



# Fact Sheet

## THE IDEAL MESSENGERS

- Popular DJ artistes, entertainers, sports stars and more teens delivering the messages

## THE IDEAL PACKAGING

- Teen involvement, language and colourful exciting packaging
- Brand name products are preferred
- Rasta colours, shocking colours, Graffiti-styles
- Cartoon characters (e.g. Sponge Bob Squarepants)
- Promotional parties with lots of hype and music

## OTHER COMMUNICATION STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Keep messages short, simple and straightforward
- Be as age specific as possible
- Disaggregate messages for boys and girls
- Develop messages for boys that combat negative gender stereotypes, while acknowledging the role and influence of the group or 'crew'
- Develop messages for girls that focus on the circumstances behind their risky behaviours, including economic influences
- Ensure that the messages and the messenger as well as the location of the message are consistent with the values and norms of teens to ensure maximum impact
- Develop trend-setting logos, message concepts and items that teens will want to 'own' and carry
- Develop or strengthen programmes that offer 'hands on' practical life skills in sexuality areas where young people feel their skills base is limited
- Work with older men as to their involvement with adolescents, including dispelling certain myths that perpetuate the need for involvement with young girls



Participatory Action Research methods are strengthening HIV/AIDS communication efforts BY teens FOR teens

For more information on PAR and young people, a Guide can be obtained from:  
Adolescents & HIV/AIDS Project  
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## UNICEF's RIGHT TO KNOW (RTK) Partners in Jamaica:

### Government

Ministry of Health  
Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture  
National Centre for Youth Development  
St. James Health Department (WESTHELP)

### Non-Government

Children First  
National AIDS Committee  
Portland AIDS Committee  
St Catherine Parish AIDS Committee  
Jamaica Coalition on the Rights of the Child (Youth Advocates)  
Hope Worldwide Jamaica  
Jamaica AIDS Support  
Jamaica Red Cross Society

Produced by RTK partners in collaboration with the UNICEF Country Office for Jamaica, with CIDA financial support



## Communicating with Jamaican Adolescents

## about HIV/AIDS

For every child  
Health, Education, Equality, Protection  
ADVANCE HUMANITY





This Fact Sheet is intended for anyone seeking to communicate with Jamaican young people about HIV/AIDS related issues, especially outside of the traditional health sector.

**Why do young people have the RIGHT TO KNOW?**

Like adults, all young people have a right to information, life-skills and services that enable them to protect themselves from HIV/AIDS or sexually transmitted infections.

**What can be done to ensure young people have the RIGHT TO KNOW?**

Provide basic facts, life skills and messages that that will give young people correct information about HIV/AIDS in a way that empowers them to make good decisions about their lives and activities and positively influence their peers.

**We can also make our HIV/AIDS communication efforts better by:**

**Involving teens in the process** – encourage young people to develop the information and pass on the knowledge that they have to other young people

**Motivating teens to action** - give young people the tools and support they need to take control of their future, believe in themselves and help other teenagers.

**Why Participatory Action Research (PAR)?**

PAR is a two-directional approach to learning. With PAR:

- Young people plan and carry out research to get information from other young people
- The process allows ALL participating teens to become better informed, skilled, take part and take ACTION

**A tool used in Participatory Action Research (PAR)**

**Mapping**

Adolescents are gathered in a room mapping service providers in their communities and labelling them according to how they treat young people. From the shopkeeper who refuses to sell condoms to children, to the guidance counsellor who encourages them to protect themselves, they create a pictorial of the communities in which they live.

**How Mapping works**

The map, creating a visual representation of the community, is used to guide and increase discussion, explore solutions and analyse problems by identifying:

- Places where young people “hang out”
- Sexual ‘hot spots’
- Places where young people go for services and information



# What Jamaican Youth say about...

## HIV/AIDS

- Young people want straight-forward information about HIV/AIDS in their language.
- The facts must be presented simply and clearly, without hiding them.
- Many young people hold positive attitudes towards persons with HIV/AIDS but feel they cannot act on them because community responses are usually hostile.
- Young people’s knowledge about HIV/AIDS is chiefly gained through the mass media, especially television.
- There are still high levels of myths and misconceptions among Jamaican adolescents, especially about the origin of HIV and how it is transmitted.
- Boys and girls say that they are sexually active, although some of the motivating factors differ by gender.
- Young people’s worst fear about HIV/AIDS is pain and death. Their best hope is for a cure.

## MALE/FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS AND RISKY SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

- A lack of intimate communication between the sexes often results in impulsive sexual behaviours.
- Traditional roles for males and females influence the behaviour of teenagers.
- Adolescents learn sexual behaviour by copying role models such as parents, brothers, sisters and friends.
- ‘Hard core’ or rough sex with multiple sex partners make up some of the risky sexual behaviours practiced among teens.
- Incest and other forms of domestic violence result in negative sexual behaviour patterns for adolescents, especially for girls.
- Adolescents say they lack parental guidance about sex, sexuality and relationships.

## REASONS BOYS ENGAGED IN CASUAL SEX (ONE NIGHT STANDS)

- Young males believe that they are incapable of saying no to sex.
- To improve the level of respect they get from their “crew” or group.
- There is competition among males to get girls because numbers are important to crew members.
- To “dis” or degrade girls.
- Young males tend to adopt negative images and operate largely as sexual predators.

Adolescents say they lack parental guidance



## REASONS GIRLS ENGAGED IN CASUAL SEX (ONE NIGHT STANDS)

- To get more respect in the community by being with a “big” man or rich man.
- Sex is often seen as “goods” that can be exchanged by females for money, ‘gifts’ or other personal gains and benefits.
- Girls are available for older men out of school who they believe have more money than younger men. This can be a result of family pressure.

## IDEAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

### Television

- cartoons, comedies or talk shows hosted by young people who are lively, interactive, straightforward and aware
- advertisement or strip messages on popular local cable television channels (e.g. RETV, Hype Zone) or NBA features and football matches

### Movies - short movies or pre-movie features at the cinema

### Print media - articles, stories or advice columns in tabloids, comics or magazines

### Internet - lively, interactive web sites or chat rooms for teens

### Street Corner - community ‘walk and talks’

### Hang out spots - catchy slogans/messages visible at malls, clubs, bus stop/ terminus and cinemas

### Cell Phones - catchy slogans/messages visible on covers and cases; voicemail or text messages

### Expos - youth forums, safer sex fun days or rallies

### Personal items - string or ‘attitude’ bags, rags, kerchiefs, cosmetic bags, CD cases, visors, hats, T-shirts and wrist bands

Some adolescents see sex as ‘goods’ that can be exchanged for money, ‘gifts’ or other personal gains and benefits

