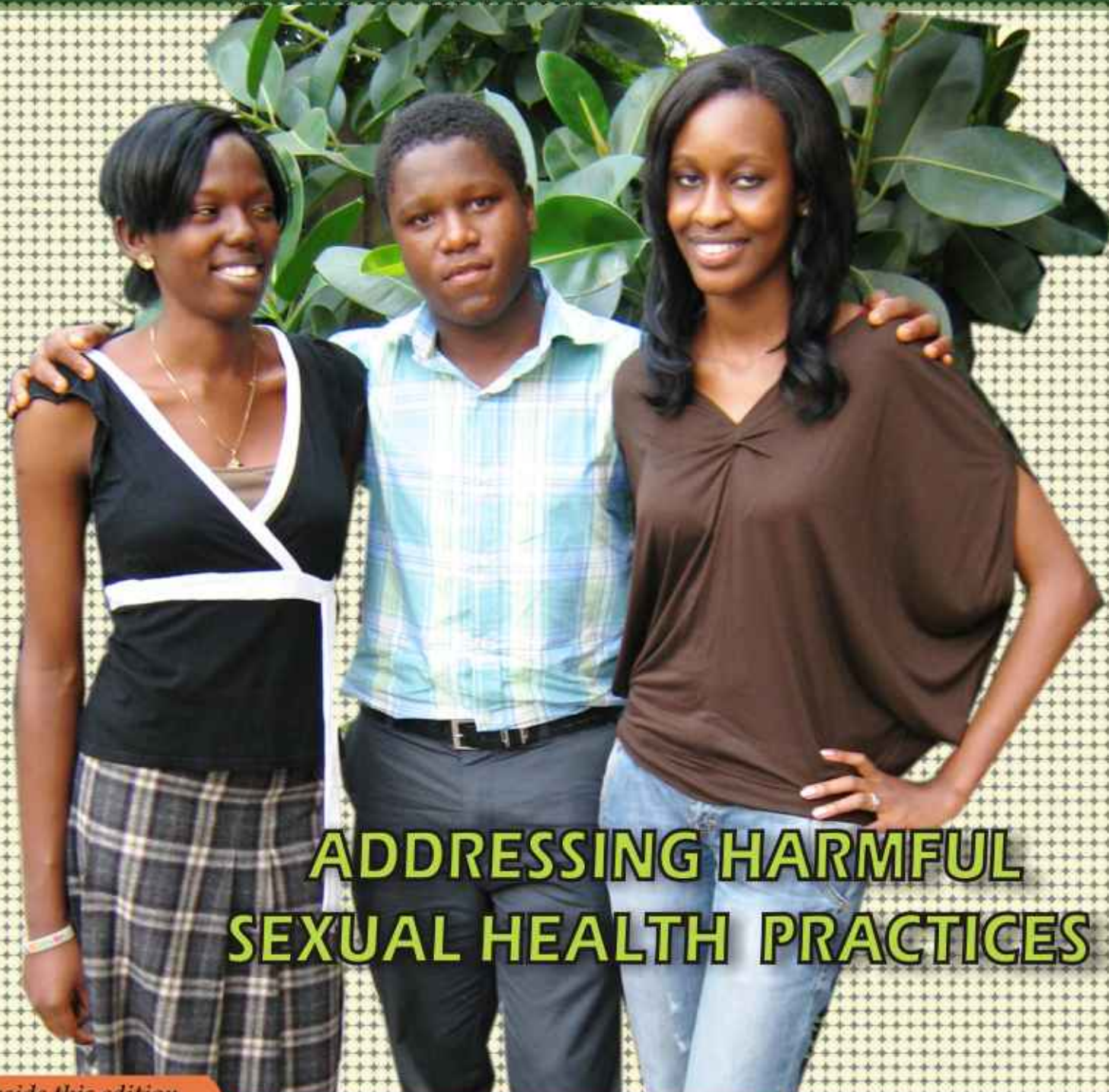


Growing Up

A NEWSLETTER FOR YOUNG PEOPLE



ADDRESSING HARMFUL SEXUAL HEALTH PRACTICES

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Growing Up

Growing Up is published quarterly in Lagos 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, health and youth development programmes.

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This edition of growing up is produced with support from:

The Mac Arthur Foundation,
Population Programme,
Chicago, Illinois

Printed by:
FINE PRINT LIMITED
Tel: 01-4979275

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ENSURING OUR RIGHTS: ADDRESSING HARMFUL SEXUAL HEALTH PRACTICES

By Mervis Emelife

Ngozi is a nineteen year old girl who lives with her parents. When she was barely fifteen, her parents felt that she had attained the age of maturity considering the pubertal changes, her body was undergoing. They then took her to their village and consulted the local mid-wife there, who arranged for Ngozi to be circumcised in the company of twelve other teenage girls during the rites of passage festival. Luckily, Ngozi endured and survived the agony of having part of her clitoris cut and her vagina stitched. Her parents felt it was the right thing to do in order to prevent Ngozi from being promiscuous but alas, Ngozi got pregnant after being gang raped, three years after the mutilation.

Zainab is an orphan who is barely fourteen. While her mates are still in school and enjoying every bit of their teen age, she is lying sick on a hospital bed. Her uncle married her off to an older man, who already had three wives and ten children. Few months into the marriage, Zainab got pregnant and, ended up in a hospital as a result of complications from the pregnancy. The doctors said she was suffering from Vesico Vagina Fistula (VVF).

These scenarios highlight the urgent need to address these harmful sexual health practices in our communities as in most cases; young girls are at the receiving end.

What are Sexual Health Practices?

Sexual health practices refer to the practices and up-held beliefs that have to do with one's sexual and reproductive health. Due to the fact that they are practices, they are basically traditional but vary from culture to culture. In every culture, practices exist which celebrate life transitions, perpetuate community cohesions or transmit traditional values to subsequent generations. Most of these traditions reflect norms of care and behaviour based on age, life stage, gender and social class. However, while many traditional practices promote unity and social cohesion, some others erode the physical and psychological wellbeing of individuals especially women and girls.

Types of harmful sexual health practices

Harmful sexual health practices exist in various forms but all have their roots from the age long unequal social and economic relationships between the male and the female. Some of these harmful sexual health practices are Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), wife inheritance, child labour/trafficking, male child preference, nutritional taboos, early/ forced marriage, HIV-related stigma, widowhood rites, and unhygienic delivery practices. However, we shall be looking into the harmful practices that are related to the health of young people.

Female Genital Mutilation: FGM also known as female circumcision or female genital cutting is widely practiced in some African countries as well as some Asian and Arabic countries. It is also practiced in immigrant communities in Australia, Europe and the United States. FGM is the excision of part or all of the female genitalia for non-medical reasons. FGM ranges from the removal of the clitoral hood to infibulation which involves removal of the clitoris as well as part or all of the labia minora. The labia majora are then sealed, leaving only a small opening to allow for flow of urine and menstrual blood.

Early/child marriage: In many cultures, the practice of marrying daughters off at a young age is common. Malnourished and underdeveloped female children are united to much older men in marriages where they have little motivation or ability to plan their families. The practice of early marriage is predominant in sub-Saharan Africa and south Asia.

Gender inequality/male child preference: In many societies, preference for sons is a norm. It usually involves female children being relegated to the background as male offsprings are considered as the 'real' children. This preference manifests itself in the neglect, deprivation and discriminatory treatment of daughters to the detriment of their physical, mental and reproductive health. This practice adversely affects females through unequal allocation of food, education and healthcare, a disparity which is usually reinforced throughout life.

Child labour/trafficking: In some communities, it is now the norm for young boys and girls to drop out of school and engage in trading or worse, be sold out as domestic aids and commodities for sexual exploitation. In sub-Saharan Africa, where poverty is prevalent, young children below the age of consent are used as tools for generation of income with little or no regard to their education, health and security.

HIV-related stigma: Many individuals are misinformed about the Human Immunodeficiency Virus, thus fuelling stigma and discrimination. This attendant stigma and discrimination prevent young people from asking questions that would enable them to make informed choices. The result is that, they end up taking decisions that negatively affect their health.

Nutritional taboos: In some cultures, taboos are placed on food that are otherwise healthy for the growth and development of young people. As a result of these taboos, they are deprived of essential nutrients and thus, suffer from iron and protein deficiencies. These deficiencies have long term effects that affect the total well-being of the individual, including creating complications in the reproductive health of such persons.

Myths that influence these practices

- In some societies, Female Genital Mutilation is a rite of passage into womanhood.
- FGM is believed to curb female sexual desires, prevent promiscuity and promote fertility.
- Sons are regarded as potential money earners, thus are more likely to provide financial support in the future.
- Daughters are considered as economic liabilities
Sons are the ones to sustain a lineage
- If a female marries early, their fertility is enhanced
- If a female marries early, she is prevented from being promiscuous
- Certain food such as gizzard and chicken egg would encourage a child to steal
- Eating head of fowl/fish would make a child behave like a fowl/fish.

As usual with most myths, the above are based on age-long beliefs which do not have any scientific basis, thus it could be said that there is no truth in any of the myths listed above

Consequences of these practices on young people

While the reasons for sexual health practices vary, their negative effects and outcome are clear and well documented.

- FGM could lead to sickness or death resulting from infection, blood poisoning, tetanus or haemorrhage. The agony of FGM causes long-lasting psychological damage. Aside these, FGM gives rise to prolonged labour and complications in delivery.
- Male child preference and gender inequality cause a rise in the level of illiteracy in females and these lead to high level of dependence of females thus, females are left in lifelong positions of economic and social disadvantage.
- Early marriage results in early child bearing/teenage pregnancy which causes a rise in maternal mortality as well as lead to Vesico Vaginal Fistula, Recto Vaginal Fistula, damage of womb, tubal pregnancy etc.
- Nutritional taboos lead to deficiency of important nutrients and minerals
- HIV-related stigma prevents people from gathering enough information in order to make the right choices and also prevents young people from interacting with their peers and, isolation could lead to depression and consequently, suicide.

What should be done to stop these harmful sexual health practices?

Cultures are powerful and, since most of these harmful sexual practices stem from traditions, careful efforts are required to alter or eliminate these practices. Western pressure for change is sometimes too heavy, insensitive and perceived as culturally imperialistic, thus efforts to change harmful practices are most effective when they originate from where they are practiced. The following are some suggestions that would help eradicate harmful sexual health

practices:

- The government should out-law all forms of Female Genital Mutilation.
- Government should implement programmes geared towards mobilizing and enlightening young people especially females on their sexual health rights.
- Education of the girl-child should be encouraged.
- Elimination of all forms of discrimination against the girl-child.
- Increase public awareness of the value of the girl-child.
- Child marriage and betrothal should be prohibited and all marriages must be registered in an official registry.
- Government should promote laws and policies that create a safe and secure environment as well as protect the rights of People Living With HIV/AIDS.
- Child traffickers and parents who use their children to source for money should be brought to book.
- Enlightenment on the dangers of nutritional taboos.

Conclusion

Harmful sexual health practices can sometimes seem impossible to change, thus efforts to eliminate them would require the cooperation and understanding of

policy makers, community leaders and people who have experienced these practices and suffered certain consequences. Laws condemning harmful practices must be enforced and community enlightenment embarked upon to increase public awareness of the negative consequences of these practices. These steps would help create a more conducive atmosphere for the growth and development of young people.

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- Advocates for Youth: Female Genital Cutting (A joint WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA statement)
- WHO-Fact Sheet on Female Genital Mutilation June 24, 2000
- The Nigerian Girl-Child Today (Monograph on harmful and beneficial practices in Nigeria).





POEMS



WHAT IGNORANCE

Indeed, I had thought it was a dream
Till once again, I heard the shrilling scream
I jumped out of bed, my heart in deep fear
Alas, that cry was
from a place very
near

My sister lay in a room in my home
As my mother saw me and bid me 'come'

'My daughter', she said 'This is tradition'
Your sister is undergoing what we call circumcision'
All over her, was filled with deep red blood
Indeed, it seemed the room was flooded
I couldn't believe Mama would subject sister to such
pain
Then I began to wonder, if indeed there was any gain

The next day at school, I told it to my tutor
And together, we went to see a counselor
She said my sister's rights were being infringed upon
She herself was circumcised as a child
Female circumcision is an act of ignorance
And should no longer be given a chance

The health of adolescents is put on the line
Perpetrators should be sanctioned with a fine
Just imagine the infections young people contract
Through harmful practices based on tradition
Common sense should take precedent over myths
Arise, and put a stop to these inhuman treatments.

Mervis Emelife (17 years old)

'NO' TO HARMFUL SEXUAL HEALTH PRACTICES

The era of revival is here, O African youth!
The good news brought out of the storm
Life has been diverged in two roads
The falcon cannot hear the falconer
Anarchy threatens the world.

Why indulge in child labour, trafficking
Sexual abuse and FGM
Why give preference to male children
And relegate girls to the background?
Why, why, why- no reason at all

African youth caught in sands of culture
Arise! The time of revival is here
Harmful sexual health practices must stop
Young girls need to be appreciated;
Education is their priority

The sun brings light
To deliver African youth from the shackles of
ignorance
With prophetic eye, I peer into the future
A generation, free from sexual abuse
This is the message of hope.

Iyanoye Glory Foluke, SS3

Eva Adelaja Girls Senior Sec. School, Bariga, Lagos

SPEAKING OUT

I was in dreamland licking ice-cream
Only to hear my cousin let out a scream
Her voice was laced with grief as she wriggled in pain
One would have thought a female tiger was being slain

I tried to lend my dear cousin a helping hand
But aunty sent me away, my eyes filled with sand
Something, told me I was going to be lonely
But I never knew, she would give up easily

I asked questions in a voice so low
Yet, all I got was shouts-down in a row
Was a human life that worthless?
I always asked in my loneliness

Somehow, I found out about circumcision
It has to be done for the sake of tradition
So, is this how lives would waste?
Just so that our tradition may have taste

Considering that I knew all about my cousin's pain
I promised I wasn't going to be silent again
This practice must be put to a stop
Our rights must come out on top

FGM only brings our females, pain
What's the use when there is no gain?
Let's help the leaders of tomorrow
And wipe away the tears of sorrow

Grace C. Marcel (14 years old)

THE CHILD-BRIDE

Nervous, shaking and frightened she stood
Trying to control her emotions as only a twelve year old
could

At her tender age being presented as a wife to a man
Old enough to be her father, she couldn't understand
Looking at the aging face of the man to be her husband
Held down and bound by the chains of ancient customs

One year later and her belly begins to bulge
Under aged sex she has been forced to indulge
No one thinking twice about the consequences to her health
Of having to bear children, while still a child herself
The day of delivery comes and she nearly dies from pain
The child is still-born and buried without a name

Torn, broken and damaged both inside and out
Writhing in pain with no one to attend to her shouts
Her body starts to smell from the infection in her genitals
Rendered barren because of the damage to the physical
At the age of thirteen her body is a waste
Unable to enjoy life because she was married in haste

Despised by her husband, abandoned by her friends
Left alone with no one on whom she can depend
At a young age, her life is over before it began
Buried in an early grave, unmarked beneath the sand
So read this story and weep and I hope you will derive,
A lesson from the story of an unfortunate child-bride.

Kerri Gitari (16 years old)

Cartoon

YOU WANT TO CIRCUMCISE YOUR DAUGHTER? COME ON! FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION IS WICKED.



WELL, I BELIEVE IN OUR CULTURE.

THAT GIRL MIGHT END UP WITH VVF AND OTHER HEALTH PROBLEMS.



WELL EM... I EM... STILL THINK WE SHOULD PUT OUR TRADITION FIRST IN ALL THINGS.

INSTEAD WE SHOULD PUT OUR CHILDREN'S LIVES FIRST BEFORE TRADITION AND PUT OUR HARMFUL SEXUAL HEALTH PRACTICES WHERE THEY BELONG.



WHERE?

THE DUSTBIN!





PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES' TRAINING

In line with the policy of providing training for Service Providers and Programme Implementers on Adolescent Youth Friendly Health Services (AYFHS), Action Health Incorporated (AHI) in organized a - two week training for the Public Health Nurses from October 20-30, 2008.

The programme aimed at building the capacity of Public Health nurses on the concepts of AYFHS; acquire more knowledge on some of the challenges young people face and how they affect their sexuality as well as increase their comfort level when discussing sexuality issues.

Eighteen (18) Public Health Nurses participated in the training which incorporated various training techniques. Interactive and participatory techniques such as role play, group counselling, demonstration, experience sharing, case scenarios and case study were used during sessions to facilitate effective learning.

Training sessions covered topics such as *Introduction to Human Sexuality; Overview of Adolescent Sexual Health in Nigeria; Sexuality*



A cross section of Public Health Nurses at the training

across Life Span/Sources of Sexual Learning; Sexual Attitudes and Values Clarification; STIs and HIV/AIDS; Communicating About Sexuality; Teenage Pregnancy/Pregnancy Options Counselling; Contraception; Breast and Testicular Self Examination; Sexual Orientation and Implication for Service Delivery; Assessing AYFHS; Data Collection Methods; Sexual Abuse and Finding Help.

COMMISSIONING OF THE MARRIED ADOLESCENT FRIENDLY SCHOOLS (MAFSS) AND CLINICS

Married adolescents' education was given a boost with the commissioning of two Married Adolescents' Friendly Schools (MAFSS) and clinics in Yola on October 9, 2008. The ceremony had in attendance the Senior Country Advisor for Packard Foundation, Dr. Mairo Mandara; Adamawa State First Lady, Dr. Nana Asmau Nyako, who was represented by the Chief Medical Director, Federal Medical Centre Yola; AHI Director, Dr. Uwem Esiet, Acting Chief Medical Director, Yola Specialist Hospital; representatives from the State Ministries of Education, Health, Women Affairs and Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB); religious leaders; community leaders, Women Innovators; students of

Government Technical College, Yola; staff of implementing partner organizations, as well as AHI Programme Officer.

Highlights of the event were the tape-cutting by Dr. Mairo Mandara, presentation of certificates to healthcare providers who had just been trained in AYFHS; and a drama presentation by young people, titled "**Health Consequences of Early Marriage**".

Recognizing the need for Married adolescents to be mentally, socially, physically and morally developed, Action Health Incorporated identified two existing schools in each of Adamawa and Borno States for the intervention in support of married adolescents' education. This was sequel to series of advocacy visits by Women Innovators and implementing partners to the Ministries of Education, Health and Women Affairs in Packard Project target states. These schools will serve as Married Adolescents'-Friendly Schools (MAFSS), into which married adolescents can be enrolled to enable them complete secondary education. Designated sections of the schools were fully equipped by Action Health Incorporated (AHI) as clinics and crèches. This is to ensure the availability of a conducive learning environment for the married adolescents.



Dr. Mairo Mandara declaring the Clinic and Crèche open while the representatives of the Ministry, AHI and others look on

Lagos University Teaching Hospital Officials Visit AHI

AHI hosted a team from the Department of Community Health, Lagos University Teaching Hospital on 12th November 2008. The 8-man team comprised 4 lecturers and 1 Senior Registrar from the Department of Community Health, LUTH along with 3 other senior lectures from the Department of Community Health, University of Ibadan, University of Benin Teaching Hospital and Nnamdi Azikiwe University Teaching Hospital respectively.

The visit aimed at familiarizing the accreditation team from the National Postgraduate Medical Board of Nigeria with organizations collaborating with the department of community health, LUTH on the post-graduate residency programme.

The team was received by Dr Esiet, Director and Co-founder of AHI at the AHI board room. Speaking during the visit, Dr Onajole, HOD of Community Health, LUTH expressed his gratitude to AHI for the meaningful quota that the organization is contributing to the success of the department. He then introduced members of the accreditation team comprising Dr Isah, University of Benin Teaching Hospital; Prof Ilika, Hon. Commissioner for Health Anambra, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Teaching Hospital; and Dr Osungbade, College of Medicine, University of Ibadan.

While welcoming the team, Dr. Esiet provided the team with an overview of AHI's work, with regards to the two core areas of competencies; access to sexuality education, where AHI was the lead advocate in ensuring approval of the national sexuality education curriculum (now called Family Life and HIV Education) and was involved in the capacity building of over 1500 teachers in Lagos State and the provision of youth friendly health services, one of the major areas where the organization is partnering with the Department of Community Health, LUTH. He added that the department of community health is also partnering with AHI on ARSRC, a project of AHI which is aimed at promoting informed public dialogue and understanding on human sexuality in Africa through its four focal countries. Dr Esiet commended the department of community health for the provision of high level medical personnel on a monthly basis to the organization.

The team later embarked on a tour of facilities at the centre. It provided the team a better understanding of AHI's work as they interacted and asked questions in all the units. They were later taken around 'The AHI Residence', an 18-room bed and breakfast facility located in the heart of Lagos Mainland.

Dr Onajole expressed his gratitude to the Management and staffs of AHI for accommodating the team and for taking out time to attend to the team.



Dr. Uwem Esiet, Director, AHI briefing the team from LUTH



AHI Youth Interns with the visitors.

World AIDS Day 2008

AHI joined the rest of the world to mark the World AIDS Day on December 1, 2008. The event which took place at the AHI Youth Friendly Centre had young people from around Lagos in attendance.

The programme aimed at stimulating action and compelling all stakeholders to keep their promises about stopping the spread and impact of the virus hence the theme, "**Leadership**" which urges governments to keep the commitments they have made to fight the deadly disease.

The sub theme, "**Respect and Protect**" is inclusive and highlights the responsibility everyone has to transform attitudes to HIV and encourage actions that stop its spread. "Respect and Protect" inspires

individuals to consider the different roles they can play by showing respect when treating people living with HIV fairly, respecting their confidentiality and challenging prejudice wherever it occurs. It also encourages people to respect themselves and their partners by always practicing safe sex to protect their sexual health as well as find out the facts about HIV, spread the 'Respect and Protect' message and encourage others to do the same.

The event incorporated ice breakers, energizers, quiz competition, dance and a lecture presentation anchored by Dr. (Mrs.) Fatiregun, the AHI Youth Friendly Health provider. In her lecture, she explained who leaders are; leadership styles, which are autocratic, democratic and laissez fair; and qualities of a good leader. She also explained the meaning

of respect; and the need to protect the rights of the People Living With HIV (PLWH).

She highlighted the rights of PLWH, to include right to life, education, good health, religion, etc. and stressed the need for young people to show love and care to PLWH and People Affected by HIV/AIDS (PABAs). She laid emphasis on the roles of the government in keeping their promises concerning HIV and AIDS. Thereafter, young people used the opportunity to ask various questions which were duly answered.

The event which was also commemorated in five (5) schools in Lagos State; Wesley Girls Junior Secondary School, Sabo, Yaba; Baptist Senior High School, Obanikoro; Kosofe Senior College, Kosofe; Mainland Senior High School, Fadeyi and Ajayi Crowther Memorial Senior Grammar School 11, Bariga aimed at giving more young people the opportunity to learn about HIV/AIDS.

First observed in 1988, World AIDS Day was initiated by Health Ministers from around the world who called for a spirit of social tolerance and a greater awareness of HIV/AIDS on an international scale. According to recent UN estimates, there were

39.5 million adults living with HIV worldwide last year and nearly 5 million newly infected.



Participant at the world Aids Day



HIV-RELATED STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION ARE PERVERSIVE AT ALL LEVELS: People living with HIV should experience "the full human rights and fundamental freedoms". Government have an obligation to promote laws and policies that create a safe and secure environment as well as to protect the rights of people with HIV to make free and responsible sexual and reproductive health choices.

Special Report

The Teenage Festival of Life (TFL) 2008 Ensuring Our Rights: Addressing Harmful Sexual Health Practices.

It was a Thursday morning, the sun was up and it promised to be a bright day. Most of the students of the prestigious University of Lagos were on holidays as school was not in session, thus it was surprising to find a bevy of beautiful young people streaming into the premises. It was even more surprising to realize that most of those young people were secondary school students. Curious, you inquire what they were doing in a University environment; they say with excitement, 'Today is TFL'. They leave you behind and proceed towards the Senate building. Close to the Senate building, you discover lads and lasses clad in pink shirts and black skirts/trousers. You then decide to survey the main auditorium, then you discover a banner that screams '**Ensuring Our Rights: Addressing Harmful Sexual Health Practices**'. Someone explains to you that 'those young people dressed in pink and black with pretty smiles are ushers and registrars, today is the long awaited **'Teenage Festival of Life 2008'**'.

Since its inception in 1993, the annual Teenage Festival of Life has carved a niche for itself as a forum for young people to display their creative competence while also disseminating information on issues that concern them. TFL as it is popularly called by young people came into existence to bridge the communication gap between young people and adults as young people are given the opportunity to air their views on certain issues through creative media such as drama, poetry and music. Adults that attend the Teenage Festival of Life often attest to having witnessed the budding talents, young people possess. TFL was initiated by Action Health Incorporated, a non-governmental organization, dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of adolescents in Nigeria by increasing awareness, implementing public education and innovative health care programs.

On November 6, 2008, the mid-term break didn't prevent over 2,500 students from more than 80 schools within Lagos State from attending the Festival they look forward to yearly. Adults were not left out as school teachers, PTA health counselors, AHI trained peer educators, school principals, Government officials, donor agencies, NGO representatives and parents were present in their hundreds to witness the annual event firsthand. This year, young people and adults gathered at the Main auditorium of Unilag to address harmful sexual health practices and voice their concerns.

As the saying goes, '**Proper Prior Preparation Prevents Pitiful Poor Performance**'. A planning committee comprising both adults and young people was set up. The committee started work in the first quarter of the year and was saddled with the responsibility of coming up with a feasible theme for the festival; draw up a list of proposed activities to be

carried out prior to the event, recommend categories of competition and modalities of entries as well as suggest ways to make this year's festival more memorable than the preceding ones.

Sooner than expected, posters were placed within and outside the AHI youth center and also distributed to schools within Lagos State. The posters spelt out the theme of the festival, venue, date, categories of entries and rules guiding application. Adverts were also placed for young people interested in serving as ushers, registrars and comperes at the event.

To enhance the quality of the competition, a 2-day capacity building workshop was organized for interested schools. Schools that participated in the workshop were given guidelines on the creative and informative aspects of the competition. The workshop had professionals in various organizations as facilitators and at the end of the workshop; schools were allowed to begin their submission of entries. After the workshop, over 100 entries were received for the various categories and the judges had to shortlist entries for the prejudging exercise. A total of 20 entries were short listed for the prejudging exercise that was held on the 7th of October, 2008. After the prejudging exercise, the three best entries in all the categories were selected based on criteria such as originality, creativity, relevance to theme, harmony, melody and voice projection.

After the three best entries were selected, the students had to be groomed so that the presentations would meet the high standards of stage performance. To achieve this, the three best schools in each category were groomed extensively for two weeks. While this was going on, the six comperes were being groomed by Chief Dayo Adeneye who was to be the MC at the event. As part of the preparations for TFL, media kits were distributed to media houses. The kits provided explicit information on AHI; its mission statements and objectives, TFL; its genesis, aims and objectives as well as providing insight on this year's theme.

On November 5th, 2008, all performers including ushers, registrars and comperes headed for the venue of the event for the dress rehearsal. This was necessary, so as to get used to the stage and costumes and have their lines and roles perfected. All was now set for the D-day!

Dawn came and it was November 6, 2008; a day that will linger in the minds of people old and young alike for a long time. Before 9am, the auditorium was filled to capacity with over 2,500 students and more than 500 adults. Notable personalities in attendance included the MacArthur Foundation representative; Ms Amina Usman, government officials from State Ministries of Education and Health, NGO representatives, PTA health counselors, parents, out-of-school youth and representatives from Community Development Associations (CDA). Chief Dayo Adeneye, world famous D1 opened the floor with the introduction and recognition of guests. A welcome address by Mrs Adenike Esiet, the Executive Director of Action Health Inc. followed and

in her speech, she acknowledged the fact that the event witnessed a large turn out, despite the mid term breaks. She then went on to appreciate the presence of everyone that graced the occasion while enjoining young people to take something valuable from the festival and use whatever information they gather to ensure that harmful sexual health practices are addressed.

In her speech, the chairperson of the occasion, Tutor General/Permanent Secretary Education District VI, Lagos State Ministry of Education, who was represented by Mrs. Ajoke Gbeleyi stressed the importance of education in bringing about transformation and change in this generation. A representative from the MacArthur Foundation also gave a goodwill message.

After the good will messages and addresses, members of the audience were taken through a slide presentation on the TFL process. This was done by Mrs Derin Omole, who highlighted the various stages of TFL preparation such as the inauguration of the TFL committee, TFL workshop, submission of entries, entries short listing, prejudging exercise etc.

It was then time for the schools to make their well rehearsed presentations. Baptist Senior High School, Obanikoro sang about **Human Rights**, Lagos State Senior Model College, Meiran asked us to **Stand Up For What Is Right** while Mainland Senior High School, Jibowu said **Let's Address Harmful Sexual Health Practices**. In the drama category, Wesley Girls Junior Secondary School, Sabo acted out **Sexual Health Practices**, Girls Junior High School, Agege would have given the likes of Ini Edo and Desmond Elliot a run for their money with their drama titled **The Costly Mistake** while, Lagos City Senior College, Sabo enjoined us to answer the **Call To Duty**. In the category that Prof. Wole Soyinka and daddy Larry Williams are known for, Kosofe Senior High School enlightened us on **Female Dejection**, Soundmind Prevarsity College, Mile 12 talked more on **Negative About Negativity**, while Lagos State Senior Model College, Meiran consoled the audience saying **We Shall Overcome**. All the presentations met with rousing ovation and applause, a testimony to the excellence of the performances.

Uncle D1 also came in hand to motivate the audience with his incisive talk which centered on the power of dreams and the audacity of hope. He cited Senator Barrack Obama, the newly elected US President who happens to be the first Black President of the USA, as example of how young people can live their dreams if they only believe. He spoke on the importance of setting goals, hard work, humility and service to humanity. He said these were the main ingredients of any success story and enjoined young people to reflect on what they wanted to be remembered for. At the exhibition stands, AHI and five other NGOs exhibited their materials with AHI distributing over 2,500 copies of the Growing Up Newsletter.

The tempo of the auditorium was raised when rave making musician, Kelly Handsome bounced on stage to thrill the crowd with his hit single and also teach the audience some lyrics from his forthcoming tracks. The heat had hardly died down when popular musician and award-winning Tuface Idibia was ushered onto the stage by Uncle D1. The crowd went crazy and it

was as if the roof was going to give way. Tuface sang more than six tracks from two of his albums and was thrilled as the crowd sang with him all the way, sometimes drowning his own voice. The crowd cheered to frenzy as he dished out hits like **True love, If love is a crime, For instance, I No Send You, African Queen** etc. in between their performances, Kelly Handsome and the African Queen crooner provided information on health issues while reeling out series of advice to young people.

It was then time to call out the winners, award prizes, give plaques and trophies. The schools in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd positions in the three categories were awarded Trophies while those in the 4th, 5th and 6th positions were awarded Plaques. The supervising teachers were also given gift items.

In the drama category, Isa Aminat Winnie and Opaley Oladimeji, both from Lagos City Senior College, Sabo received awards for their outstanding performances. Dapo Olarenwaju of Soundmind Prevarsity College and Gbemi Onasanya from Lagos State Senior Model College had their poetic competence winning them awards for outstanding performances. With the most sonorous voices, John Okpa from Baptist Senior High School, Obanikoro and Pelemo Anuoluwapo from Lagos State Senior Model College, Meiran bagged their awards.

In the drama category, Girls Junior High School grabbed first position while Wesley Girls Junior Secondary School and Lagos City Senior College came second and third respectively.

With their poetic talent, Lagos State Senior Model College, Soundmind Prevarsity College and Kosofe Senior High College clinched first, second and third in that order.

As a result of their musical capability, Baptist Senior High School clinched first position; Lagos State Senior Model College came second while Mainland Senior High School took third position.

A popular saying goes thus **'All is well that ends well'**. The Teenage Festival of Life 2008 ended on a good note with Mrs Ayo Gbemileke, a staff of AHI giving the vote of thanks. The objective of this year's festival was achieved as youth and adults were adequately informed on the need to ensure the rights of young people by addressing harmful sexual health practices. On my way out of the University, I heard a young person say to his friend that he would make sure he helps in putting an end to FGM and early forced marriage in his village, I then said to myself, "mission accomplished".



The rave of the moment. Kelly Handsome thrilling the audience



The Compere's looking radiant in their attire at the festival



Ms. Amina Usman of the Mac Arthur Foundation giving her goodwill message



Students of Lagos State Senior Model College, Meiran, making their presence felt in the Song Category



'Tu Face' doing what he does best



'Tu Face Idibia', the Guest Artist thrilling the audience



Ms. Bolake Odetoynbi, Executive Director, PATA presenting a trophy to one of the winners



Community leaders and parents were not left out



Participants at the AHI Exhibition stand

Dear Diary



Monday

Today I woke up with the sun streaming in through my window; I knew it was going to be a bright day. The results of our mid-term test are out. Blessing and I did so well, that our class-teacher said, if we keep it up, we would be among the best five students in our class at the end of the term. Yesterday, the guy I met at the BRT bus-stop walked up to me and asked how I was. I felt embarrassed because I knew my parents were watching, so I answered him rudely. He refused to let me be and I had to walk out on him. Later, mum called me and asked who he was and what my relationship with him was like. I told her how we met and she advised me not to talk to strangers. Later, we had lunch and I took a nap before doing my assignments.

Tuesday

I got up at six this morning and prepared toast and tea for breakfast before school. On our way to school, Blessing told me, she would be traveling on Friday to her village with her mum because she was going to be circumcised. Neither of us knew anything about circumcision so we decided to ask our counselor. During break, we went to our counselor's office and told her to enlighten us on circumcision. She began by saying the official name for circumcision is Female Genital Cutting (FGC) but we couldn't continue our discussion because she was summoned by the Principal. I also told mum about it, when I got home and she said she was sure circumcision is a bad thing as it often led to bleeding, infections and possibly death. I also looked up the word Mutilation in the dictionary and it meant the defacement, marring, injury, or damage of an essential part. I was worried for Blessing.

Wednesday

I woke late today and dressed up hurriedly for school and I was surprised that Blessing wasn't on the bus. My journey to school was boring. I couldn't wait to tell Blessing what I discovered about her proposed circumcision. Eventually, we met in class and it turned out that her dad had driven her to school because he was on leave. During assembly, I told her all mum had said about FGM and what I got from the dictionary as well. Blessing didn't believe me, she couldn't imagine her mum subjecting her to such pain, more so when she was the only daughter. We were busy during break and could not see our counselor but we however, raised the issue during our Health and Life Planning Club (HLPC). Our president gave an explicit explanation on FGM, its consequences and myths. Blessing was in tears after club meeting, she didn't know how she would tell her parents what she had learnt. I decided to go home with her and help explain to her mum so that she wouldn't be circumcised.

Thursday

Mum was angry with me yesterday because I went home with Blessing without informing her or gaining her consent. I apologized and told her all that happened in school and why I had to go home with my friend. Trust mum to be understanding, she even promised to call Blessing's parents and talk to them, so they don't see the issue as childish play. We were able to talk to our counselor today and she gave us more insight on FGM and other sexual health practices that stem from traditions and are harmful to our well-being as adolescents. She was kind enough to write a note to Blessing's parents stating the dangers in these practices and also about the myths that these practices were based on.

Friday

Today is the day, Blessing would have traveled for her genital cutting and who knows what would have happened if my mum and our counselor had not intervened. Dad was proud of us as he remarked that it was our curiosity that led us to discover the hidden truth of some traditional practices. At school, Blessing and I wrote a story and poem on FGM and submitted to the editor of our school's magazine for publishing. We felt that was wise to do, as most people were oblivious to the consequences of FGM and other harmful sexual health practices. We titled the story, '*Narrow Escape*' while the poem was '*Tears before the rainbow*'.

Saturday

Today was hectic at first, because I had loads of chores to do. Afterwards, Blessing's mum took us both out to Shoprite and bought us loads of goodies. Later, we went home and studied for our oral French test on Monday. I slept late today because I had a lot of Bible verses to memorize and I also watched a film titled 'Mama Mia'.

Sunday

Service was refreshing today. I led the praise and worship session and I also recited the highest number of verses. I got home tired but still assisted mum in preparing lunch. We had some guests this afternoon and I couldn't take a nap. In the evening, mum sent me to the supermarket to buy air time for her phone. I bought it and strolling home, lost in thought when I heard someone shout my name. The sound of the voice wasn't familiar and I curiously turned, only to come face to face with....I will tell you in the next edition.

PHOTO REPORT

VISIT OF THE MACARTHUR FOUNDATION VICE PRESIDENT TO AHI

The MacArthur Foundation Vice President, Barry Lowenkron, on November 15, 2008 visited Action Health Incorporated (AHI). He was accompanied on the visit by the Regional Representative, Dr. Kole Shettima. The visitors used the opportunity of the visit to inspect the newly commissioned 'AHI Resource Centre' and 'The AHI Residence' which had been built with The MacArthur Special Award Grant.

The Executive Director of AHI, Mrs. Nike Esiet, the Director and Co-founder, Dr. Uwem Esiet as well as other Staff members welcomed them to the organization and they were taken on a tour of the facilities.

They were later treated to a drama presentation titled "**A Call To Duty**" by the students of Lagos City Senior High School. It highlighted some of the harmful Sexual Health practices and provided information on the physical,

psychological and health risks of these practices. At the end of the visit, the Vice President was impressed with AHI's activities geared towards the promotion of adolescent sexual and reproductive health.



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Your Body and Cigarette/ Tobacco Smoking

Smoking is often seen as a rite of passage through adolescence. Many teenagers will give it a try. Some will have a cigarette or two and not touch them again. But for others it leads to a lifetime of smoking and subsequent ill health.

Lots of people start smoking in their teens because they think it makes them fit in and look cool. As they get older, they spend much money a year on cosmetics to try and disguise the ageing process.

Why young people smoke:

Some of the reasons why young people may try smoking cigarettes include:

- Peer bonding and the desire to fit in with friends.
- To copy parents or older brothers or sisters who smoke.
- The wish to assert their growing independence.
- The desire to appear more grown up and sophisticated.
- Curiosity.
- To imitate actors or models with appealing images in movies or magazines.

Nicotine is the addictive drug in tobacco smoke that causes smokers to continue to smoke. Addicted smokers need enough nicotine over a day to 'feel normal' to satisfy cravings or control their mood. How much nicotine a smoker needs determines how much smoke they are likely to inhale, no matter what type of cigarette they smoke.

Along with nicotine, smokers also inhale other chemicals in cigarette smoke. Many of these compounds are chemically active and trigger profound and damaging changes in the body. There are over 60 known cancer-causing chemicals in tobacco smoke. Smoking harms nearly every organ in the body, causing many diseases and reducing health in general.

The effects of tobacco smoke on the respiratory and circulatory systems include:

- Irritation of the trachea (windpipe) and larynx (voice box)
- Reduced lung function and breathlessness due to swelling and narrowing of the lung airways and excess mucus in the lung passages
- Impairment of the lungs' clearance system, leading to the build-up of poisonous substances, which results in lung irritation and damage
- Increased risk of lung infection and symptoms such as coughing and wheezing
- Permanent damage to the air sacs of the lungs.
- Raised blood pressure and heart rate.
- Constriction (tightening) of blood vessels in the skin, resulting in a drop in skin temperature

- Less oxygen carried by the blood
- Stickier blood, which is more prone to clotting.
- Damage to the lining of the arteries, which is thought to be a contributing factor to atherosclerosis (the build-up of fatty deposits on the artery walls)
- Reduced blood flow to extremities like fingers and toes
- Increased risk of stroke and heart attack due to blockages of the blood supply.

Other effects on the body:

- Irritation and inflammation of the stomach and intestines.
- Increased risk of painful ulcers along the digestive tract.
- Reduced ability to smell and taste.
- Premature wrinkling of the skin.
- Higher risk of blindness.
- Gum disease (periodontitis).

The male body

The specific effects of tobacco smoke on the male body include:

- Lower sperm count
- Higher percentage of deformed sperm
- Reduced sperm mobility
- Changed levels of male sex hormones
- Impotence, which may be due to the effects of smoking on blood flow and damage to the blood vessels of the penis.

The female body

The specific effects of tobacco smoke on the female body include:

- Reduced fertility
- Menstrual cycle irregularities or absence of menstruation
- Menopause reached one or two years earlier
Increased risk of cancer of the cervix
- Greatly increased risk of stroke and heart attack if the smoker is aged over 35 years and taking the oral contraceptive pill.

Benefits of stopping smoking include the following:

- Chest infections and colds become less frequent.
- The smell of stale tobacco goes from your breath, clothes, hair, and face.
- Foods and drinks taste and smell much better.
- You are likely to feel good about yourself.

WATCH YOUR MANNERS

THE BENEFITS OF GOOD MANNERS

Good manners compliment the more compassionate and respectful lifestyle we hope for. There is little difference between good manners, a respectable citizen and humane education. Each one is showing respect for other living things, and each one has a foundation of teachings or guidelines- also not separate from one another. Someone who addresses others with dignity and respect such as 'please', 'thank you', 'Mr.', 'Ms', 'yes sir' and 'no sir' is not expected to go home in the evening to sprout obscenities and abusing other people. Although, these phrases in some communities may not become the norm, the simple salutation of 'yes' or 'no' and 'hello' would still be much improved over most of today's greetings from those who will someday be our nation's leaders. Hence, the multi-dimensional benefit of having and stressing good manners to your children and students cannot be over-emphasized. Showing respect to other human beings is dignified and offers proper communication.

Those who are taught good manners will recognize that they play an integral part in living a more compassionate life. It is a consistent and humbling means of showing each and every person that, when addressing or interacting with all humans, you must display your gratitude and respect. It's a civilized means of showing respect. In most cases, this is simply respect and compassion.

Taking this a step further, when you have a solid basis of practicing good manners and you find yourself in a situation where proper etiquette is more developed than what you are accustomed to, you would find it necessary to ask questions so as to avoid any harmful or embarrassing actions on your part. You wouldn't want to sit down to a full course meal if you had never experienced this ritual.

It is unacceptable when having guests, to allow them to be uncomfortable or feel 'left out' in conversations or activities during their visit. We are taught to be kind, welcoming and to make them feel comfortable during their time with us. To allow an injury or even harsh words would be totally out of line with the teachings that accompany good manners. People with a good base of manners would never dream of purposely doing harm to another living being and would go out of their way to avoid placing them in the way of harm. It does tend to reflect a more compassionate means of living and treating others.

EVERYDAY ETIQUETTE TIPS

(a) Always say 'please' and 'thank you' and always acknowledge someone else in the room.

- (b) Always address an elder with their last name unless they specify otherwise.
- (c) After sitting down at the table and waiting for everyone else to sit down, unfold your napkin and place it in your lap.
- (d) At a formal table setting, your bread plate is on your left, and your water glass is on your right.
- (e) After receiving a gift, be sure to send a thank you note within two weeks.
- (f) Don't forget to turn your cell phone off in theaters, hospitals, and most other public places.
- (g) Make sure to ask the caller for permission before placing them on speaker phone or a three-way call.
- (h) Don't brush your hair in any place other than the bathroom or in private.
- (i) When speaking to someone, be sure to speak clearly and to make eye contact.
- (j) When emailing, do not type in all capital letters. That indicates yelling or shouting.

References:

- www.21stcenturycares.org/manners (accessed 11/18/2008)
- www.theschoolofmanners.com/tips accessed 11/18/2008

Contd from page 17



Your Body and Cigarette/ Tobacco Smoking

Type of help available

Help is available for smokers who want to quit. Some things that help people quit include:

- Counselling
- Education and information
- Nicotine patches, gum, inhaler, lozenges and tablets

References:

- www.teendrugabuse.us/teensmoking.html (accessed 5/12/2008)
- www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/ (accessed 2/12/2008)
- www.need2know.co.uk/need2know/health/addictions/article.html?id=1345 (accessed 2/12/2008)
- www.netdoctor.co.uk/health_advice/facts/smokehealth.htm (accessed 2/12/2008)



True Life Story



Circumcision! My 16th Birthday Gift

I knew something was wrong. I just couldn't put my finger on it. Why was Mama acting so strange? It was two weeks before my sixteenth birthday and I was ecstatic. No more childish chores and rules, I was really growing up! My excitement was short lived because this was when I began to detect something bizarre going on with Mama and my aunties. I would catch them whispering in hushed tones and when I would appear, they would swiftly change the subject. I would also, out of the corner of my eye, catch Mama staring at me in a peculiar way. All this was very unnerving. What was going on? Had I done anything wrong?

Exactly one week to my birthday, Mama called me to her room. She sat me down on the bed and then she did something she only does when I am in big trouble; she locked the door. My heart was thudding painfully in my chest and I could hardly hear myself think over the loud rush of blood, pumping violently in my ears. I looked at her quizzically, praying to all the gods I could think of, to save me from whatever trouble I could be in. Then, she spoke. In a soft and gentle voice, Mama told me something that would alter the course of my life forever; I was to be circumcised on my 16th birthday! I couldn't believe what I was being told! I didn't even know that our village practiced female circumcision. Over the multitude of thoughts swimming around in my head, I heard Mama continue. She explained that the elders of my family had decided that since I was the only daughter, it was tradition that I be circumcised.

I needed to clear my head and think, so I ran. With rivulets of tears streaming down my cheeks, I sprinted from the room all the way down to the other side of the village. I kept on running until I found my favorite spot by the river under the gigantic and ancient Iroko tree. I collapsed and lay panting, gazing upwards towards the clear blue sky. Circumcised? Me? Yesterday I could hardly wait until my birthday, but now as the day drew closer, I felt a heavy sense of foreboding come with it. I cast my mind back to a few months ago. A guest speaker came to our school to give us a talk about sex education. It was funny and embarrassing at first because we weren't used to adults talking to us so casually about sex, but then he broached more serious topics, one of them being female circumcision. I began to recall all the effects of circumcision. You could get HIV, you could bleed to death or the wound could turn septic and lead to complications in childbirth. I remember flinching at each outcome as though his words were piercing me directly. I couldn't let them circumcise me. What if I get infected with HIV? Or what if the wound turns septic and I can't have children? What if I died in the process? All these thoughts were consuming me. I was not going to let this happen to me.

I got up and realized I had spent the better part of the day under the tree. As I walked back home, I

made up my mind to talk to mama about all I had on my mind. Surely she wouldn't let anything bad happen to me. I would explain to her all the risks involved in female circumcision and she would understand. As I drew closer to my compound I began to doubt myself. Before I had a chance to change my mind, Mama came running out of the house and wrapped me up in her arms. She had been worried sick about me. I comforted her and gently led her back inside the house. I sat her down and told her all that was on my mind. I educated her about the hazards of female circumcision and she gasped in horror. She took me in her arms once more, cradling me like a baby, and for the first time that day, I felt safe.

I woke up the next day, feeling light and relieved. Yesterday's burden had been left behind. I got up and went to greet mama but her expression stopped me dead on her tracks. My stomach tightened into knots again and the heavy feeling of anxiety overwhelmed me. Her face was drawn and streaked with tears. As she looked up at me, fresh tears welled up in her eyes and she began sobbing afresh. In my panic-stricken state, I bent down to console her and in a slow, halting voice, she told me what had happened while I was asleep. Mama had gone to meet with our family elders to try and inform them about the risks of female circumcision and persuade them to rescind their decision. Her pleas fell on deaf ears because the elders remained adamant in their decision. They told Mama that many girls have been circumcised in our family and that none of them had died. Our plight was a serious one. We had nowhere to turn to. Since Papa passed away three years ago, it has been our family elders that have been assisting us in all our needs. It would be foolish and disrespectful to disobey them now, yet it was impossible to abide by their wishes.

Just when I thought all hope was lost, and that my 16th birthday would be the end of life as I knew it, Mama came up with a plan. The night before the ceremony, I would have to run away to the neighboring village and hide with my Grandmother. It would be risky but it was either that or circumcision. So, mama and I contacted my Grandmother and made the necessary arrangements. Then the fateful day arrived. Under the cover of darkness, I kissed my three younger brothers goodbye and embraced my mother passionately. I didn't know when I would see her again. Half blinded by tears, I crept around the back of my compound and ran as far away from my village as possible. I ran and ran until at last I reached my grandmother's place. My legs gave way underneath me as I reached her door. She carried me inside and closed the door behind her. There began my life in exile.

So, I have been living with my Grandmother since then for the past three years. In those years, I have only seen mama four times. It is painful and I miss her a lot but at least I have my life. I escaped the brutality of circumcision although; there are many young girls like me who are not so lucky. I can never return to my village and I have been disowned by my family but my life is a testimony, a testimony that I will share at every opportunity I get. Sex education helped me save my life, it can save yours too.

YOUNG ACHIEVER



Keisha Gitari

(Selfless Service To Humanity)

"It has always been my desire to impact those around me positively and this is what has led me to become the focused and driven individual I am today. Working with people is a particular passion of mine and a lot of my volunteer work has been focused around young people in hospitals, orphanages and the community as a whole. I also understand the value of team work and am able to productively work as part of a team. I enjoy learning new things and am not afraid of a challenge. My hard working and determined nature is definitely my greatest asset as it ensures that I give every task set before me my utmost best". Interesting, you may say. These were the words of Keisha Gitari, a 20 year old volunteer whose passion for impacting her environment and the people around her has led

for more humanitarian work, hence, in July 2007, she volunteered to serve at **Urgent Action Fund-Africa, (UAF-Africa)** an NGO based in Nairobi, Kenya where she helped to document and develop new data collection materials as well as handle individual grant cases and worked one-on-one with grantees to ensure that the funds were used appropriately. Volunteering to contribute her quota to the development of humanity is not strange to her. According to her, *'my parents had already set the precedence in this field. They have been involved in Human Rights activism and have worked to ensure the development and establishment of rights based litigation and media awareness throughout Africa and their example has caused me to be directly involved in Human Rights activities from my early years. My mother had earlier founded an NGO Refugee Consortium of Kenya (HAKI HOUSE) in Nairobi, which gave me the platform to develop my interest in people. I helped out after school and in the summers! Right now, I'm forging my path by volunteering at various organizations working with women and children'.*



Between October to December 2008 Keisha volunteered and worked as an Intern at **Action Health Incorporated, (AHI)** in Lagos, Nigeria, an NGO that is dedicated to the promotion of adolescent health and development. She subsequently participated in a 2 week Family Life and HIV Education training programme. At the end of the course, she was awarded a certificate of participation thereby becoming

her to volunteer in various countries of the world.

Born in London, England in 1988 to Dr. Joseph Bradley Gitari, a Kenyan and Mrs. Abi Gitari, a Nigerian, Keisha attended Breaburn International (Primary) School, Nairobi, Kenya (1997-2000) before proceeding to Loreto Convent M'songari, Nairobi, Kenya from (2000-2004) for her secondary school education and Oxbridge Tutorial College, Lagos, Nigeria (2005) for her 6th form and by September 2005 at the age of 17, she had gained admission into the University of Kent to study Politics and International Relations. One would have thought that she would focus solely on her university education, but this only ignited her crave



Keisha being congratulated at the end of the training on Family Life and HIV Education

(Continue On Page 23)



Career Guide



DO YOU WANT TO BE A CHEMIST?

Chemists investigate the properties of various substances and study how those substances behave under different conditions. Analytical chemists determine the exact chemical composition and structure of substances and may also investigate and identify their origin. Industrial chemists are found in many areas of industry such as pharmaceuticals, agrochemicals, detergents/soap manufacturers, metals, polymers, drugs and food. They are concerned with the chemical properties of materials and how they are developed and used in industry to improve production and products.

THE JOB

About a half of all chemists are engaged in research and development. Most work on projects where they apply their knowledge to improving and creating new products such as drugs, synthetic materials and new fuels.

Chemists often work as part of multidisciplinary teams, experimenting, monitoring and analyzing results in a laboratory. They may need to communicate with non specialist audiences. They must also pay attention to details of health and safety and keep up to date with the latest techniques by reading and attending conferences.

Chemists may also be involved in specialized analysis and in developing new testing techniques.

Many chemists are laboratory based, but they also work on production lines, building sites and in mines. They often work in teams and supervise other staff. They may need to travel for meetings and seminars, both at home and overseas.

An example of a specialist area of work is water purification. Chemists analyze the filtered water in purification plants and test samples from points along the distribution system to ensure it meets prescribed standards. They determine and monitor the types and amounts of chemicals needed to make it suitable for drinking.

TRAINING

All bachelors' degrees in Chemistry give a general grounding in chemistry and include inorganic, organic and physical chemistry. Other options could include: analytical, polymer science and applied chemistry. There are some specialized degrees in manufacturing chemistry or those combined with medicinal chemistry or biological chemistry. Academic training often covers a broad area of work rather than focusing on specific industrial areas. Training is often part of a degree incorporating work placement and practical experience. It is possible to become a member of a professional association by further study and research. Nearly half of all chemistry

graduates progress to a higher qualification through postgraduate study. This may in form of a specialization such as polymer chemistry or training in a related field such as chemical physics.

PROSPECTS/OUTLOOK

The employment outlook is only fair to chemists working in government and in the chemical industry. Although, industrial output will increase, improvements in productivity lessen the opportunities for growth in jobs. The most promising areas are in pharmaceuticals and biotechnology.

Opportunity to move into teaching in schools, colleges and higher education are there. Some chemists may qualify in chemical engineering and self related areas.

Industrial chemists can progress to senior posts within research and development or move into management.

SKILLS AND PERSONAL QUALITIES

Accuracy
Attention to detail
Logic
Communication skills
Numeracy
Enquiring mind
Patience
Practical skills
Problem-solving ability
Teamwork
Technical/scientific ability

Reference:

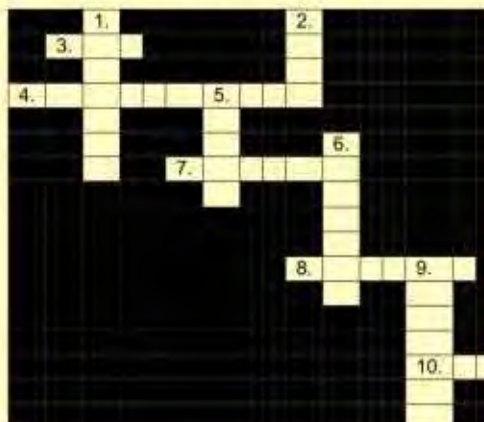
• "Professional and Technical Careers: A Guide from World Book"



BRAIN TEASERS

By Frances Chukwura

Hi Guys, in this edition we will be looking at some terms in Sexual Health Practices. You think they are easy? Let's see how far you can go then. GOOD LUCK!



Across

3. Slice (3)
 4. Injury (10)
 7. Person mostly affected (6)
 8. Minora (6)
 10. RVF (3)

Down

1. Ethnicity (7)
 2. Ache (4)
 5. Cutting off the Clitoris (5)
 6. Reproductive organ (7)
 9. Taking away (7)

Answers

1. erutluc
 2. niap
 3. tuc
 4. noitalitum
 5. 1epyt
 6. latineg
 7. elamef
 8. arojam
 9. lavomer
 10. FVV

CROSS WORD PUZZLE

By Emmanuel Umezuruike (19 years old)

Hi folks, here are some professions. Pick them out if you can.

L	C	R	E	O	A	R	T	Z	X	R	E	R	O
A	B	H	A	D	V	E	X	I	Y	W	O	O	A
W	C	H	N	B	F	L	P	G	R	L	C	C	O
Y	M	L	U	A	E	L	A	N	L	T	T	T	F
E	C	J	R	N	A	O	Z	A	O	J	Z	Z	A
R	T	M	C	K	E	B	B	R	F	D	J	J	Q
O	E	Q	A	E	B	T	S	L	P	O	H	H	O
R	E	E	R	R	O	E	N	G	I	N	E	E	R
A	T	A	N	O	T	A	G	A	I	N	I	I	O
S	I	E	F	O	Z	Q	P	I	T	O	I	I	P
M	E	J	T	N	A	T	N	U	O	C	A	A	H
R	E	H	C	A	E	T	N	O	E	G	R	U	S

- Teacher
- Lawyer
- Engineer
- Surgeon
- Accountant
- Trader
- Pilot
- Farmer
- Banker
- Footballer
- Doctor

a qualified Sexuality trainer/facilitator. Aside this, she spent a great deal of time writing different articles for various AHI publications as well as being involved in the administration of various institutes held by the organization. She feels very elated having the opportunity to serve both in Kenya and Nigeria. According to her, *'In Kenya, I worked to promote the basic human rights of women and adolescent girls and was delighted to find that the Local government and community leaders were eager to develop this area as they encouraged the women and children to be impacted so as to stand up against human rights abuses while in Nigeria, the youth were directly involved in the work that I did as the focus was to increase public awareness and to implement innovative education, health and youth development programmes'*.

Growing up for Keisha was challenging as she was constantly moving from country to country and having to get used to new environments, new people

and different culture. Fortunately, her determination to be focused on her mission and her penchant to learn the various languages helped her to fit in more hence, her ability to speak English, basic French and Kiswahili languages.

The amiable young lady who always finds a balance between studying and extra-curricula activities such as kick boxing and creative writing, advises young people to strive to impact positively on someone else's life. She sees her parents as her role models and mentors for being extra ordinary individuals who have achieved numerous successes in life and strongly believes that their love for humanity and justice has contributed to make her the person she is today.

Keisha, who is in her final year in the university, hopes to pursue a Masters Degree in Human Rights as soon as she completes her programme. Who says volunteerism among young people shouldn't be encouraged?

CROSS WORD PUZZLE

By Lawrence Chukwuma

Hi friends, I have another exciting and interesting puzzle for you. Try and solve these riddles. Good luck.

C	O	V	A	H	A	S	S	E	R	T	I	V	E	V
D	O	N	E	D	U	C	A	T	I	O	N	K	L	P
E	N	O	N	Q	R	G	E	A	W	S	E	R	D	J
T	B	I	N	A	T	K	D	I	V	E	S	I	T	Y
E	S	T	H	F	G	P	U	C	B	N	D	S	A	E
R	X	A	D	G	A	J	C	H	K	N	T	E	R	Y
M	D	I	G	R	H	J	A	S	H	O	P	I	E	D
I	F	T	I	G	B	H	T	E	G	O	O	F	G	E
N	S	O	F	G	B	J	I	C	H	T	T	O	G	F
A	S	G	V	H	J	C	O	N	J	F	E	J	C	E
T	E	E	W	N	U	G	N	E	F	R	N	N	H	C
I	C	N	B	L	F	H	J	L	G	E	T	F	O	T
O	C	F	T	N	H	K	B	O	D	E	I	S	I	J
N	U	I	F	H	T	D	H	I	N	D	A	E	C	S
C	S	G	J	F	D	F	F	V	K	O	L	U	E	O
M	E	R	O	N	I	O	D	B	F	M	G	L	D	V
F	E	H	R	O	N	C	D	B	F	N	F	A	D	E
A	V	E	V	U	F	U	F	H	D	E	G	V	W	R
A	H	R	E	T	G	S	F	J	Y	I	K	B	S	A
S	F	E	B	J	C	O	U	R	A	G	E	S	E	A

- Rape
- Education
- Freedom
- Choice
- Values
- Negotiation

- Assertive
- Determination
- Defect
- Havoc
- Diversity
- Hope

- Courage
- Focus
- Success
- Potential
- Violence
- Cultism



RESOURCES



The materials listed here are resources on adolescent development. These materials are available for use in the reference library at the AHI Youth Centre at 17 Lawal Street, Jibowu, Yaba, Lagos

Books

(A) "Comprehensive Sexuality Education: Trainers' Resource Manual"

By Action Health Incorporated (AHI)

This manual provides a step-by-step guide to teaching sexuality education. It provides instructional material for teaching topics under the six key concepts of comprehensive sexuality education (i.e. relationships, human development, personal skills, sexual behaviour, sexual health and sexuality, society and culture). Educators and other sexuality professionals will find this manual a complete resource in teaching young people about sexuality.



(B) Family Life and HIV Education for Junior Secondary Schools Students' Handbook

By Action Health Incorporated (AHI)

Family Life and HIV Education Students' Handbook is developed for use by student at the Junior secondary School level as a supplementary text with factual information on the Family Life and HIV Education (FLHE) Curriculum. It is organized around the five key concept in the approved FLHE curriculum to help young people learn about their bodies, physical and emotional changes that occur during adolescence; presenting how young people can acquire skills including steps to take in setting sexual limit and ways of refusing unwanted sexual advances; exposing young people to issues around HIV infection and prevention and encouraging young people to discuss relationships with family and friends, as well as addressing the social and cultural environments that influence the way they learn about and express their sexuality. Where appropriate, the handbook contains stories, illustrations, pictures and cartoon that will help the students understand the topics better.



(C) Family Life and HIV Education for Junior Secondary Schools Teachers' Guide

By Action Health Incorporated (AHI)

Family Life and HIV Education Teachers' Guide is a comprehensive, easy-to-understand guide for use by teachers in Junior Secondary Schools who have the responsibility for classroom delivery of the Family Life and HIV Education (FLHE) Curriculum. This publication is not a textbook but rather a "how to do" guide for teachers. The guide encourages teachers to be creative, reflective and observant of the reaction and general demeanor of young people during classroom interaction, as well as creating an enabling environment for learning. Each chapter in the guide is divided into the following sections for effective delivery of the FLHE curriculum: lesson objectives, teaching aids, activities and evaluation questions. Teachers are encouraged to supplement with appropriate content-based textbooks, the FLHE curriculum and the Family Life and HIV Education Students' Handbook.



(D) "You, Your Life; Your Dreams (A Book For Adolescents)"

Developed by Family Care International and Straight Talk Foundation in collaboration with the German Foundation for World Population.

The book was written for adolescents, aged 14 to 19, to help them cope with some of the many challenges and decisions they face as they move from childhood to adulthood. It offers factual information about the changes that occur during this time of life, and about a range of other issues, such as: how to stay physically and emotionally healthy, how to avoid sexually transmitted infections and unwanted pregnancy, how to handle pressure to have sex, and how to avoid drug and alcohol abuse. It also offers advice on getting along with their parents and friends, handling romantic relationships, setting goals, doing well in school, and coping with setbacks that they may encounter along the road to adulthood.

