

THE PARTNERSHIP

The Partnership

Slowing the vicious cycle

Since AIDS first came to be known more than 20 years back, it has created such a widespread presence that there is no country in the world that has completely escaped its impact. It is a universal disease with no respect for colour, tribe, creed, religion or economic background. We live in South Africa, a country where the AIDS pandemic is one of the worst in the world. The disease affects all segments of South African society, but has particularly ravaged historically disadvantaged communities, such as the rural poor, urban marginalized such as informal settlements, and migrant workers.

The effects of AIDS on children are devastating. Children, particularly girls, are often pulled out of school to care for a sick parent. After the trauma of watching a parent die, these children face the additional burden of adjusting to a new home and experiencing increased economic hardship and uncertainty. One of the most troubling effects of HIV and AIDS is the growth of child-headed households - households where children, once again usually girls, are left alone to care for their younger siblings. According to the 2006 United Nations AIDS report, there are about 1.2 million children under age 17 in South Africa who have been orphaned because of AIDS, a number that has nearly doubled since 2002. And many more children have suffered from the effects of the disease.

The decision of Youth for Christ KwaZulu-Natal to serve children and youth in disadvantaged communities has brought us head on with the

HIV and AIDS Statistics for South Africa

- National HIV prevalence rate among adults (ages 15-49): 18.8 percent
- Adults and children (ages 0-49) living with HIV at the end of 2005: 5.5 million
- AIDS deaths (adult and children) in 2005: 320 000
- AIDS orphans at the end of 2005: 1.2 million
- Approximately 1000 people a day die from HIV and AIDS

“The need to teach basic life skills, incorporating values such as human worth, fidelity and abstinence is key”

challenges the impact of HIV and AIDS has to this target group. YFC has a strong presence in communities and schools and as such we cannot ignore the challenges ahead of us.

So what are the challenges with Youth:

- In spite of the severe AIDS epidemic, which includes widespread knowledge of people dying of AIDS, there is very little done to internalise the risks of having many sexual partners.
- Sexual initiation in relationships is reported

to occur very early after the relationship has started within a few weeks.

- Infidelity is generally perceived as acceptable and there are high levels of partner turnover.
- Peer pressure amongst young people place value on early sexual debut making it difficult for youth who want to remain virgins.
- Sexual debut is often unplanned and does not occur within an established relationship.
- Alcohol and drugs influence casual sex.
- Some are in relationships for status, access to money and resources, and belonging to a group.
- Some are in relationships to get away from the child headed households and poverty.

These behaviours have serious and far reaching implications if they are not addressed, that create a vicious cycle in which HIV and AIDS together with poverty thrives.

Research has shown that in order to make significant progress against HIV and AIDS, effective prevention programs are a must. If the number of people newly infected continues to increase, the growing number of people in need of treatment and care and the growing number of orphans and vulnerable children will overwhelm the world's ability to respond and to sustain its response to HIV and AIDS. Presently prevention programs need to be scaled up. In a report released by Global HIV Prevention working group, it warns that prevention efforts are not keeping pace with the number of people that are treated for HIV. For every person who began antiretroviral therapy in 2006, there were six people who were newly infected.

YFC's work with youth in schools calls for a response that seeks to ensure that effective prevention work takes place. Our programs in school allow staff to break the silence and initiate frank, open and informed discussions about behaviours related to the spread of HIV and AIDS such as sexual infidelity, unsafe sex and drug abuse. The need to teach basic life skills, incorporating values such as human worth, fidelity and abstinence is key. A person whose self esteem and self respect is enhanced and who has developed a strong character is less likely to participate in risky behaviour. This is crucial to prevention programs and reducing new infections taking place among youth.

The Vicious Cycle of HIV



The Global Epidemic Today

Africa remains the global epicenter of the AIDS pandemic. South Africa's AIDS epidemic - one of the worst in the world - shows no evidence of a decline. Today it is estimated that close to 40 million people live with HIV - yet the vast majority are unaware of their status.

AIDS is an exceptional disease and the response to AIDS must be equally exceptional. It requires ongoing leadership on both the national and international levels. Twenty-five years into the epidemic, the global response to AIDS must be transformed from a crisis-management approach to a strategic response which recognizes the need for long-term commitment, prevention and management of the disease. While it is important for governments world wide to begin realizing this, the ultimate responsibility belongs to the individual, to you! And at YFC/KZN we see it as our responsibility to make our staff aware of the issues and make them responsible for their own health and well being.

The impact of the HIV and AIDS epidemic at any workplace, be it business or the non government sector, is extensive. Within any organisation, HIV and AIDS threatens service delivery when projects are affected by decreased staff due to illness and death, absenteeism due to funeral attendance and the emotional impact of dealing or not dealing with loss of family, colleagues and beneficiaries they serve.

It was vitally important for us to ensure that an HIV and AIDS program was put in place to address HIV and AIDS in the workplace. YFC is committed to creating a working and learning environment that is supportive, sensitive and responsive to staff and volunteers who are affected and infected.

The program incorporates the following:

- The organisation conducts basic AIDS training which is compulsory for all staff and volunteers to attend to ensure they have knowledge and are informed about HIV and AIDS.
- Ongoing training takes place during the course of the year that aims to transfer up to date information, teach skills and ensure that all staff are familiar with safety precautions.
- Workplace discussion on HIV testing is currently taking place, encouraging and



motivating staff to go for voluntary counselling and testing. Some staff have decided to go for testing in groups to encourage each other and be a support for each other.

- Youth for Christ has a HIV and AIDS policy in place that ensures that HIV and AIDS becomes a prime focus area in YFC's ministry, and also to protect the interest of staff and volunteers in the organisation.
- A budget is available for emergency risk reduction in case of potential exposure to HIV that occurs during work hours, and should the need arise for on going support, YFC will do it's utmost to assist individuals in this area.

In Youth for Christ our human resource of staff and volunteers is our greatest resource and therefore we are committed to caring for our staff in a responsible way.



yfc
kwazulu-natal
Giving Hope to Children and Youth

Internship
LOCAL TRAINING PROGRAMME

CHANGE AGENTS
INFORMED AND HOPE - DRIVEN BY HIV AND AIDS CONCERN

Khayaletlu
PROJECT FOR YOUTH AT RISK

L'Abri
OUTDOOR CENTRE

Tennyson House
SERVING HOMELESS GIRLS

YAZINI
LIFE SKILLS AND PEER EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

YOUTH
DEVELOPMENT CENTRE
INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

REGIONAL OFFICE:
P.O. Box 1659
Pietermaritzburg • 3200
Tel: (033) 345 2970
Fax (033) 345 1583
NPO No. 004257
E-mail:
office@youthkzn.co.za
Website:
www.youthkzn.co.za
Banking details:
Nedbank, Scottsville
Branch code: 134125
Acc. no.: 1341011461

STAFF SPOTLIGHT

LIZ GOVENDER

Liz started with YFC/KZN 23 years ago as a receptionist, and has worked her way to the position she now holds as administrator. She has been married for 30 years, and has one son who she is very proud of. Liz is an avid gym goer, and also has a strong passion for anything creative, which explains her current study of interior design. Liz is also a part of the leadership of her church.



SIFISO MDLULI

I was born and raised in Gingindlovu, 140km north from Durban. I obtained developmental experience while serving as a street team volunteer in from February until November 2006. I was employed as the street team co-ordinator in November. The internship helped me to identify of who I am and where I'm going in life. I am committed to serve in a meaningful way, together with my wonderful team who motivate me. I treat challenges as the tools and steps for my development and success.



EUNICE MOSHESH

I was born and raised in Eastern Cape. I am married and have three children; my family means a lot to me. I started working with YFC in 1999 as a Receptionist/ Secretary and still am to date. I am a Lay Minister in my church. My involvement with my church and my YFC experience has contributed immensely in my personal and spiritual growth. I enjoy working with different people from different backgrounds and cultures.



ZAMA XABA

I worked for the Durban Yazini project in 2003-2004 as intern facilitator in high schools. I learnt a lot of things especially about personal development. In 2005 I was appointed as a contract worker in high schools which was a big challenge. Unfortunately I wasn't able to finish the year due to some family problems. When I was away I realised that Gods aim for me was to save young people. In 2006 YFC/KZN gave me a second chance, which is not something that very often happens in life.



I rate myself as a likely person to be making a difference in young peoples lives .I enjoy each and every minute I spend with young people at schools. I am very proud to be a part of the YFC team and very lucky to have the chance to explore my ability. This is what is in my heart.