

Session 14: Prevention of sexual abuse for children 17 years and below



14.0: Introductions

Participants | Women and Men together

Objectives |

1. To explore long term goals for prevention of sexual abuse and early sex.
2. To empower parents with skills to facilitate healthy communication with their children about sexuality.

Duration | 2 hours 30 minutes.

Preparation | Review advance information about participants; revise/expand questions accordingly.

Activity 14.1: Review of home practice

Time | 20 minutes

S T E P S

- 1 | Welcome everyone for session fourteen.
- 2 | Review home practice by asking individuals to share their experience. ***(Encourage them to discuss benefits and challenges when they reflected on the gender norms and worked out a plan of modifying some in their respective families).***
- 3 | Encourage participants to continue doing the home practice.

Activity 14.2: Helping Children to stay Safe from Sex Abuse, Drugs and Alcohol

Time | 40 minutes

What the facilitator needs to know

The family is the root of the human being. Children especially, depend totally on the family for their wellbeing and most purpose and direction

Therefore, the parents would be a supportive environment where the child can learn to be independent, allow to abstain or delay sex until the right decision making age.

Even amidst lack and other challenges children and young people need adequate care to reduce the risk of developing undesirable and risky behaviors which have negative impact on themselves, their family and the community.

During the discussions, enable participants to understand the different types of sexual abuse for both girls and boys. These include:

- ⊙ Unwanted touching
- ⊙ Staring and leering
- ⊙ Suggestive comments or jokes
- ⊙ Sexually explicit pictures, posters etc.
- ⊙ Unwanted invitations to go on a date
- ⊙ Requests for sex
- ⊙ Intrusive questions about your personal/private life
- ⊙ Insults, name calling or taunts based on your sex
- ⊙ Sexually explicit text messages, emails

During the activity, when the cup or pot breaks, help parents to identify some of the following by asking; What did you observe? How did you feel?

- ⊙ Lost hope and got confused
- ⊙ Felt sorry and was heartbroken when the pot broke
- ⊙ Life is precious and must be guarded well
- ⊙ Life once lost will never be the same
- ⊙ We should not be irresponsible people if we want to live happily
- ⊙ Felt guilty for failing to advise the others who were playing with the pot
- ⊙ One's life is also important to the community

Ensure that you ask parents to try out 'the clay pot activity' with their children during the week. This is a practical and interesting activity to help parents discuss this sensitive topic with their children.

Objectives

1. To help parents discuss ways to ensure children's personal safety.
2. To identify ways of protecting children from sexual abuse or pressure to use drugs and alcohol.

Materials

Flip chart, masking tape and markers.

STEPS

- 1 | **Provide** an overview of the session objective.
- 2 | Show participants a very beautiful breakable clay pot or cup.
- 3 | Tell them to imagine that this pot or cup represents their life, something very precious.
- 4 | Ask a few participants to take the pot one after the other and express how best they can take care of their life.
(Encourage them to use words, movement, and actions that demonstrate that they care to handle their pot/ cup very well).
- 5 | Allow about 5 people to try out. Some of the things parents could say are:
 - ⊙ This is my life and I will not compromise it for anything
 - ⊙ This is my unique life
 - ⊙ I am a strong person and I cherish my life
 - ⊙ My life is so beautiful
- 6 | After participants have handled the breakable pot or cup, take the cup/ pot and handle it carelessly, while tossing it up in the air and talking about negative behaviours **(such as I don't care even if I smoke, I don't care even if I engage in early sex, alcohol consumption is not bad for me).**
- 7 | Drop the pot or cup and let it break into pieces.
- 8 | During plenary ask the participants to share their feelings before the pot/ cup broke and after the pot or cup got broken. Write these on two separate flipcharts. **(Allow 10 minutes for this).**
- 9 | Ask participants to form 2 – 3 groups and discuss the following questions.
 - a) What are the consequences of not caring well for your life?
 - b) What are the things parents can tell their children to help reduce the children's risk to sexual and drug abuse? (obtain at least 5)
 - c) How can we use the illustration or pot experience to support our children with information to prevent sexual and drug abuse?
- 10 | As participants are working in their groups, the facilitator should try to mend the broken pot/ cup.
- 11 | When the participants are done with their discussion, let them present their views in the plenary **(allow 5-10 mins).**
- 12 | Now present the mended pot or cup to the participants and let them discuss it. Ask if the mended one is as treasured and valued as the intact one **(before it broke).**

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Tell them that the mended pot can still be useful after repair but, it needs a lot of commitment and more hard work to make it look nice.

Close the activity by highlighting the following points

1. *Inform them that like this pot/ cup, children need to be cared for and protected from abuse of any kind, including sexual abuse, alcohol and drug use activities, so that they are not destroyed like the beautiful pot or cup. We can do this by giving children wise counsel, supporting them when they report risk, showing them that no one loves them more than we do, not being abusive to them, and encouraging them to care for themselves. But sometimes children may suffer abuse or have engaged in early sex, they may get pregnant or engage in drug abuse willingly, while at home or while staying with someone else. As parents of such children, we need to encourage and support them to overcome this challenge. We should advise/ be firm for them to stop if they are doing so willingly, and positively encourage the abused, reassuring them that ALL IS NOT LOST. This will help them to be more careful to avoid risks and work hard to change their destiny.*
2. *Conclude the session by emphasizing:*
 - a) *Life is a precious gift that should be treasured. It's upon each one of us to let our children know that life is a gift to be treasured.*
 - b) *Every choice has its consequences, positive or negative. Therefore, children need to learn to make the best decisions in each situation. Parents have a role to help their children make the right choices about sexual activities and drug use by:*
 - i) *Providing accurate information on sexuality that is age friendly*
 - ii) *Guiding children how best to take care of their lives just like we have experienced with the pot or cup.*
3. *As parents, we need to live as role models by providing the best examples to our children in our everyday lives*

Activity 14.3: Circle of Friends Poem

Time | 45 minutes

What the facilitator needs to know

This activity is meant to help participants to reflect on their individual lives, to be able to identify how they can use the lessons from their lives to support their children learn the importance of family relationships, and to stimulate their thinking of how to improve relations with people who are important in their lives through parenting.

Provide relevant examples about how children might change parents' lives like;

- ⊙ Free time with friends
- ⊙ Visiting and amount of time at work
- ⊙ Free to for play and relaxation

Let parents know the importance of Love and Discipline as key elements that must be provided in the same measure if children are to have a better river of live and be responsible children at 20 years.

- Objectives**
1. To facilitate interpersonal relationship and enable participants to live with themselves
 2. To develop effective speaking skills and control emotion

Materials | A copy of the circle of friend's poem, flip chart markers, small pieces of paper

Provide an overview of the session objective.

Invite one volunteer to read the 'circle of friends' poem below

I have many friends

But ***only a few are true***

I have friends that I only say Hi and bye to

I have friends that just come around

When they need answers or advise

Although these are not true friends

They play a big part in teaching me about life

On the other hand

I have true friends

Who encourage and support me

Sure, we have our differences

But only true relationships withstand obstacles

They compliment me on a good job

And they send my spirit to the skies with their constant

Loyal friendship

And sometimes I just wonder

Why

Why God only puts a few good friends on earth

I think I may have the answer

But I am unsure

Because many things in life hold little security

But may be true friends are gifts

Wrapped under a big Christmas tree

That is disguised in a scholastic setting

It's our job to constantly unwrap each gift

To hunt for the ones

That help us learn and positively grow

Bringing us joy and happiness

Adopted from: True Eyes

<http://WWW.Poemhunter.com/poem/my-circle-of-friends/>

3

Ask the participants to individually respond to the questions below and write their responses in their note books (**reflect and share with their with their neighbor the responses**).

- a) Think of all the friends you have and write down the names of the five you consider to be your good friends
- b) Among the five people whose names you have written, who is your very good friend?

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Ask participants to form 2 -3 groups and let them discuss the following questions. (**Provide 10 – 15 minutes for this**)

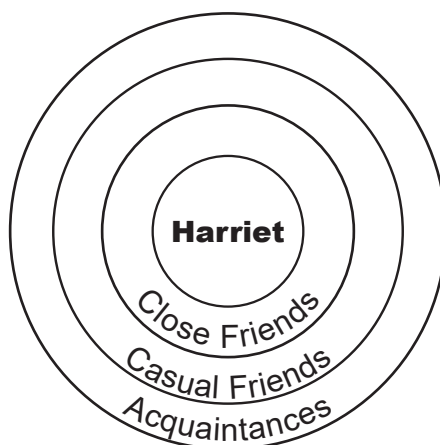
- a) Was it hard/easy to choose that person? Why?
- b) What criteria did you use to choose the five and later the one very good friend out of the five?
- c) Why do people choose friends who are not of the same age like themselves? Are there advantages of having adults as friends? What about disadvantages?
- d) What are the qualities that make one a good friend as opposed to a bad friend?

5

Invite them to join the plenary and ask 1-2 people to share what they learn from the group discussion.

6

Summarize the activity by explaining the various categories of friends (close friends, casual friends, and acquaintances) using the circle below



CLOSE FRIENDS

Close friends are people we trust and can rely on at anytime in life, and share with our personal information that we consider to be secrets. We do not fear to tell them things concerning us.

CASUAL FRIENDS

These are people we love chatting with but they are not close to us although we may visit them many times. e.g people we watch with foot ball, talk about music, politics etc.

ACQUAINTANCES

These are people we talk to occasionally but we take them as friends. They also guide us on issues of life that we may not know. E.g Doctors, opinion leaders, teachers, some parents

7 Ask participants to perform a role play of a family and how they will support their children to use the skills learnt and understand their friendship cycle (explaining in the various categories of friends (**close friends, casual friends, and acquaintances**)).

8 Ask other members of comment on the role play to ensure that participants understand how to work it out with their family members especially the children.

9 Use the information below to help parents understand how to guide their children on the selection of good friends.

Good Friends	Bad Friends
Is ready to be there for you at any time of your life	Not there for you in bad times
Is open and trustworthy	Not open
Is reliable	Not reliable
Gives good advice	Gives you bad advice
Helps you when in problems	Does not help when in problems
Does not tell you to do negative things	Leads you astray
Makes you happy	Makes you unhappy
Shares with you the little he/she has	Is mean and does not share his/her things
Cares about the way you feel	Doesn't care about how you feel
Encourages you to work hard	Does not encourage you to work hard
Guides you to be better	Talks behind your back

Activity 14.4: Pregnancy Code

Time | 45 minutes

What the facilitator needs to know

- ⊙ Girls are sometimes forced to run away from home when they feel unfairly treated and oppressed. They may end up being sexually and economically exploited, in addition to unwanted pregnancies.
- ⊙ It is important for parents to treat girls fairly and to give them answers when they ask questions.
- ⊙ Parents also need to educate their girls about their bodies and about how pregnancy happens.
- ⊙ Many parents believe that information on sexuality will encourage their children to engage in sexual activity. However, right information on sexuality generally leads to more responsible and safer attitudes.
- ⊙ Let parents know that it's important to choose words carefully and use right language depending on the capacity and age of their children.

Objective | 1. To help parents acquire skills of communicating freely with their children on various issues including sexuality.

Materials | Flipchart, masking tape and markers

STEPS

1

Provide an overview of the session objective.

2

Ask four volunteers to perform a role play (mother, father and 2 young people).

3

Ask the volunteers to step aside and use the information below to guide them on how to carry out the roles of the family (**mother, father, daughter and son**).

Girl (Child): Since I came from school I have had to go for water, then collect firewood and you are just sitting there; can't you even wash the plates?

Boy (Child): You girl, what is wrong with you? Don't you know I am a boy? How do you expect me to wash plates? You are just becoming lazy.

Mother comes in

Mother: Why are you two always quarrelling? Quarrelling instead of doing the work you have to do?

Girl: Why do I have to do all the work and he is just sitting around or walking about? I asked him to wash the plates and he just insulted me!

Mother: Why don't you help your sister? Boys can do housework too.

Father walks in as the mother speaks

Father: You woman are teaching your daughter to be lazy! The housework is for girls; boys have other things to do! Let the girl learn to do the work herself!

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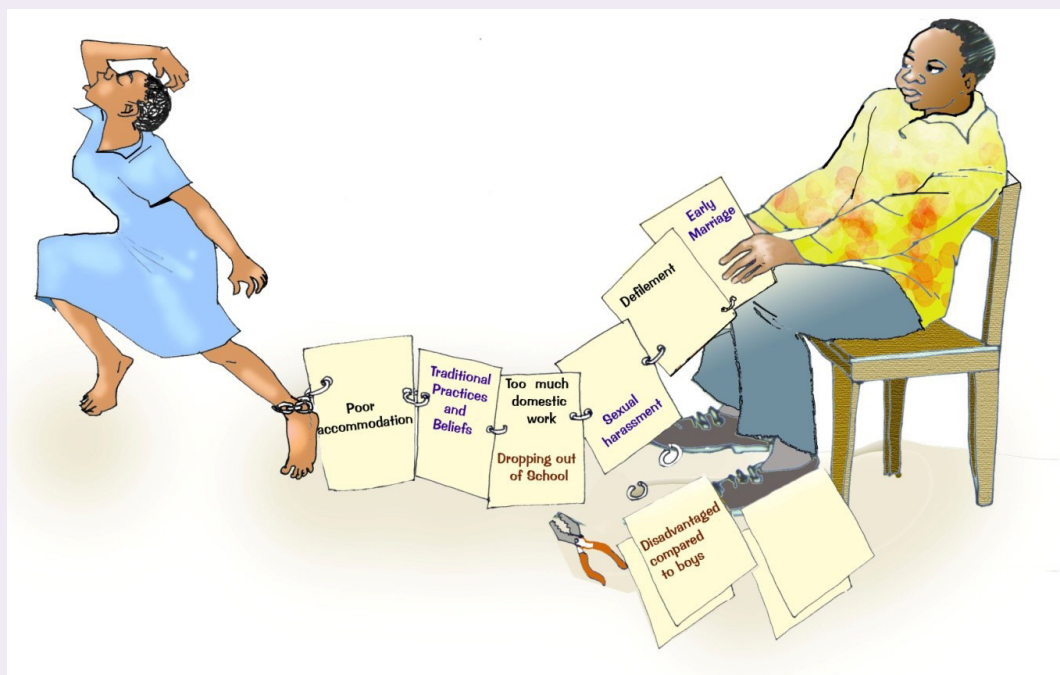
Ask participants to discuss the following questions.

- a) What did you see and hear?
- b) Do such things happen here?
- c) Why does such a situation happen? (**List the responses on a flip chart**).
- d) What does such a situation lead to? - Ensure that parents will mention issues like drop out of school, early pregnancy and marriage etc (**List the response on a flip chart**).

5

Continue with the activity;

- a) Invite 3 volunteers to act as mother, father and girl child, and have the parents sit facing the girl
- b) Use the responses in 4b and 4c above and start writing them on separate small pieces of paper and join them using masking tape
(As you write one by one, continue engaging the parents to reflect on causes and challenges that are faced by the girl child and the responsible parties. This will make it easy to tie the problems you writing on the small pieces of paper from the parent to the child)
- c) Just like in the picture below tie the papers to girl's leg and have the parents hold the papers on the other end.



6

Ask participants to discuss who should be responsible for the problems that the girl child faces relating to the role play in step 5. **Give about 5 minutes to discuss this).**

7

Ask participants if it would be easy for that kind of girl or boy to keep in school if surrounded with similar problems? **(Give about 5 minutes to discuss this).**

8

Ask: what did you learn from the activity?

Close the activity by highlighting the following points

1. *It is important for us to appreciate that children will transit between childhood and adulthood. During this time, children experience many physical, emotional and social changes.*
2. *Physical changes, such as menstruation in girls or development of facial hair in boys, can be confusing and worrisome for most of the children.*
3. *During the time, children develop new interests and attempt to establish their independence from adults. Peer pressure increases and can become particularly difficult for young people to resist.*
4. *As parents, we need to use this time of their transition to support and improve our relationships. Talking and listening to them as well as ensuring they have access to the right information should be one of our roles in helping them.*
5. *In addition to teaching the religious values, we should provide sexuality information to help them resist peer pressure and avoid sexually transmitted infections including HIV, if they decide to have sex.*
 - ⊙ *use everyday opportunities to talk about sexuality – for example, when you hear something on the radio together, or see something relevant on TV.*
 - ⊙ *let your child know that you're interested in seeing things from their perspective – for example, asking them what they think about sexuality.*
 - ⊙ *be ready to talk about issues or concerns when your child raises them, and assuring your child that they don't need to feel embarrassed.*
 - ⊙ *be honest if you don't know the answer to a question – you could suggest that you look for the answer together.*
 - ⊙ *ask your child what they already know, then add new information and clear up any misconceptions.*
6. *It is important to reflect on our cultural beliefs and practices because some of them contribute to children's involvement in early sex and dropping out of school.*

Activity 14.5: Home practice

Time | 5 minutes

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Ask participants to do the following with their children and family members during the week.

a) The beautiful clay pot or cup activity from beginning to end