quickly as the question...I would say I'm at Olivia's place, after all, she knows Olivia as my best friend.

Saturday

The party was scheduled to start at five, so my friends and I planned to leave the house by 8.00 am. I had no problem doing this, as mum wasn't home; all I did was to tell Kaine to let her know when she returned that I was at Olivia's place. Olivia's parents' driver took us to the party, which turned out a great fun. A lot of my classmates were there and missing it would have been terrible. By 8.00pm we had had so much fun that we decided it was time to leave; but unfortunately for me, the driver was nowhere to be found. I became apprehensive...getting back home late would mean explaining and not only that, it would mean telling mum the whole truth. Stephanie told me to calm down but I couldn't. The driver eventually showed up by 9:30pm. By then I had become so afraid that I was sure there was no way I would get out of the trouble I had landed myself in. It was legion...mum's dishes...the party I didn't tell her about but attended...sneaking my clothes out...lying about my whereabouts...and now...getting home late!

I finally got home around 10:15pm and deep inside me, I knew I was in big trouble and was afraid to enter the house. To my relief, mum had gone to bed by the time I arrived home. At least that was what Kaine told me. I sneaked into my room, happy that I had made it home clean and safe; "mum would never know now," I thought to myself. The only problem I have to resolve, I thought, is that of the broken plates...or is it?

Sunday

After church, mum and I prepared lunch. Sundays are usually relaxed in our house. All one had to do was to prepare for the new week. I went to Stephanie's place and met Olivia there. I told them that everything was fine and we didn't have to worry. We gisted and I left for home to prepare for school the next day. Around 9:30pm, while getting ready for bed, my mum called me into her room saying she had something to discuss with me. I gladly took the seat she offered, being so sure that I had perfectly covered my tracks. I wonder what's on her mind? My God! You won't believe what she said...I'd tell you in the next edition.

I'M SO IMPRESSED WITH YOUR PERFORMANCE IN THIS OFFICE, LINUS.

THANK YOU, SIR.



BUT YOU SAID YOU READ HISTORY, SO HOW COME YOU'RE SO GOOD WITH THE COMPUTER, GOOD IN OFFICE ADMINISTRATION, PUBLIC SPEAKING, SELF-ORGANISATION AND TIME MANAGEMENT?

WELL SIR, I...



TELL ME THE TRUTH, LINUS, YOU ALSO DID A FOUR-YEAR PROGRAMME IN COMPUTER AND BUSINESS STUDIES.

ACTUALLY I DID A ONE YEAR PROGRAMME AFTER MY SSCE WHICH HELPED ME TO DISCOVER MYSELF.



WHICH PROGRAMME ARE YOU REFERRING TO?

THE YOUTH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, OF COURSE...IT'S MEANT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.





NEWSREEL

COMMEMORATION OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The International Women's Day, March 8, 2006 has come and gone but the memories still linger in the minds of the young people who attended the commemorating event on March 6, 2006 at the AHI multi-purpose Hall.

The theme of the event which was 'Women In Decision-Making' and the sub-theme, 'Celebrating Women: The Pillars of the Nation' were aimed at celebrating womanhood and their achievements. It was an avenue in which the minds of young people were opened up to leadership qualities and the roles they are expected to play in the society.

The event featured interactive discussion on 'Leadership in adolescents' and a debate titled 'Should Women be given equal opportunities at all levels in the society?' This helped to develop their personal and communication skills as they were made to talk about issues such as the inferior status accorded women in the family, workplaces and policy-making arenas.

They concluded that male domination in the society was as a result of our culture and tradition of the African societies. They recognized that with maximum support from their male partners, women would play



The event also put smiles on the faces of the participants

their leadership roles successfully. They therefore unanimously solicit for the empowerment of the girl child through building of skills and creation of awareness on women's rights.

More than ninety young people took part in the programme.

TRIBUTE TO AN ICON OF EXCELLENCE



Chief (Dr.) Irene Modupeola Thomas qualifying in 1954.

Chief (Dr.) Irene Modupeola Thomas, OON, Yeye Lokoyi of Ilesha was the daughter of the late P.J.C and Josetta Mary Thomas.

She attended Wesleyan Girls High School, Queens College (1930-34), Lagos. She left to the United Kingdom to study Medicine at Kings College Medical School, Newcastle-on-Tyne and the University of Durham,

This alumnus of John Hopkins University was also a philanthropist. She gave a much needed uplift to the less privileged members of the society. She co-founded the Motherless Babies Home to provide a safe haven for abandoned children. In recognition of her service to the country, she was awarded the Order Of the Niger (OON).

She was appalled at the high incidence of Vesico Vagina Fistula (VVF) and as a result seriously campaigned against female circumcision at local, national and international levels.

This icon of excellence will be remembered for her contributions to the education of women/girls and her struggle for the protection of women against harmful traditional practices.

She died peacefully on Wednesday, December 25, 2005. (Christmas Day), aged 88 years.

Rest In Peace, Mama!

COMMEMORATION OF THE DAY-OF-ZERO-TOLERANCE TO FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION.

AHI joined the rest of the world to mark the International Day of Zero Tolerance to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), which took place on February 6, 2006. The event, which was marked at the AHI Youth Centre, was aimed at creating awareness on the dangers of the practice and the need to eliminate all forms of FGM practices. More than 120 in and out-of-school young people attended the programme.

Highlights of the event include a lecture and a drama presentation titled "Campaign against FGM" by a group made up of in-school young people from various schools.

In his presentation, Dr. Oridota, a resident doctor at the AHI Youth Clinic enlightened the young people on the various types of FGMs such as:

- Type I: Excision of the prepuce with or without excision of part or the entire clitoris.
- Type II: Excision of the clitoris with partial or total excision of the labia minora
- Type III: Excision of part or all of the external genitalia and stitching/narrowing of the Vagina opening (infibulations).
- Type IV: Pricking, piercing or incising of the clitoris and/or labia; stretching of the clitoris and/or labia; cauterization by burning of the clitoris and surrounding tissue.

Scrapping of tissue surrounding the vaginal orifice (angurya cuts) or cutting of the vagina (Gishiri cuts).

He stated that FGMs were carried out for psychosexual,

sociological and religious reasons while pointing out that some of the possible complications of FGMs included:

- Bleeding to death during and after the procedure.
- Severe shock and pain during circumcision
- Damage to the organs surrounding the clitoris and labia.
- Acute and long-term urinary and reproductive disorders.
- Vesico Vaginal Fistula (V.V.F).
- Infertility and other complications caused by infections of the cervix, uterus and fallopian tubes.
- Potential transmission of HIV - caused by the use of non-sterile and/or shared instruments during the procedure.
- Pain during childbirth due to constriction of the vaginal outlet and lots more.

In conclusion, he advised that, in view of possible complications of FGM practices, all forms of the act should be totally eradicated.

VOCATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING FOR YOUTH

As part of efforts to equip young people with the necessary tools to grow up and become responsible adults, AHI organized Vocational Training Skills Training Workshop for youths within Kosofe/Mainland Local Education District of Lagos State on February 4, 2006.

The training, which was on 'Bead Stringing', was aimed at awakening the spirit of creativity and teamwork among young people. It was also aimed at equipping them with vocational skills, which could serve as a source of income for them in the future. The sessions covered areas like knowing the kinds of beads and tools used for bead stringing; how to create different patterns of beads and how to start one's own bead stringing business (including tips on effective advertisement).



Trainers and young people stringing beads during the workshop

At the end of the programme, the beneficiaries expressed joy for being part of the programme and said they would put the skills acquired to good use.

EXCELLENCE AND DEDICATION TO DUTY EXTOLLED.



Finance and Admin. Manager, Bimbo Jide-Aremo presenting a gift to Mrs. Bunmi Olatunde

It was a mixture of sadness and joy on March 3, 2006 at AHI as Mrs. Bunmi Olatunde, a Programme Manager was given a befitting send-off by the management and staff of the organisation.

In her brief remark, the Executive Director of AHI, Mrs. Nike Esiet commended Mrs. Olatunde for her dedication to duty, hard work and loyalty to the organisation and wished her all the best in her future endeavour. She advised other staff members to be hard working and pursue the ideals that the organisation stands for as those who do well are always rewarded. She said that Mrs. Olatunde had risen to the post of a Programme Manager as a result of her six years of active and illustrious service in the organisation. The Finance and Admin. Manager, AHI, Mrs. Bimbo

Jide-Aremo in her contribution, stated that her leaving the organisation should not be the end of her service to young people and called on her to continue to contribute to the growth of young people wherever she may be.

Other staff members also extolled her virtues and therefore promised to be hard working and loyal to the organisation.

In her reply, the out-going Programme Manager, thanked the management for giving her the opportunity to serve and promised to continue to contribute her little quota towards the empowerment of young people. All the staff of AHI witnessed the event.

Highpoint of the event was the cutting of the cake and the presentation of a gift item to Mrs. Bunmi Olatunde.

infatuation.

This year's edition also featured impromptu speeches, drama presentation, question and answer sessions, poetry competition, rendition of songs, and presentation of choreography by the "girls in black" from Eva Adelaja Senior Girls Secondary School, Bariga.

Representatives from about 10 secondary schools in the Mainland Local Government Area of Lagos State climaxed the event with the cutting of the St. Valentine's cake.

Most of the participants were happy to be part of the laudable programme and promised to strive to avoid any form of risky behaviour.



Participants cutting the Valentine cake at the event.

YOUTH COMMEMORATE ST. VALENTINE'S DAY 2006

All roads led to the AHI Youth Centre on February 14, 2006, as is the norm on that date every year. This year as usual, many in and out of school youth trooped to the Centre to join their peers in the commemoration of St. Valentine's Day.

The event, which witnessed a large turnout of young people, had as its theme, 'True Love Waits'. It was aimed at equipping young people with skills and factual information on abstinence that would help them build positive and lasting relationships without engaging in sexual activities.

In her presentation, Mrs. Tayo Amodu, Programme Assistant, IEC, urged young people to refrain from risky behaviour that could undermine or jeopardize their health and development, adding that teenage pregnancy, STIs/HIV/AIDS, emotional problems were some of the problems associated with risky behaviour. The event was also used to teach the young people about self-esteem, decision making and differentiating between love and

PERSONAL HYGIENE FOR ADOLESCENT HEALTH

Hygiene is the science and practice of maintaining health. One of the most effective ways by which we can protect others and ourselves from illness is by maintaining good personal hygiene. This means washing ones hands as well as ones bodies regularly. It also means being careful to cover mouths and noses when coughing or sneezing, so as not to infect others, washing food items that have been touched, and dropping items such as tissues (that may have germs) into a waste bin after use. It also means using protective items (like gloves) when one might be at risk of catching an infection.

BODY ODOUR

Body odours are caused by the combination of a number of factors. These include:

- ❑ Chemicals in sweat, including pheromones, which are made by the body and which sexually attract (or repel) other people.
- ❑ Wastes excreted through the skin, such as metabolized alcohol.
- ❑ The actions of bacteria that live on the skin and feed on dead skin cells and sweat.
- ❑ Unwashed clothes, such as underwear and socks.

If you're concerned about the way your underarms smell, you can use a deodorant, or, for more effect, a deodorant that is combined with an antiperspirant. Deodorants get rid of body odour by covering it up, while antiperspirants actually stop or dry up perspiration.

Deodorants/antiperspirants come in sticks, roll-ons, gels, sprays, and creams; they are available at most drugstores or supermarkets. All brands are similar

and those that the producers claim are made specifically for men or women are similar too; the only difference may be in the perfumes added to give it a feminine or masculine touch, as the case may be.

HAND WASHING

Most infections, especially colds and gastroenteritis are caught when we put unwashed hands, which have germs on them, into our mouth. Some infections are caught when other people's dirty hands touch the food we eat. To prevent this, hands and wrists should be washed with soap and clean water, using a brush if the fingernails are dirty. After washing your hands, dry them with paper towels or hot air dryers. Always make sure you wash your hands:

- ❑ After using the toilet
- ❑ Before making or cooking food
- ❑ After handling dogs or any other animals
- ❑ If you have been around someone who is coughing or has cold.

PERSONAL HYGIENE FOR YOUNG GIRLS

THE VAGINA

The vagina is able to clean itself, as such; no special care is needed other than to clean the external genitals. Do not put anything like douches into the vagina, as the delicate skin can be damaged.

Here are some personal hygiene suggestions for girls:

- ❑ **MENSTRUATION** During menstrual periods, wash your body, including your genital area, in the same way as you always do. Change tampons and sanitary napkins regularly, at least four to five times a day. Always wash your hands

(cont'd on page 19)



True Life Story

“Oh! How I Pity My Guys ”

When I moved on to the senior secondary school, three years ago, I never envisaged what eventually happened to me. By age 15, I was already endowed with all a matured woman should possess. Besides that, I was quite intelligent and I think that endeared me to Mr. Chike (not real name), the student teacher from Fapokoy Magigi University. As a young girl, I thought he was being friendly with me because I was very intelligent. I was totally oblivious to the fact that he wanted more from me than the usual morning greetings and niceties.

Consequently, I was shocked the Friday afternoon he asked me out on a date. What was his reason? He said that I scored the highest in his mid-term test and he felt the need to sit down with me somewhere to advise me on how to improve on my grades. I was reluctant at first, but when he said we were going to an eatery, twenty minutes drive from the school, I decided to give him a benefit of doubt. However, I got more than I bargained for, when we got to the eatery, a very popular one in the highbrow area of the city. Chike proposed to me! Is it right for an adolescent, my age, to be in such a relationship? Is the age difference of about seven years not too much? How do I know he truly loves me as he professed? Suppose all he wanted was sex? What do I do in this situation I've suddenly found myself? Should I tell him yes or no? All these and more questions began to scroll across my brain?

But, honestly, 'student teacher' Chike, a young chap of 21, was very handsome and irresistible. In fact, some of my classmates secretly admired him and wanted an opportunity to have a relationship with him. He had all

the qualities a woman would want in a man. After these considerations, I gave in. He told me all that an SSS1 girl would want to hear. In my innocence and naïveté, I succumbed to his request to have sex with him and consequently lost my virginity. That was about two years ago.

After his placement, he returned to the university for his final year and we kept in touch with each other. I visited him on a number of occasions (I've lost count of the number of times). He was my first and only love and therefore, I hung on to every word he uttered.

Chike later graduated and we lost contact, I did not see or hear anything about him until last January when his sister told me about his whereabouts...

About 18 months ago, I applied for a scholarship and my school of choice required that I go for medical tests. Along the line, I decided to check my HIV status; unfortunately the result was POSITIVE! It then dawned on me that I had, in one unguarded moment of passion, traded the rest of my life for a fling with a university student who had deliberately, selfishly and intentionally preyed on my innocence.

My first impulse was to take my life. The following day, I went to a different health facility and the result was still positive. Counseling session did not mean much to me at that time and I (in most cases) walked out of the sessions. I attended just so I could learn more about how to manage the virus, as I did not disclose my status to people until today.

There was no doubt that this student teacher (page 21)

Chike proposed to me! Is it right for an adolescent, my age, to be in such a relationship? Is the age difference of about seven years



Dear Aunty

Dear Readers, the "Dear Aunty" 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 Aunty Column), Action Health Incorporated, 17 Lawal Street, Off Oweh Street, Jibowu, P.O. Box 803, Sabo, Yaba, Lagos.

Q

I always have severe menstrual pains during my periods and although I always use analgesics, I hardly have any relief from them. Is this normal?

A

Thank you for sharing your concerns with Dear Aunty.

Painful dysmenorrhoea or menstrual pain is one of the physiological changes that females experience monthly with the onset of menstruation.

The pain is as a result of the passage of the menstrual flow through the tiny cervical opening and the effect of a chemical substance called prostaglandin on the lining of the uterus.

Once in a while the severe pains may occur as a result of problems with the reproductive tract e.g. pelvic inflammatory diseases.

The duration, which differs in individuals, may be between one or three days. Severity of the pains depends on the individual pain tolerance level and the pain is usually felt more on the first and second day.

The first step to finding relief to the pain is to consider it as a temporary problem that will not last forever; hence you need to occupy your time with an activity to divert your mind away from it.

Secondly learn and do mild pelvic exercises to aid blood flow. You can also use hot water compress on your lower abdomen.

You can take some analgesics. The last resort to severe dysmenorrhoea or menstrual pain is dilatation of the cervix. Mind you, this is for very serious and obvious severe menstrual pain.

Q

Please, ma, how does one know if he or she has a toilet disease and how does one treat it?

A

I will like to correct the term toilet disease. There is no infection or disease called toilet disease, though there is a type of reproductive tract infection that one can pick up from using the toilet that an infected person has used.

Many females complain that they have reproductive tract infections when they experience abnormal vaginal discharge. Ideally, the normal vaginal discharge should be of moderate quantity. The colour should be whitish and must not have offensive odour. So whenever women experience any deviation from this they feel they have "toilet infection".

There are more than one reproductive tract infections that manifest as abnormal vaginal discharge. The right thing to do is to go to a standard orthodox health facility for treatment that will include laboratory tests.

Action Health Incorporated has one of such facilities. It is a youth friendly clinic where you will be attended to privately and confidentially.

Q

What are the ways of preventing unwanted pregnancy?

A

Unwanted pregnancy can be prevented through the following ways:-

Abstinence: This means staying away from sexual intercourse.

Barrier methods: Proper use of male and female condoms, diaphragm, cervical cap/sponge, and intra-uterine contraceptive devices.

The use of hormonal preparations: oral contraceptive pills, emergency pills, and injectables.

Spermicides: Vaginal foaming tablets, vaginal foams

Natural family planning methods: Rhythm method and Basal Temperature method. The above methods are orthodox methods; if one therefore wants to use any of them, one has to contact a registered family planning professional to assess which method best suits an individual.

(cont'd on page 16)

(cont'd from page 15)

Q

I read one of your tracts and I found it very interesting, especially the one on "boys growing up". A friend of mine is disturbed about the size of his manhood and really in need of help. Someone prescribed traditional medicine for him but he wouldn't use it because he doesn't believe in such. What would you advice him to use in order to have his penis enlarged? He feels so inadequate when he sees the size of those of his age mates.

A

Thank you for the nice comment about our publication. Since you have not been able to tell us in your letter the actual size of your friend's penis, may I suggest that you invite him to our youth friendly clinic? There, he will have a one on one contact with the health provider as well as a thorough examination. What you consider a small size for his age may be okay for his physique. Once a male person has reached puberty, at full erection the penis, either small or large will have the same size. Please assure him that the size of the penis does not have anything to do with his ability to father a child if that is his fear.

Q

I am a 16-year-old boy and I wish to be a member of AHI; how do I go about this? Also, there is a drug addict who lives around my house, what can I do to help him? I believe he can be helped to change positively.

A

Thank you for your inquiries about how to become a member of AHI. I am also impressed about your concern for a neighbour whom you believe could be helped.

AHI Is not a membership organisation, but one that is dedicated to the growth and development of young people; the organization uses different avenues to achieve this.

The head office is situated at 17 Lawal Street, Off Oweh Street, Jibowu. It also houses the youth centre, which is open to all young people irrespective of sex, religion, social status, nationality, or educational qualifications. You can be part of our daily activities either at the Youth Friendly Clinic, the I. E. (Information, Education, Communication Unit, or the library. You don't need to pay for registration to enjoy the facilities at the centre.

At the IEC unit, you will join other young people in a friendly and relaxed environment, to share ideas on growth and development issues or general issues.

At the clinic, you will have the opportunity to talk about your health concerns in a friendly and confidential manner. Here also, you can discuss any issue with the health providers on a one on one basis. A fully equipped laboratory with qualified staff is also available if tests are needed.

Apart from coming to the youth centre, you can maintain contact with the centre and other young people by subscribing to our quarterly magazine called 'Growing Up Newsletter'. Just send your postage stamps with your address and you receive a copy whenever it is published.

Once you are fully part of the activities at AHI, you will find that you are on the way to helping your neighbour, with the help of adult staff members, who have been trained to provide professional help in such matters. The first step however, is to encourage him to also come to the centre. Seeing other young people being positively engaged might encourage him to drop his self-destructive habit.

You are welcome any time during these working hours.

Monday- Friday 8.00 a.m -5.00p.m.

Saturday 9.00 a.m -1.00p.m.

Q

How can one differentiate between vaginal discharge and vaginal disease?

A

Vaginal discharge is the fluid -like secretion that one finds in the vagina. Its function is to keep it moist. The colour of a normal vaginal secretion/discharge can be whitish (pale white), slippery or colourless as in egg white. The colour depends however on the day of the menstrual cycle. The quantity is moderate and in a normal situation, the woman should not feel that there is something coming out of the vagina apart from the feeling of slight moisture. Any deviation from the above description of colour and quantity may indicate vaginal irritation, infection or disease; hence abnormal vaginal discharge is one of the signs and symptoms of vaginal diseases.

A woman always experiences vaginal discharge whether there is a vaginal disease or not. Once there appears to be an abnormal discharge, it is advised that the woman should see a health provider who would recommend some laboratory tests, to determine what is happening in her body and to prescribe appropriate treatment.

Action Health Incorporated has a youth clinic where the services rendered include among others, treatment of reproductive tract infection, sexually transmitted diseases and a standard laboratory.

You can reach the Health Provider on 01 7743745 or visit the clinic at 17 Lawal Street, off Oweh Street, Jibowu, Lagos.

Career Guide

DO YOU WANT TO BE A LIBRARIAN?

The principal work of Librarians (also known as library technicians in some countries) is to ensure the ready availability and effective use of information, in all its forms. Librarians need to combine an interest in books and related information material, with an active interest in people and their information needs, whatever these may be: work, leisure, or learning. Librarians require a broad-based education and an enquiring mind.

A library establishment may employ many Librarians who are helped in their work by Library Assistants, or Library Technicians. Assistants are responsible for most of the routine work carried out in the library. They help professional staff in the purchase, storage, and lending of library materials, for example, and they may have frequent contact with the people using the library's facilities. Libraries and information centres are to be found in all types of public- and private- sector organisations.

THE JOB

Librarians do not work only with books, but are also responsible for other forms of information periodicals, audiovisual material, computer software, newspaper cuttings, photographs and slides. This type of work is not suitable for those who want to work just with information, since Librarians also have to be able to get on with many different types of people, understand their information requirements, and be able to communicate effectively with them.

Part of the work that Librarians carry out involves analyzing and anticipating the information needs of their clients, and then choosing and buying materials accordingly. These materials are then organized logically so that people can easily find them. Facilities at libraries are also promoted through lectures, exhibitions, and displays so that people know about them.

Other duties of Librarians depend on the type of establishment, but many include the evaluation of materials, answering client's queries, liaising with suppliers and supervising staff. Computers are increasingly used to catalogue, store and retrieve information just as online databases are becoming more prevalent.

Libraries are generally pleasant and comfortable places to work. Librarians usually work normal office hours,

although in public and academic libraries some evening and weekend work may be necessary, these are usually on a rotational basis.

Some Librarians carry out research as part of their job, but in fact, all Librarians need to read widely in order to keep themselves well informed on matters of general knowledge, as well as on matters relating directly to their work.

In all library settings, Librarians will most likely be working closely with other people, so teamwork is an extremely important aspect of the profession, while communication skills are also very vital.

TRAINING

To qualify and work as a Librarian requires a considerable amount of professional training. In the UK, for example, Chartered Librarians are expected to have a degree in Library/Information Studies (three to four years) or a degree in any subject, plus a one- year, full-time or two- year, part-time postgraduate qualification. They are also expected to undergo a one-year post-course training. In most cases, prior experience as a Library Assistant places one at an advantage. In the US, Librarians are expected to hold a master's degree in library science, while proficiency in one or more foreign languages is also desirable. Librarians in a specialist library need a strong background in their chosen area of interest (usually a degree), as well as training in a professional library science. Degree programmes are available in most of the universities in Nigeria, with the prospects very bright for an aspiring Librarian.

A wide-range general knowledge is needed for working in newspaper and broadcasting libraries. Prison and



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Hospital Librarians need good inter personal skills, which are considered as important as professional qualifications. Librarians working in the business community need information management skills, since much of the work involves detailed database and online searching, as well as other computer based activities.

Librarians in college and university libraries and such specialised libraries as music library, usually have a first degree in an academic subject and a postgraduate degree in Librarianship. Expertise in languages and computer skills will also come in handy in these areas of work.

Library Assistants are usually trained on the job, under the supervision of Senior Library Assistants or Professional Librarians. It is possible to take formal assistant qualifications on a part-time study basis.

PROSPECTS

There are many opportunities for both Librarians and Library Assistants in both public and private sector libraries.

Public libraries are administered by the local government and offer Professional Librarians the opportunity to specialise in particular areas of interest. However, due to the contraction of public sector employment, opportunities for professional work in public libraries are diminishing. Among specialist Librarians are the following:

- Music Librarians: select and promote recorded and printed music that may be borrowed by the public.
- Reference Librarians: help the public, researchers, and professional people (media practitioners for example), to access reference material from the appropriate information sources.
- Community Librarians: deal with special needs, such as those of the elderly, ethnic groups, and the disabled.
- Lending Librarians: organize the arrangement and borrowing of books and other resources, including talking books, which are available on cassettes, CD-ROM, and video.

In smaller branch libraries, a Librarian may be in charge of all aspects of the library service. Some Librarians also work in the central administrative offices of a library system, cataloging and supervising the ordering of stock.

Although there are opportunities to progress within these various areas of work, there is an increasing tendency for Senior Managers of library services to be drawn from other areas of local government management, such as leisure and education. These posts demand a high level of skill in financial, organizational, and personal management.

Professional opportunities also exist in schools, college, and university libraries, hospital and prison libraries, government departments, newspaper and broadcasting libraries, national libraries, company libraries, orchestras and music publishers, professional bodies, research institutes, and trade unions. Employment opportunities are increasing for librarians working in legal firms and business companies. In business libraries, librarians often work closely with information scientists.

Although opportunities are decreasing in public-sector libraries, due to public spending cuts, they are increasing in the private sector, due to the information explosion that is taking place. Librarians with technical or scientific backgrounds, computer information skills, and one or two foreign languages should do well.

Promotion for Librarians tends to be via specialisation or by moving to bigger libraries, where they may rise to the position of Chief Librarian. Specialisations include reference, children, school, special collections, and special libraries. Some Librarians eventually work as independent, freelance consultants, once they have gained sufficient experience and expertise in their chosen field.

FOR FURTHER ENQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT:

Librarians' Registration Council of Nigeria
C/o National Library of Nigeria Headquarters
Sanusi Dantata Building,
Central Business District
P.M.B 1, Garki
Abuja, Nigeria.

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Skills and Personal Qualities

- Analytical Ability
- Attention To Details
- Communication Skills
- Computer Skills
- Critical Thinking
- Decision-making Ability
- Flexibility And Adaptability
- Good With People
- Initiative
- Leadership Qualities
- Manual Dexterity
- Numeracy
- Planning Ability
- Problem-solving Ability
- Teamwork
- Technical/scientific Ability

(cont'd from page 13)

PERSONAL HYGIENE FOR ADOLESCENT HEALTH

before and after handling a tampon or pad.

- ☞ **CYSTITIS** This is an infection of the bladder. It is a common condition for sexually active young girls. Urinating after sexual intercourse can help to flush out any bacteria that may be in the urethra and bladder.
- ☞ **THRUSH** Some soaps and detergents can irritate the skin of the vagina, and make thrush infections more likely. Some people find that they often get thrush when they use antibiotics. Use mild soap and un-perfumed toilet paper. Avoid tight, synthetic underwear. Try cotton underwear, and change regularly. There is medical treatment for thrush, so talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

PERSONAL HYGIENE FOR YOUNG BOYS

A build up of secretions can form under the foreskin of uncircumcised boys. If you are uncircumcised, gently pull back the foreskin when you have a shower and clean with water. You can use soap if you like, but make sure you rinse it off well.

BAD BREATH

- ☞ Good dental hygiene includes regular brushing and flossing. Diseases of the teeth, gums and mouth, such as infections, can cause bad breath. Most people have bad breath first thing in the morning because saliva is not made while you were asleep. Some foods that cause bad breath include garlic and onion. Mouth washes, mouth sprays and flavored chewing gum can make your breath smell better for a while, but if you have a health problem in your mouth, you need to see your dentist.

BODY HAIR

- ☞ Body hair in new places is something you can count on again it's hormones in action. You may want to start shaving some places where body hair grows, but whether you do so is up to you. Some guys who grow facial hair like to let it develop into a mustache and beard. Some girls may decide to leave the hair on their legs and under their arms as is. It's all up to you and what you feel comfortable with.
- ☞ If you do decide to shave, whether you're a guy or a girl, you have a few options open to you. You

may use a traditional razor with a shaving cream or gel, or you may use an electric razor. If you use a regular razor, make sure the blade is new and sharp to prevent cuts and nicks. Shaving cream and gel are often a better bet than soap because they make it easier to pull the razor against your skin. Some of the newer razors contain shaving gel right in the blade area, making even beginners feel comfortable shaving.

TRAVELLING HYGIENE

When traveling, take special care if you're not sure whether the water is safe or not. Here are some suggestions to help you:

- ☞ Drink only bottled water.
- ☞ Don't use tap water to clean your teeth.
- ☞ When you wash your hands, make sure they are totally dry before you touch any food.
- ☞ Don't wash fruits or vegetables in unsafe water.
- ☞ If you have no other source make sure the water is boiled before you drink it.
- ☞ Make sure all dishes; cups and other utensils are totally dry after they are washed.

WHERE TO GET HELP

- ☞ Your doctor
- ☞ Dentist.
- ☞ Youth serving clinics.

Reference: www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au



PROFILE OF A ROLE MODEL

Mr. Mohammad Umar Ndagi

Holder of the Bachelor of Science (BSL) degree from the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria in 1992; Masters in Library Studies (MLS) from the University of Ibadan in 1999, this amiable, determined and pragmatic young man will hold you spell-bound as he narrates his gallery of despair, his wriggle through vicissitudes of life and his determination to succeed in life.

Ndagi Mohammad was born in February 1960. He hails from Niger State, Nigeria. He lost his father at a very tender age and, being the first son in the family of five (all males), he had his hands full as the responsibility of taking care of his younger brothers rested on his slim shoulders. With the low socio-economic status of his family coupled with his zeal to achieve his educational goals, he had no other option than to take to hawking of agricultural products on the streets of Minna. This, coupled with the stipends he could get from sympathizers and family friends was used for the upkeep of the family and in paying for his school fees. He later obtained his Teachers' Grade II certificate in 1980 from Government Teachers' College, Dekina and in 1984, obtained his National certificate in education (NCE) from Niger State College Of Education, Minna.

According to him, school years were his most difficult as he had to struggle to buy books, pay his schools fees and still help his younger brothers who were looking up to him".

He confessed that he had always admired Mallam Alhassan Bida, a Librarian and his Lecturer at A.B.U. Zaria because of his intelligence, experience and his exemplary knack for

organizing and disseminating information.

He said his driving force had been his mother who kept on praying for him and encouraging him to work hard. He therefore challenged young people who want to take up Librarianship as a career to be disciplined, well read, intelligent, focused and should possess human relations as the job entails dealing with readers.

He called on more young people to study Library Science, as the prospects of getting employment opportunities are bright. They can be employed in Banks, Educational Institutes, Oil Companies, National and State Libraries, Private Libraries as Information Scientists /Documentation officers and as Consultants i.e., giving advice and setting up libraries.

'Ndagi', as he is popularly called likes reading, playing volleyball, badminton and writing.

Some of his articles published in various journals are: -

▣ "Career Guidance in Librarianship"

▣ "Preservation and Conservation of Library Materials: The National Library situation".

▣ "Effective Reference Service Delivery": A Case Study of the National Library of Nigeria, etc.

Mr. Mohammad had been a teacher at Government Secondary School, Badeggi, Niger State (1986-1989) and Government Girls' Secondary School, Bida, Niger State (cont'd from page 21)

He therefore challenged young people who want to take up Librarianship as a career to be disciplined, well read, intelligent, focused and should possess human relations as the job

(cont'd from page 14)

"Oh! How I Pity My Guys "

infected me. According to his sister, he passed away after being bed-ridden for sometime, and since I have never had any sexual relationship with anybody else apart from him, I knew for sure that he was the source of my predicament. I also had no blood transfusion and did not use a syringe. The realization that I have been used, abused, dumped and now waiting for a sure death got me very angry. With a resolve to pay men back in their own coin, I devised a strategy by which I would infect as many men as possible within a year. I had to get my own back from this group of human specie, since the man that I thought was in love with me, actually did not care about me or my life. I meticulously carried out my plans to the letter by consenting to all sexual overtures from the boys in school, the "sugar daddies" who were not satisfied with their wives at home, as well as the guys on the streets who thought they were too smart for the girls. Any man would do...I was on a mission.

So, guys, anyone of you out there who had crossed my path should count himself unlucky and should quickly place an order for Anti-Retro Viral Drug (ARV) supply before it is too late! . I have decided to spread the virus indiscriminately for the injustice done to me. I also plan to distribute the virus in the university Chike attended, when I eventually gain admission into that same university later this year. I have no apologies for this, because I got it from one of the students. Incidentally, I have a well-documented list of all the guys who crossed my path and each time I look at the list I derive a sort of satisfaction that I've gotten many people infected. You won't believe those who made the list: male teachers who were not actually practicing the good moral values they taught us but decided to sexually harass girls young enough to be their daughters especially...those shameless teachers who demanded sexual gratification before girls could pass their subjects! Apart from the teachers, I also have on my list, many guys who were either my mates or my seniors who, instead of concentrating on their books, concentrated more on my curves and pestered me for sex. Such a pity! So far I have 69 people on my list 60 students and nine teachers. I owe nobody no apologies and you can be sure I'm still on a spreading spree in my school, until

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PROFILE OF A ROLE MODEL

(1992-1994) He is presently the Principal Librarian in the National Library of Nigeria, Lagos.

He is married to Mrs. Rukayat Mohammad and they are blessed with five children.

September, after which I'll move on to that university to continue on a higher scale. But then...

Despite my anger and my determination to deal with the male specie by spreading the virus, I feel guilty about the damage I have done so far. Infecting more people would not cure me, but would only create more problems for the suffering masses as a whole. The best thing to do is to manage the situation responsibly from now on and find a way of living with the infection in a positive and productive way. Although I am bitter about what happened to me, I feel very sorry for those I have already infected. They were not responsible for what happened to me, so why should I hurt them this way? O, how I wished I had never hurt them. I'm very sorry for my action and I hope that if and when they do find out, they'd find it in their hearts to forgive me. I have been able to manage the disease by eating well and not indulging in any dangerous lifestyle. I look healthy and strong and I hope that I'd live long enough to impact positively on my community, hoping it would serve as a kind of compensation for my dastardly act.

PERSONAL SKILLS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

TIPS FOR FACING THE CHALLENGES OF ADOLESCENCE

Adolescence is a period when you are saddled with decisions about career, lifestyle, drugs, alcohol, friends and family. It is also a time when one is under a lot of pressure to live up to social expectations. Planning your life can therefore be especially difficult if you are ill equipped to deal with the different challenging situations you are confronted with during this period. In order to increase your chances of a relatively crisis-free adolescence and emerge as a responsible adult, it is very important that you acquire the skills for decision-making, assertiveness and goal setting. You also need to be able to take charge of your life. The following are tips that can help you:

■ KNOW AND CLARIFY YOUR VALUES

Your values are what you believe in, what you think is right or wrong, and what is most important to you. Decisions that you make are usually based on your values, which you draw from a variety of sources, such as parents, family, friends, and religion. However, do not 'borrow' other people's values - let your values be yours.

■ DRAW UP A PLAN FOR YOUR LIFE

Many successful people set targets for themselves and are goal-orientated. Have a plan of what you want and how to go about getting it. Never wait till you get to the bridge before looking for ways to cross it. Decide ahead what you want to achieve by the time you are 20, 35, 50 and above that.

■ DEVELOP YOURSELF

Your goals will remain dreams unless you develop yourself. Read books on diverse topics. Gather facts about successful people and how they dealt with the difficult situations they faced. In short, broaden your horizon.

■ HAVE A ROLE MODEL

A role model is someone you admire and respect - someone you look up to and want to be like. Choose a role model and deal with problems the way your role model would if he/she were faced with your problem. However, it is not advisable that you choose a TV star as your role model, because real-life is not usually as depicted in movies.

■ MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS

Decisions about career, sex, drugs and alcohol are usually some of the toughest decisions you will have to make as an adolescent. Before you make decisions, get facts about

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each choice, think properly about them, i.e., weigh the pros and cons, and discuss available options with your parents, a trusted friend or an adult.

■ BE ASSERTIVE

Being assertive means expressing your views about an issue without hurting the other person's feelings. Behaviours that enhance assertiveness include being honest, speaking up for yourself, communicating your feelings as they come up, instead of waiting; and being direct, i.e., using the "I" word. Communicate your feelings and don't be cajoled into doing things contrary to your values. However, don't be aggressive: aggressive behaviour shows a lack of concern for the other person's feelings.

■ LEARN A SKILL

Learning a skill can make you feel good about yourself and build your self-esteem. The feeling that you have a skill is a positive one. The various skills that you can learn include: computer knowledge, teaching, writing, drawing, acting, etc. These skills could in turn earn you some money and give you some measure of independence. However, you must be ready to meet and overcome disappointments. You must be prepared to work as long as the situation demands.

■ TAKE ADVANTAGE OF HOLIDAY PERIODS

Holiday periods are not meant for only fun and games. You could make creative use of your free time. Holiday periods can be spent learning pottery, bookkeeping, car maintenance, interior decoration, and lots more. You could also acquire knowledge about issues that range

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