

# WHEN DAYS ARE DARK, FRIENDS ARE FEW

Many people who are HIV-positive are stigmatized and treated with hate, mistrust, and rejection by others. Children who lose their parents to AIDS also experience discrimination.

Have two volunteers role play for the whole group. The intent is to help others understand how a person who has lost a parent to AIDS might feel and how support might be provided to that person. Use the provided script below.

## Characters

Masego and Lucy: Two 16 year old teenagers. They are friends in the same class.

Pako: 16 years old. He was a schoolmate of Masego and Lucy.

But a few days ago, he suddenly left school.

## Scene

Masego and Lucy are walking home from school, and wonder why Pako hasn't been to school...

Masego: I really don't understand why [Pako] dropped out of school! I wonder [Pako] wrong. I haven't seen him since last week, and I don't even know where he lives.

Lucy: I was wondering myself... he said he enjoyed coming to school. He didn't say word, did he? — I mean leaving... it's not very kind on his part!

Masego: Have you heard nothing about him?

Lucy: Well, actually my mother mentioned, but it's hard to believe.

Masego: What do you know? Come on, tell me whole story!

Lucy: I don't know if it's true, but my mother that his mother died.

Masego: Ah... I'm sorry... can you imagine how must be feeling about that?

Lucy: It's hard. I can't even think of it. He must feeling very lonely. No one can fill the love one's mother.

Masego: But his mother was quite young, wasn't she? Was she ill?

Lucy: According to what my mother was told, she died of AIDS, and Pako might also be infected with AIDS.

Masego: He lost his mother, and he is infected with AIDS! It can't be true. I'm really concerned about him. He's only 16... I can't believe it.

Lucy: My mother told me to stay away from him. I really don't know what to do... perhaps we should avoid him! We might catch the disease.

Masego: Hmm... we learned that AIDS can't spread by meeting with infected people. I think he needs our support. After all, he is our friend.

Lucy: Maybe you're right. How can we support him?

Masego: Without his mother I am sure he will need help in the house. I also remember my father saying a way to support a person affected by AIDS is to continue the friendship: spend some time with the person so that he or she can share feelings and get support. Imagine how we would feel if you or I lost our mother and people were avoiding us.

Lucy: Yes, I would feel scared and lonely. Let's not waste time... let's go and meet him. It's true when they say when days are dark friends are few! Let's show Pako that we a genuine friends.