

GRADE 8

ACTIVITIES:

TOPICS INCLUDE:

1. Why do teens need to know about AIDS, when most people who have it are adults?
 2. What is AIDS?
 3. How does a person get AIDS?
 4. What is the blood test?
 5. Can people get it from kissing?
 6. Who can catch AIDS?
 7. Can people get it other ways, besides having sex or sharing needles with someone who has the virus?
1. Introduce the lesson by discussing its relevance and its purpose. Begin by putting Transparency 1 on the screen. (There is one Transparency for each topic)

Why do teens need to know about AIDS, when most people who have it are adults?

Up to now, most teenagers have not felt very concerned about AIDS. They haven't worried that it might possibly affect them or their friends. Physicians haven't been particularly worried about teenagers either. That view is changing. Although the number of adolescents with AIDS is very small, many doctors consider teens a population "at risk" for the disease. Even though most people with AIDS are adults, many caught the virus when they were teens.

It's extremely important that you have all the facts-- the very best information about AIDS. There are lots of rumors going around, and you must be able to tell fact from fiction. Your knowledge will be your protection against exposure to the disease.

AIDS is different from most other diseases. It is passed when people engage in certain behaviors. That means that people have to participate in certain kinds of activities to allow the disease to enter their bodies. You need to know which behaviors can transmit HIV and which cannot. Then you can

take care of yourself and help your friends to stay safe. You will know exactly how to avoid exposure to AIDS.

And you'll have to do that because there is no cure for AIDS. Once a person is infected with the AIDS virus (HIV), it will be in their body as long as they live. There is no way that they can get rid of it. There is no cure for people who are ill.

We can't vaccinate you against AIDS either. Most of you had shots when you were young which protects you against polio, measles, and mumps. Unfortunately, there is no medication to protect us against AIDS. Scientists around the world are working toward a cure and a vaccine, but nothing appears likely in the next few years. The fact of AIDS is something we all have to live with.

AIDS is not curable, but it is entirely preventable. That's what we're going to talk about: What behaviors can cause AIDS, and which behaviors are safe. Afterward, I'd like to hear any questions that people still have.

2. Define AIDS and explain its effect on the body, putting Transparency 2 on the screen.

What is AIDS?

AIDS is caused by a virus, a tiny germ that enters the body through the blood stream. It has to get into the blood to cause infection. Once inside the body, this virus, called HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus), begins to attack the immune system, the system responsible for fighting off all germs, all diseases. In people with AIDS, the virus invades a white blood cell, which is the leader and organizer of the immune system. Inside the white cell, the virus multiplies and multiplies until the cell finally bursts open, releasing more new virus into the blood stream. These new AIDS viruses look for more white blood cells to invade.

Over time, the number of white blood cells decreases, and the immune system can no longer function properly. The person becomes completely vulnerable to many kinds of germs that

enter their body. They cannot fight back against infection and disease.

People's bodies respond differently once they are infected with the virus, and we don't know for sure why this is so. Most people look and feel perfectly healthy, and most don't know they are infected. The virus lies dormant in their cells, as if it were in a sleeping state, and their immune system continues to function normally. We could not tell by looking at them that they have the AIDS virus in their bodies. They will carry the virus as long as they live, and as long as they live, they will be able to pass the virus to other people through specific behaviors which we are going to talk about. (These people are called asymptomatic carriers and are HIV positive)

In other people the virus does serious damage to their immune system. Some develop what we call AIDS. A patient must have a specific type of illness to be diagnosed with AIDS. Most have either a particular kind of pneumonia or a kind of cancer which causes bleeding inside the body under the skin.

People have a variety of symptoms. Some of these people may be very ill, while others seem relatively healthy. These symptoms may be similar to those we may get when we have the flu, but they last a much longer time and are much more severe. People may have a fever, cough, diarrhea, yeast infections, sudden weight loss or night sweats. If someone has these symptoms for more than two weeks, and the doctor doesn't feel they are part of another illness, he or she will probably test for HIV.

These people in the middle have an uncertain future. Some may become so ill that they die without ever being diagnosed with AIDS. Others may be sick for awhile and then feel better. They may be able to return to work and resume their normal activities. But they won't know when the virus might begin to

do more damage.

3. Discuss transmission, using Transparency 3.

How does a person get AIDS?

AIDS is a very hard disease to catch. It can only be transmitted from one person to another person when they exchange certain body fluids. There are only four body fluids known to have a strong enough concentration of the virus to pass it from one person to another. One of these fluids is blood; two are sexual fluids: semen from the man and vaginal fluid from the woman, and the fourth is breast milk. One of these infected fluids would have to enter a person's body and then get into their bloodstream in order to cause infection. There aren't very many ways that this can happen. In fact, there are basically only two behaviors that pass the virus. These are called risk behaviors, because they can cause great harm, in this case, AIDS.

The first is shooting IV (intravenous) drugs. When people shoot drugs, they often do it with other people. When a person puts the drug into his/her vein with a needle, she/he also pulls some of the blood up in the syringe. As the needle is passed from one person to the next, each may be shooting infected blood directly into their bloodstream.

Who can remember the four fluids that we mentioned? Right, blood, semen, vaginal fluid, and breast milk. Semen and vaginal fluid are shared when two people have intercourse; if one person is infected, the other person can become infected. The virus can be passed through vaginal intercourse. This is sex between a man and a woman when the man puts his penis into the woman's vagina. The virus can also be passed during anal intercourse. This is considered the most risky. It can be sexual intercourse between a man and a woman or between two men. It is when a man puts his penis into another person's anus. It can also be transmitted through oral intercourse.

Shooting drugs or having sex with an infected partner are both risky behaviors. It should be clear now why people are concerned about teenagers and AIDS. Although many teens are not experimenting with drugs or sexual intercourse, some are. People have to be smart so that they can be safe.

There is another way people transmit the AIDS virus. If a mother is infected (and remember, she may not know that she is), she can pass it to the baby during pregnancy and birth. The number of babies born with AIDS is growing daily. (You may wish to site statistics. For local statistics anywhere in Washington; call 1-800-272-AIDS. In Seattle call 296-4999. Anywhere in the U.S., call 1-800-342-AIDS.) Often parents and foster parents are unable to care for these infants, so many babies live in hospitals. It is crucial for women who are thinking of becoming pregnant to be certain that they are healthy first. Infected mothers can also transmit the AIDS virus to their babies during nursing through breast milk. Infected mothers are advised not to nurse their babies.

Some people have contracted the AIDS virus during blood transfusions. Before 1985, there was no test to screen blood to be sure it was safe. Since 1985, there has been a test, so the chance of receiving infected blood today is very, very small.

4. Elaborate on the blood test with Transparency 4.

What's the blood test?

The only test we have to tell whether or not a person has been exposed to AIDS is a blood test. The test shows if the person is infected with the virus by finding antibodies in the blood. When the AIDS virus first enters the body, white blood cells start to make antibodies which are supposed to literally seek out and destroy the invader virus. With most illness, this process works. But in the case of AIDS, the antibodies never find the virus (because it is hidden inside the white blood cells) so the antibodies just float around in the bloodstream. When the test finds antibodies, we know the virus is there too. Most people don't need to take the test. Only people who have

been involved in risky behaviors or people who have had sex with people involved in risky behaviors need to think about it.

5. Address students' common concern about kissing as a mode of transmission using Transparency 5.

Can people get it from kissing?

Many people have been worried about saliva. Most of the time when a researcher analyzes the saliva of an AIDS patient, no evidence of virus is found. But sometimes virus is discovered in saliva or tears. If any is found, the concentration is so small, that researchers have not believed that saliva and tears could be fluids capable of passing the virus.

Dry, social kissing (the kind we do with family and friends) is definitely not a risk. French kissing (deep, open-mouth kissing) is often referred to as a "theoretical risk". This means that although there is no case documented anywhere in the world where kissing or saliva is known to be the causal agent- it seems theoretically possible that the virus could be passed through heavy kissing. If an AIDS carrier had small particles of blood in their saliva (from a sore, or bleeding gums), and the other person had any kind of open sore or tiny cut in their mouth, then it might be possible for infected blood to enter through that break in the lining of the mouth and pass into the blood stream. Again, no one knows of any case where this has happened.

6. Explain who is vulnerable to HIV, with Transparency 6 on the screen.

Who can catch AIDS?

It's important to know that anyone can get AIDS under certain circumstances. The virus does not discriminate. It does not prefer certain types of people. It can infect males or females, babies, kids, teenagers, or adults. It affects people from all races and ethnic groups. The virus does not need certain types of people; it needs certain types of behavior.

At first, AIDS was labeled a homosexual (or gay) disease and in fact, the majority of people with AIDS in America today are

homosexual men. But doctors know now that AIDS is not a gay disease; it can be anyone's disease.

When I talk about a homosexual person, I'm talking about a person who is more attracted to someone of the same gender. When I talk about a heterosexual person, I'm talking about a person who is more attracted to someone of the opposite gender. AIDS began to spread quickly through the male homosexual community in America, because it was introduced into the country, on the East coast, by a gay man (probably someone who had been traveling and picked up the virus). Some gay men only have one partner for life. They are safe. Historically, though, some gay men have had many sexual partners, so the disease spread rapidly. But since it's a sexually transmitted disease, it would spread quickly in any population where people have sexual intercourse with more than one partner.

In other places, for instance in Africa, AIDS is mainly a heterosexual disease. About half the people who have it are men who caught it from women, and half are women who caught it from men.

Anyone who does IV drugs, or has sex with an infected person can catch AIDS.

7. Dispel myths and unfounded fears about transmission, putting Transparency 7 on the screen.

Can people get it other ways, besides having sex or sharing needles with someone who is infected. AIDS is a very hard disease to catch. We've talked about how the disease is transmitted. Remember, it's a blood-borne virus; it has to get into your bloodstream. AIDS is not an airborne virus like a cold or measles. You don't get it from coughs or sneezes. You don't get it by riding next to someone on the school bus, or by shaking hands. You can't get it from touching or hugging, or participating in sports. We don't have to worry about the normal daily activities we do with other people.

There have been studies done of people who live with and care for AIDS patients. Not one person has ever contracted the disease from living in the same home or going to school with someone with AIDS.

As time goes on, it's likely that many of you will know someone with AIDS. You know now that you don't have to be afraid; you don't have to stay away from that person. People with AIDS can still be friends, neighbors, relatives, teachers.....just like they've always been.

8. Hand out the Behavior Worksheet. Allow students 4 minutes to fill it out individually. Discuss the answers. They are as follows:

1 d	8 c	15 d
2 a	9 d	16 d
3 a	10 d	17 c
4 b	11 d	18 a
5 d	12 d	19 d
6 c	13 b	
7 a	14 d	

The experts are in absolute agreement about which items do not pose a risk. But even informed adults will disagree about exactly which of the other categories are appropriate, since we haven't assigned specific percentages to the terms "big" and "small", so we do not recommend grading this exercise. Its purpose is to reinforce the concepts that certain behaviors are not at all risky, and there are degrees of risk.

Behavior Worksheet

Behavior	A Yes A Big Risk	B Yes A Risk	C Yes A Small Risk	D No Not A Risk
1. Abstinence (No sex, no drugs)				
2. Sharing needles to shoot up drugs				
3. Intercourse without a condom				
4. Intercourse with a condom				
5. Social kissing (dry)				
6. Open-mouthed kissing (wet)				
7. Blood transfusion before March, 1985				
8. Blood transfusion after March, 1985				
9. Donating blood				
10. Contact with doorknobs, toilet seats, telephones, towels, bed linen, dishes, glasses				
11. Shaking hands, hugging, touching				
12. Crying, coughing, sneezing				
13. Infected mother to newborn or fetus				
14. Mosquito bites				
15. Dogs, cats, other pets				
16. Swimming pools, hot tubs, showering in PE				
17. Sharing a toothbrush or razor				
18. Unclean needles used for ear piercing or tattooing				
19. Going to school with a				

Behavior Worksheet

Behavior	A Yes A Big Risk	B Yes A Risk	C Yes A Small Risk	D No Not A Risk
1. Abstinence (No sex, no drugs)				X
2. Sharing needles to shoot up drugs	X			
3. Intercourse without a condom	X			
4. Intercourse with a condom		X		
5. Social kissing (dry)				X
6. Open-mouthed kissing (wet)			X	
7. Blood transfusion before March, 1985	X			
8. Blood transfusion after March, 1985			X	
9. Donating blood				X
10. Contact with doorknobs, toilet seats, telephones, towels, bed linen, dishes, glasses				X
11. Shaking hands, hugging, touching				X
12. Crying, coughing, sneezing				X
13. Infected mother to newborn or fetus		X		
14. Mosquito bites				X
15. Dogs, cats, other pets				X
16. Swimming pools, hot tubs, showering in PE				X
17. Sharing a toothbrush or razor			X	
18. Unclean needles used for ear piercing or tattooing	X			
19. Going to school with a				X

HIV/AIDS Curriculum
8th Grade Lesson Plans

Grade 8 - Day 2

Objectives:

1. Identify abstinence from sexual intercourse as the only certain means for prevention of HIV/AIDS through sexual contact.
2. Recognize that he or she can say "no" to sex and drugs and not lose friends.
3. Identify the influence of peers in decisions they make.

Materials:

1. Video: Storm Warnings: Teenagers and AIDS
 - a. The Media Guild
 - b. 20 minutes
 - c. Review question
2. Transparencies:
 - a. HIV/AIDS Population
 - b. Reported AIDS Cases
 - c. HIV/AIDS Stages of Infection
 - d. HIV/AIDS Transmission

Procedure:

1. Preview questions associated with the video
2. Show the video
3. Discuss questions
4. Go over transparencies
 - a. HIV/AIDS Transmission
 - b. HIV/AIDS Stages of Infection
 - c. HIV/AIDS Population
 - d. Reported Cases