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# HOW TO TEACH HIV/AIDS IN THE CLASSROOM (SCHOOLS)



# THE HOW-TO'S OF TEACHING PRINCIPLES TO TODAY'S STUDENTS AIDS AWARENESS PRESENTATIONS IN SCHOOLS

## **A. Making the Arrangements:**

It is important to try to find a reputable person to liaise for you, such as the principal of a particular school. In our case, we found a wonderful Christian principal in Soweto who, because he had community favour, introduced us. We were permitted in the public schools during class time through this principal. From there, the reputation of the HIV/AIDS program you are conducting will become well known and you will have many invitations. Find a key contact person, preferably someone who works in the area of schools, and/or who is a recognised educator. This gives credibility to the teaching profession.

## **B. Make the Necessary Preparatory Steps:**

For “OPERATION WHOLE” we first (through our “liaise” person) met with a selected group of educators (mostly principals and guidance teachers) in one area and showed them briefly how we could present a quality program in their respective school. Our preview with these school leaders took approximately 45 minutes to promote our AIDS program to them. We sold ourselves and the program!!! Go prepared! Have an outline of your aims and objectives for your school presentations so the teachers will know exactly what you will present. Give out samples and have visual illustrations to present to the educators. OPERATION WHOLE teams have conducted AIDS Awareness presentations and the gospel message to approximately 175,000 people each year since 1995.

## **C. Allow the Educators in the Area to Buy into Your Program and Make It Theirs:**

Principals of schools guard their schools very closely. You must make YOUR program THEIR idea! Facilitate the teachers to feel that this is their THING and that you are helping them pull it off. Even if, in reality, you are doing it all, you must pull them into the plan at the onset or they will close the door on you. Use key buzz phrases when trying to get into a school: use the words MORALLY BASED INSTRUCTION rather than anything RELIGIOUS! You can always subtly bring in the Christian message once you are there. Other buzz words to sell your program are: LIFE SKILLS, AIDS PREVENTION, STUDENT EMPOWERMENT, INFORMED CHOICE, etc.

#### **D. Know What Your Classroom Teaching AIMS and OBJECTIVES Are:**

Remember: you haven't taught a thing unless the students LEARN!! You are there to help students LEARN, NOT JUST TO TEACH!!! Use a lesson plan for each class. See sample in Chapter 20.

Remember: you are NOT THERE just to entertain (even though things you do may be entertaining. Humour is used as a teaching technique). YOU ARE THERE TO GET ACROSS THE MORAL (BIBLICAL) MESSAGE OF THE HOW-TO'S TO STAY ALIVE AND NOT BECOME HIV INFECTED. YOU ARE TO DO EVERYTHING TO HELP THE STUDENTS GRASP THOSE TRUTHS, IN A VERY SHORT TIME!

#### **What to Include in the Lesson Plan for School AIDS Presentations**

1. **Determine your points.** What points do you want the children to learn?
2. **Make your points clear.** Use varying teaching techniques:
  - **Lecture method** (only for about 2-3 minutes at a time);
  - **Role-playing** by enlisting the help of a teacher or a student when you are illustrating a point (example: when teaching the myths about how HIV is spread, you can use a student with you to teach handshaking. HIV is NOT spread by shaking hands);
  - **Visual impact** (i. e: flip charts, overheads, graphics);
  - **Vocal repetition** (students repeating or reading as a group, the point from the flip chart);
  - **Drama-sketches** most effectively used when they are short and make the message conclusive and not obscure! We take a pre-written skit (an example is provided in this manual in Chapter 20) to the school ahead of time and have the students act it out. They do wonderfully!
  - **Feed-back** by student participation and response (but make it short and snappy);
  - **Illustrations** to make your points that are short and relevant;
  - **Flip Charts, Overheads, or CD pictures and visuals** to reinforce your point.
3. **Make sure your classroom is set up in the way you want it.** You will probably have to do that yourself since most public schools are short staffed and the room is never ready. Most township schools have only double classrooms at best and do not have auditoriums. In primary school presentations, have the younger classes sit on the floor at the front (if not enough chairs). Put chairs in rows against the wall with a small aisle in the middle. Bigger kids can stand at the back. REMOVE DESKS! THEY TAKE UP TOO MUCH ROOM! If you are showing a video, you must cover the windows with black cotton fabric or tape newspaper over all the windows to cut out the light.
4. **Control your classroom entries and exits.** Have older students come in first, from back to front, and younger ones come in last. Even in high schools, have one of your own people POLICE lines of students as they come in, and have another one of your helpers assist with the seating, moving from the wall out. If you allow students to seat themselves, they will

always take the outside seat and then everyone has to crawl over them!!! THAT CAUSES CHAOS!

**5. Set the classroom tone:**

- Let students know what you expect (i. e: when you are talking they don't talk).
- Establish an atmosphere for learning.
- Establish respect for each other.
- Classroom is quiet except for times you enlist their participation.
- Have orderly entries and exits (row by row because in most cases the teachers will not do that for you).
- Show students the respect you expect from them (i..e: never raise your voice or yell).
- Use your eyes...use authority...always say 'thank you' when you give an instruction to children!
- Know how to STOP interruptions (but never take away the student's dignity).
- Know how to respond to "testing responses" that are the opposite of what you want. Never be thrown off base.
- Begin and finish on time!

**6. Segment your presentation.** Section it off into exactly what you are going to do that will accomplish your teaching/learning goals. OPERATION WHOLE HAS FOUND THE FOLLOWING TO BE VERY SUCCESSFUL:

- Five minute introduction of team and setting tone of classroom and what we are here to do.
- Three minutes of positive reinforcement:
  - how special each one is before God
  - no two people the same (fingerprints, DNA)
  - God made one of me; I am special (most kids have a very low SELF-WORTH FACTOR).
- Be very specific about directing students to the right choice/s; do not be vague; be bold about your message. But, you cannot force or choose for them! Make it COOL to make RIGHT CHOICES! Begin to turn around negative behaviours and make positive behaviours POPULAR!
- Emphasis must be reinforced to the learners that GOD GAVE US THE ABILITY TO MAKE CHOICES THAT WILL KEEP US FROM HIV AND AIDS.
- Two minutes singing - ONLY with primary students
- Fifteen minutes teaching - getting right in the kids' faces, utilising all teaching methods (overheads=visual, role-playing=kinetic learning, demonstration=audio learning, repetition=reinforcement).
- Five minute sketch - given to the school ahead of time and done by the students (reinforcing life skills in the how-to's of saying NO to premarital sex and peer pressure). Same sketch is adapted for different age levels. WE INSIST THAT CONTENT MESSAGE REMAINS THE SAME, ONLY THEY CAN CHANGE THE WORDING.
- Make the presentation culturally sensitive.
- Two minute hand/arm exercise (primary kids only).

- Thirteen minute AIDS comic video if you can facilitate it (primary); otherwise, fully utilise the flip charts in Volume 2.
- Thirty minute AIDS video (high schools) or flip charts.
- Two minute POINTED WRAP UP & PRAYER.
- Give instruction on hand out book/s and any follow-up meetings.
- Ten minutes should be in between individual presentations, if you are doing more than one presentation in the school. This allows for students with difficulties or problems to receive ministry (particularly Upper Division students). We suggest there that you specifically train two women and two men on the school ministry team to deal with sexual abuse, date rape, questions/answers, etc.

**7. Plan the length of your presentation and stick to it.**

Primary school students grades 1 through 8 should be maximum one hour. For high school a good suggestion is one and a half hours in length.

**8. Always make it a point that two members of the AIDS presentation team will go to thank the school principal, leaving handout samples of the AIDS booklets with him or her.**

**9. Ask for a letter of reference from that school, evaluating your AIDS presentation.**

A letter given to you from each school is invaluable as a door opener to other schools and places to share your AIDS presentation. Keep these letters in a special booklet covered with plastic pages, so that you can show these as references where you need them. This gives you credibility.

**10. Endeavour to strategise an effective follow-up program for more lasting results.**

Some suggestions would be:

- Principals'/teachers' AIDS workshops.
- Follow up student open air rallies featuring special music, HIV-positive youth sharing their testimonies, a celebrity Christian who could share his/her testimony, puppet show, etc., all reinforcing the "SAY NO TO SEX...I CAN WAIT" theme.
- Parent day workshops on AIDS and sexuality. Bible Clubs and/or local church follow-up into the schools for the students.
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- Hosting special events at your local church for the school students to attend.

The local church that trains a team with excellence to give AIDS presentations in the public schools will also find this an open door for presenting the gospel within the context of education. AIDS awareness education is an excellent way of child-evangelism and, most likely, is the key to being permitted to do this in school class time.

~ ~ ~ ~ HAPPY TEACHING & LEARNING ~ ~ ~ ~