

Little Heroes

Teen speak

We asked 13-year-old (grade seven) learners from various schools two questions:
 A: How do you contract HIV and Aids?
 B: And, how do you prevent HIV and Aids?
 Their answers are only superficially different and the level of understanding was fairly sophisticated

Greenside Primary School, Johannesburg



Tulani Madala

A: Having unprotected sex with a person who is infected. Coming in to contact with HIV blood.
 B: Always using a condom when having sex, using protection when treating a person who is infected. To not have sex at all because no sex is the best sex.



Hannah Shone

A: You can get HIV and Aids in three known ways: mother to child transmission, having unprotected sex with an HIV-infected person. Coming into contact with blood of an HIV infected person, if you have an open wound and their blood comes into contact with yours.
 B: To prevent HIV and Aids is to either have protected sex with someone you completely trust (your spouse) or to abstain (no sex). Remember the safest sex is no sex.



Harshal Mistry

A: Unprotected sex with an HIV-infected person, from mother to baby and touching infected blood with an open wound.
 B: Abstinance from sex, using a condom, don't touch infected blood without protection, if a mother is pregnant and has HIV and Aids she should take the medicines needed to prevent the baby from being born with Aids.



Khomotso Maponya (right)

A: By having unsafe sex, by touching someone else's blood who has HIV and Aids. By using an injection that was used by somebody else. To get it, one person has to have it.
 B: No sex (abstinence), by making sure that the injection used has been thoroughly cleaned, not having any contact with someone bleeding. By using contraceptives.

Makhoarane Primary School, Soweto



Katleho Mphatsoe

A: By having unprotected sex or using a needle that someone else who has HIV has used and a mother who has HIV can pass it on to her baby through breast feeding.
 B: By having protected sex and being very careful when you are around blood and protecting yourself.



Lebohang Mopeli

A: By having unprotected sex. A mother can infect her child through breastfeeding. Through a used needle or blade that has blood. If you touch blood of an HIV-positive person.
 B: By using a condom when having sex, by reminding your doctor to use a clean needle, by using gloves when you touch a bleeding person.



Tebogo Modise

A: Through having unprotected sex and using an injection that has already been used.
 B: Using a condom or just being responsible around a person who is bleeding.



Charles Masoeu

A: By having sex without a condom with somebody with Aids. By using an injection from someone who has Aids.
 B: By being responsible and eating healthy food.

Livelethu Primary School, Mpumalanga



Nokuthula Nhlebeza

A: HIV and Aids is a terrible disease that you can get from sex. We learn about it at school.
 B: The teachers tell us that we can protect ourselves by condomising or abstaining — I prefer to abstain.

Redhill Preparatory School, Sandton



Tarryn Harding

A: You often get it through unprotected sex, or through another person's blood, if that person is near a cut on your skin
 B: You can wear a condom when having sex, wear plasters on your cuts. If your partner says he or she (girls can wear condoms too) doesn't want to wear one, that person is denying you protection, which is a sexual right.



Tosin Animashahun

A: You get it by having sex in a manner as if nothing is going to happen.
 B: Hire good speakers to travel through Africa. Hand out free condoms. Hit their minds that death is near if you are not careful.



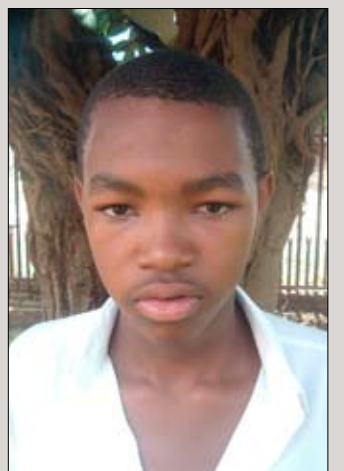
Claire Manicom

A: You get it from touching an open wound of an HIV-positive person or through unprotected sex.
 B: By making sure you wear protective gloves when treating a wound. People should be open about their infection. Have yourself and your friends tested.

Reahile Ramathesele (left)

A: Through sexual intercourse.
 B: It's as easy as ABC — Abstain, Be faithful, Condomise.

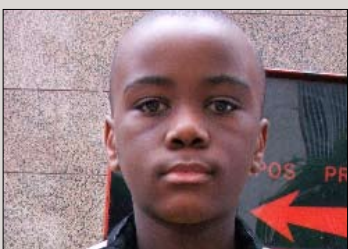
Ritavi Primary School in Nkowankowa, near Tzaneen



Thikomelo Molokomme

A: It is spread "through contact with infected blood".
 B: Say "no" to sex.

Msogwaba Primary School in KaNyamazane, Mpumalanga



Samkelo Mabuza

A: HIV/Aids is a blood disease that is transmitted through sex and if you share blood.
 B: We have classes about it on Mondays and Fridays at school, and they tell us you can avoid getting HIV if you use the ABC principles.



TC College in Nelspruit, Mpumalanga

Prudence Khanye (left)

A: Our college has special sex education classes twice a week, where people from loveLife and our teachers give us all the information we need.
 B: HIV and Aids is a sexually transmitted disease. The only way to be really safe is to abstain from sex.

Sihle Sibande (right)

A: HIV/Aids can also be got from contaminated blood, but it is mostly caused by unprotected sex.
 B: For those who cannot abstain, you can also condomise.