

PN-ABL-393  
ISA 7743 ✓

# AIDS EDUCATION FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

PUPILS' HANDBOOK FOR  
STANDARDS SEVEN AND EIGHT



MALAWI AIDS EDUCATION FOR SCHOOLS

# FINAL

# **AIDS EDUCATION FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

**PUPILS' HANDBOOK FOR  
STANDARDS SEVEN AND EIGHT**

**Produced in cooperation with the Malawi Ministry of Health,  
AIDS Secretariat, Health Education Unit, Ministry of Education  
and Culture, Ministry of Community Services, UNICEF,  
WHO, Malawi Institute of Education and USAID/AIDS COM.**

**1992 Edition**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TOPIC 1	THE FAMILY.....	5
TOPIC 2	COMMON DISEASES.....	9
TOPIC 3	WHAT IS AIDS?.....	10
TOPIC 4	HOW AIDS AFFECTS THE BODY.....	12
TOPIC 5	SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF AIDS.....	17
TOPIC 6	HOW AIDS IS SPREAD.....	20
TOPIC 7	HOW TO AVOID AIDS.....	26
TOPIC 8	TAKING CARE OF PEOPLE WITH AIDS.....	29
TOPIC 9	THE IMPACT OF AIDS.....	32

STANDARDS SEVEN AND EIGHT  
TOPIC 1  
THE FAMILY

A family is usually made up of a father, a mother and children. Sometimes other relatives also live with the family. This is called an extended family.



1. A family.

The father is the head of the family. He is usually the one who provides food, shelter and clothes for the family.



2. Father building a shelter for the family.

**ACTIVITY:** State five other things that fathers do for the family.

It is usually the mother who cooks the food, washes clothes, cleans the house and takes care of the children.



3. Mother cooking food.

**ACTIVITY:** State five other things that mothers do for the family.

Children help their parents in many ways. They can clean plates, wash clothes, draw water, cook food, work in the garden and herd cattle.



4. A girl washing plates.

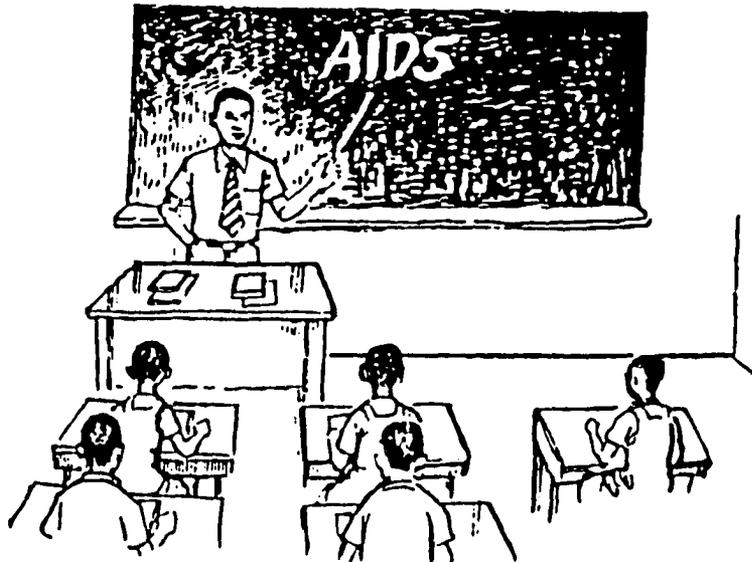
**ACTIVITY:** State five other things that children can do for the family.

**QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT:** Everyone in the family has work to do. What do you think would happen to the family if any of the members died? Who would do the work of the father? Who would do the work of the mother? Do you know of families who are missing a father or mother because of disease? What diseases kill family members?

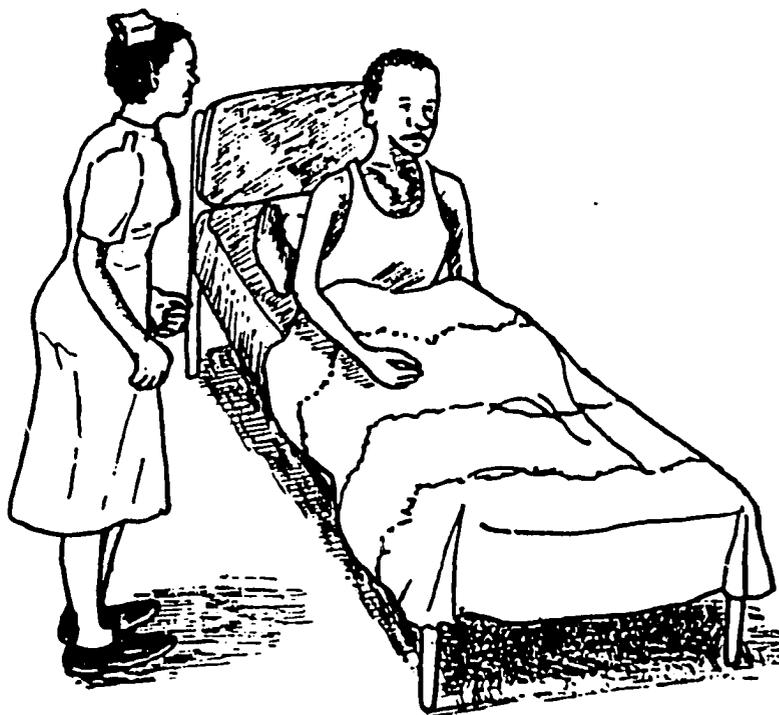
Children like to be in groups. When it is children of about the same age who like to do things together, it is called a "peer group." Children in a peer group spend a lot of time together and tend to behave in the same ways. A peer group may be all boys, all girls, or both boys and girls. Sometimes a boy and a girl in a peer group have sexual intercourse with each other.

**QUESTION:** Is there danger in having sex with your friends? What is it?

Families that live in the same area make up a community. People in the community have work to do, just like members of the family. Community work is jobs like teaching and nursing. The people who do these jobs make life easier for all of us in the community.



5. Teachers are important to the community.



6. Nurses care for people when they are sick.

**ACTIVITY:** State five other jobs done by people in the community.

The community also must see that schools, hospitals and roads get built and repaired. These are big jobs that need the help of many people.

**QUESTIONS TO TALK ABOUT:** What will happen to the community if trained people like teachers and nurses die from disease? What will happen to the community if there is no one to build schools and hospitals?

There is a danger that AIDS will kill many people, including family members and members of our community. We must all learn how to stop the spread of AIDS to protect ourselves, our families and our community. Since there is no vaccine or cure for AIDS, education is the best way to fight AIDS.

## TOPIC 2 COMMON DISEASES

Common diseases are the diseases that come regularly and affect many people. Common diseases in Malaŵi include malaria, measles, eye infections, tuberculosis (TB) and bilharzia. Sometimes people get diseases from each other when they have sexual intercourse. These are called "sexually transmitted diseases" (STDs). Some sexually transmitted diseases are gonorrhoea and syphilis.

**ACTIVITY:** State other diseases which you have heard about. Are they common in Malaŵi?

Diseases which can be passed from one person to another are called "communicable diseases." Some of these diseases are malaria, measles, TB, eye infections, bilharzia, scabies, cholera, meningitis, polio and sexually transmitted diseases including AIDS.

Diseases which cannot be passed from person to person are called "non-communicable diseases." Some of these are heart disease, high blood pressure and cancer.

Diseases which people recover from after treatment are called "curable diseases." Some curable diseases are malaria, TB, bilharzia, gonorrhoea, eye infections and measles. Some diseases cannot be cured. They are called "incurable diseases." Some kinds of cancer and AIDS are examples of incurable diseases.

AIDS is a common, communicable, incurable disease. When you get AIDS you will die, sooner or later. There is no cure, there is no vaccine. We can avoid getting AIDS by learning about the disease and how it is spread.

### **EXERCISE:**

1. List five common diseases.
2. State the meaning of "communicable disease."
3. State the meaning of "incurable disease."
4. State why AIDS is called an incurable disease.

### TOPIC 3 WHAT IS AIDS?

AIDS stands for: Acquired  
Immune  
Deficiency  
Syndrome

Why were these words chosen to describe this disease? The word "acquired" means to get something. The word "immune" means to be protected. "Deficiency" means to be missing something and "syndrome" means a group of symptoms you get when you have a certain disease.

Therefore, the words making up the name "AIDS" mean it is a disease you get (acquired) from other people, it takes away your immunity (immune deficiency) and it results in a certain group of symptoms (syndrome).

Our bodies have a way to fight the germs that cause disease. It is called the "immune system." The immune system is in our blood. It is made up of white blood cells which can kill germs that enter the body.

AIDS is caused by a special kind of germ called a virus. This virus destroys the body's immune system. When we lose our immune system, diseases which usually do not harm us can make us very sick.

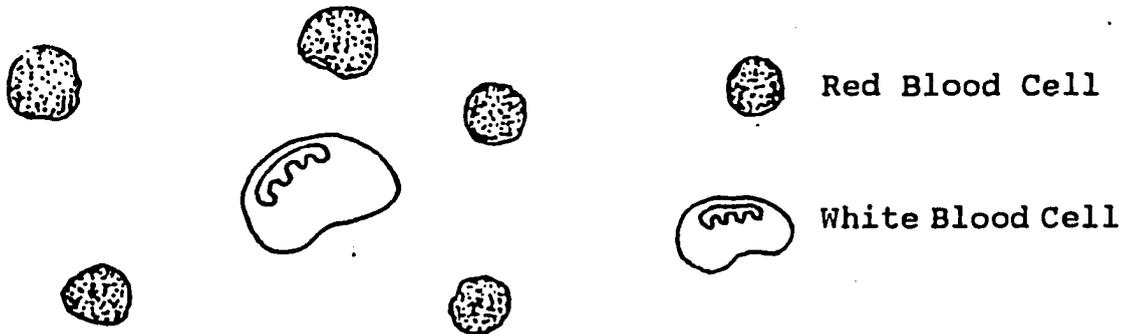
Doctors and scientists in many countries are working to find ways to stop AIDS, but as yet there is no cure and no vaccine. Anyone can suffer from AIDS. When you get the disease you will die, sooner or later.

Doctors found the first cases of AIDS in the United States of America in 1981. The first case of AIDS in Malaŵi was found in 1985. Since that time the number of AIDS cases in Malaŵi has been growing every year. No one knows exactly how AIDS got started, but it is now a serious problem everywhere.



TOPIC 4  
HOW AIDS AFFECTS THE BODY

The blood which flows through our bodies has white and red cells.



8. Red and white blood cells in the blood stream.

The white cells defend the body against disease. This is called the immune system. When germs come into the body, the white blood cells move to where the germs are and kill them. This is how the immune system protects us from disease.

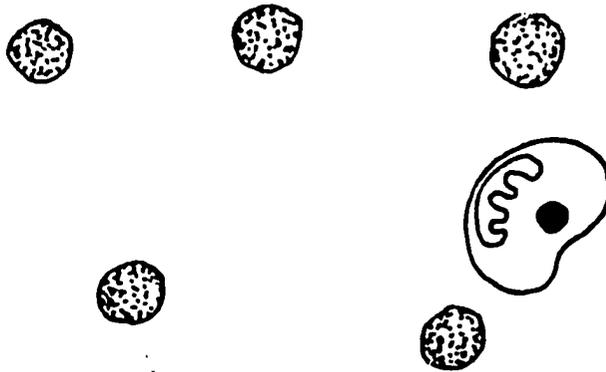


9. A germ has entered the blood stream.

You can think of the white blood cells as "soldiers" which help our bodies fight off disease.



10. A white blood cell has moved to the germ.



11. The white blood cell is killing the germ.

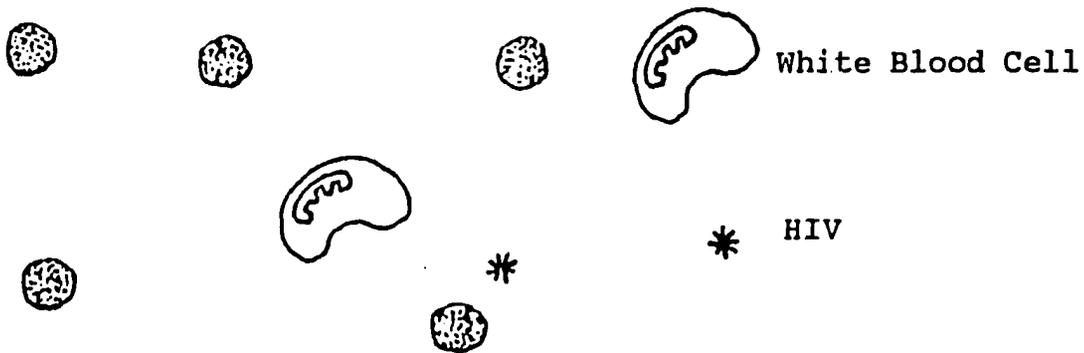
When the body protects you from a disease, you are said to be immune. Immunity means the body can fight off a disease.

The disease AIDS is caused by a virus called HIV.

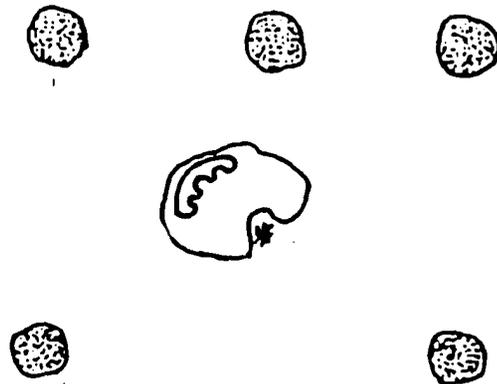
HIV stands for: Human  
Immunodeficiency  
Virus

Why are these three words used to describe the virus which causes AIDS? "Human" means that only people get the disease. "Immunodeficiency" is a combination of the words "immune" and "deficiency." It means that your immune system is not working properly and you have lost protection from disease. "Virus" is a special kind of germ which causes certain diseases.

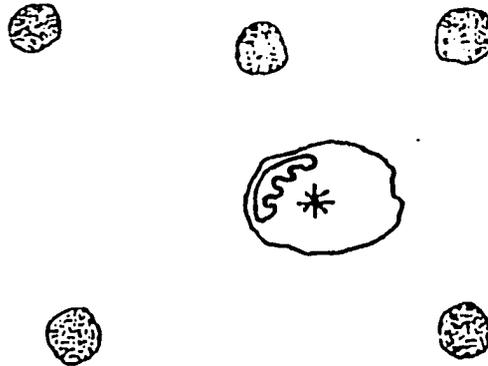
When HIV gets into the body's blood stream, it enters the white blood cells. It grows inside the white cells and finally kills them, as shown in illustrations 12 to 15.



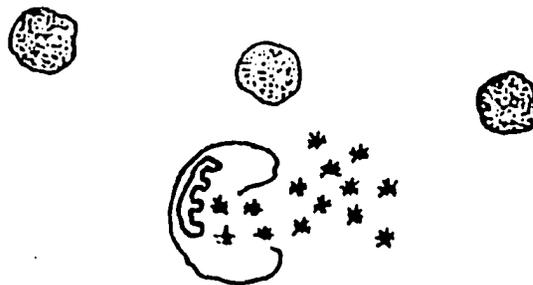
12. HIV has entered the blood stream.



13. HIV is attacking a white blood cell.



14. The HIV is now inside the white blood cell.



15. The HIV makes more virus inside the white blood cell. The white cell dies and the HIV inside it moves on to attack other white blood cells.

When the white blood cells are destroyed by the HIV, the immune system breaks down. When this happens, the body cannot fight diseases. When a blood test reveals that a person has become infected with HIV, they are said to be "HIV-positive." This means the virus that causes AIDS is in their body. Later, when they begin to suffer from diseases which their immune system cannot fight, they are said to have AIDS. Remember, even though people infected with HIV may not look sick, they can still infect others with the virus. Many years may pass from the time someone becomes infected with HIV until the symptoms of AIDS begin to appear.

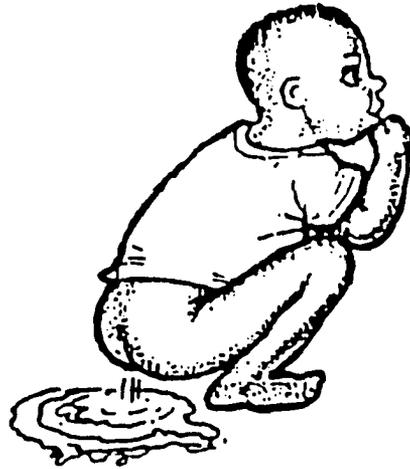
**EXERCISE:** Can you answer these questions?

1. What type of blood cells fight disease?
2. What is immunity?
3. How does the immune system of the body work?
4. What does "HIV" stand for?
5. How does HIV affect the immune system?
6. What happens when the body's immune system is destroyed?
7. What does "HIV-positive" mean?
8. At what point do we say someone has AIDS rather than that they are HIV-positive?

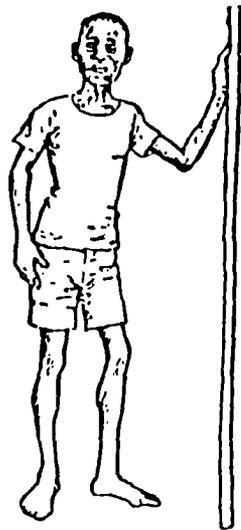
TOPIC 5  
SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF AIDS

A "sign" of a disease is something which you can see, like a rash on the skin. A "symptom" of a disease is what a patient feels, such as a headache.

Diseases you get because of AIDS can have signs and symptoms like those shown below.



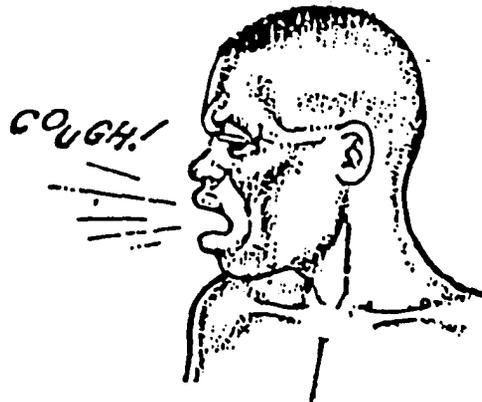
16. Diarrhoea that does not go away or that keeps coming back.



17. Steady loss of weight.



18. A fever that does not go away or keeps coming back.



19. Chest infections that come back, especially TB.



20. Swelling of glands in the neck.

While these are some common signs and symptoms of AIDS, they also can be caused by other diseases. For example, a person can have diarrhoea which lasts a long time without having AIDS.

Remember, you cannot tell if someone has AIDS by the way he or she looks. The only way to be certain is by having an AIDS blood test.

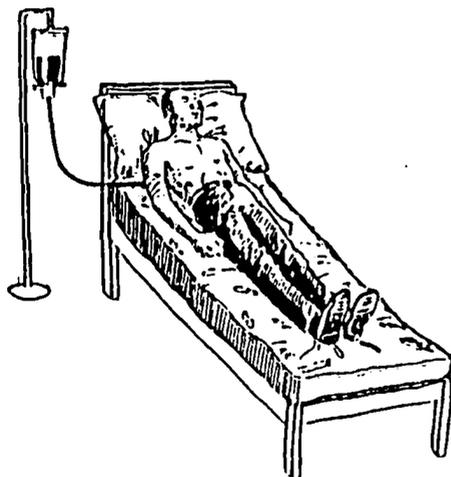
**EXERCISE:** Can you answer these questions?

1. What is the difference between a sign and a symptom?
2. What are five signs and symptoms someone with AIDS might have?
3. How can you be sure that someone has AIDS?

TOPIC 6  
HOW AIDS IS SPREAD

To "transmit" something means to pass it on to someone else. To transmit HIV means to pass the virus to another person who then becomes infected. HIV is found in blood and some other body fluids. It can be passed on to others in the following ways:

1. Transmission through sexual intercourse -- This can happen when someone with HIV has sexual intercourse with another person who does not have the infection. This is the most common way AIDS is spread in Malaŵi and other countries in Africa.
2. Transmission through infected blood -- This can happen when a person is given a transfusion with blood taken from someone infected with HIV. Blood is now tested to be sure that HIV infection is not spread in this way.



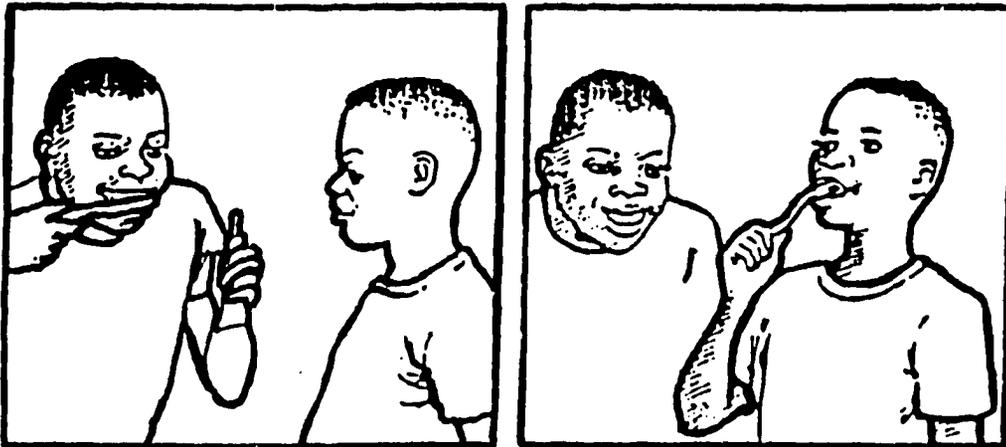
21. AIDS can be spread by a transfusion if the blood is not tested for HIV.

You can get AIDS from an injection with a needle that has been used on a person with HIV infection. That is why you should get injections only from trained people. People who give injections in villages may not be trained medical workers and may not know how to properly clean or sterilise needles and syringes.

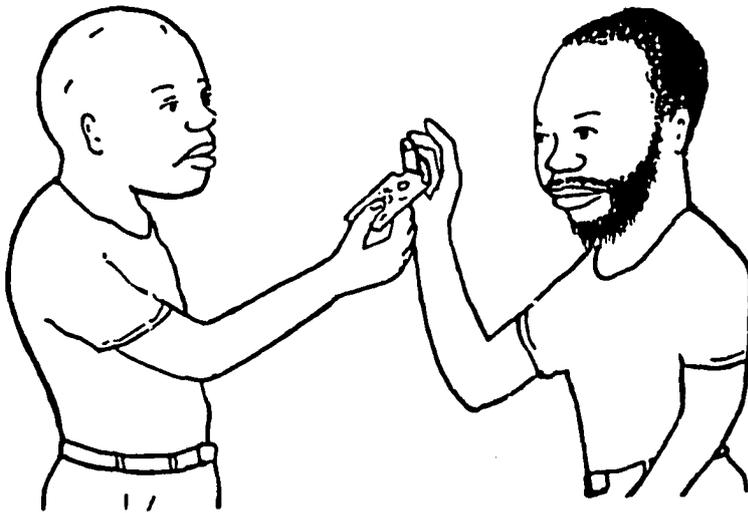


22. Getting an injection from an untrained person can give you AIDS.

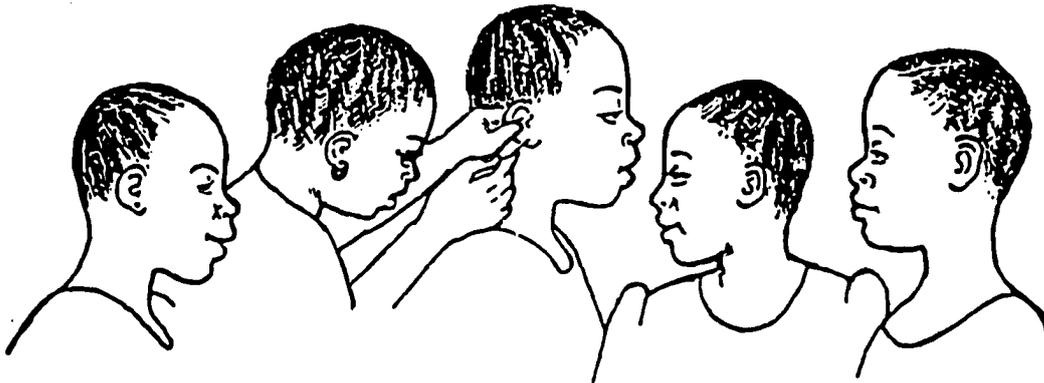
You can be infected by blood-to-blood contact in other ways. If you use a toothbrush of someone with bleeding gums and you have sores in your mouth, you might get infected. Sharing razor blades and other items which cut or break the skin also can transmit HIV.



23. Sharing toothbrushes might transmit AIDS.

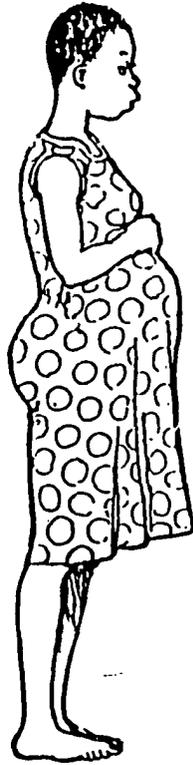


24. Sharing a razor blade can spread HIV if one of the users is infected.



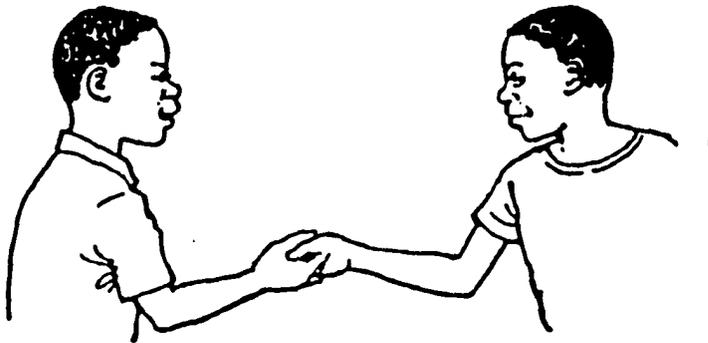
25. Using one needle to pierce the ears of several people can transmit HIV.

3. Transmission from a mother to her child -- A pregnant woman who is infected with HIV can pass the disease to her unborn child. Women who know they are HIV-positive or have AIDS should not become pregnant.

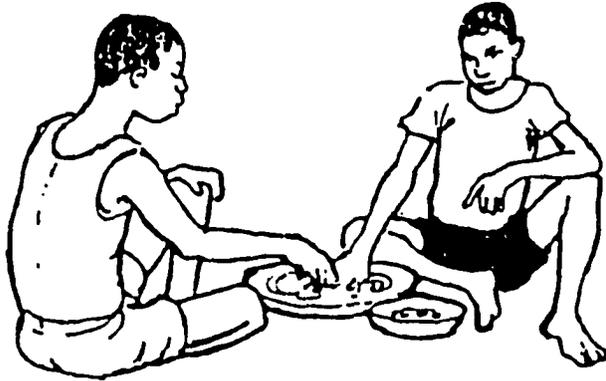


26. Mothers can pass HIV to their unborn children.

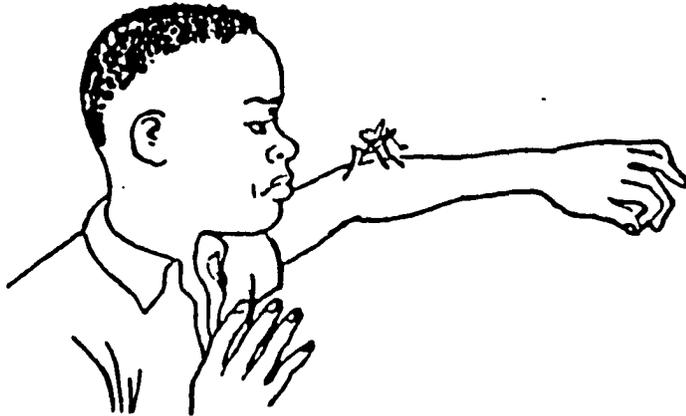
You have learned the three ways that AIDS can be spread. However, there are many people who think it can be spread in other ways, but this is not true. Below are some examples of how AIDS cannot be transmitted.



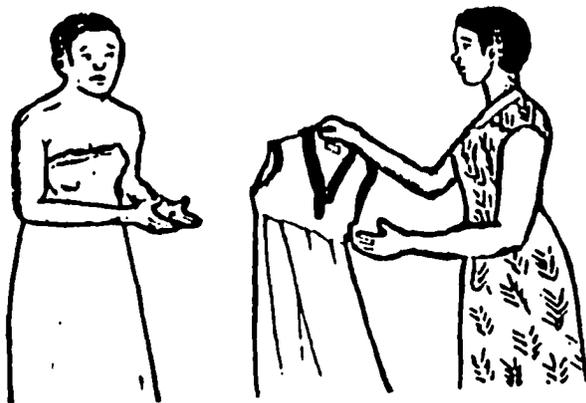
27. You cannot get AIDS from shaking hands.



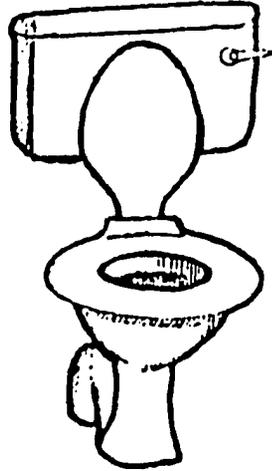
28. You cannot get AIDS from eating together from the same plate.



29. You cannot get AIDS from insect bites, including mosquitoes.



30. You cannot get AIDS from sharing clothes.



31. You cannot get AIDS from a toilet.



32. You cannot get AIDS from someone coughing, but the mouth should be covered to stop the spread of other germs.

**EXERCISE:** Can you answer these questions?

1. What are three ways AIDS can be transmitted?
2. What is the most common way AIDS is spread in Malaŵi?
3. Why should you get injections only from trained people?
4. What are six ways that AIDS cannot be spread?

TOPIC 7  
HOW TO AVOID AIDS

We will not get AIDS if we avoid doing the things which can spread it. Things we do which make it easier for us to get AIDS are called "high-risk behaviours." Here are some examples of high-risk behaviours:

1. Having sex with many people -- The more sex partners you have, the more likely that one of them will have HIV and pass it on to you.



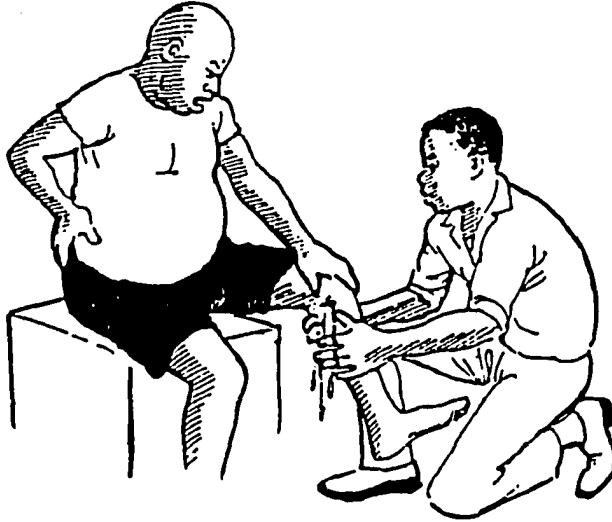
33. Having many sex partners increases your chances of getting AIDS.

2. Having sex without using a condom -- A condom keeps HIV from passing from one person to another during sexual intercourse.
3. Sharing razor blades, needles and other things which pierce or cut the skin -- If one person has HIV, their blood can be left on the cutting tool and can infect other people.

4. Continuing to have children when one or both parents are infected with HIV.
5. Being in contact with another person's blood.
6. Wet kissing when there are sores in the mouth.
7. Sharing toothbrushes.
8. Getting injections from untrained people.

Here are several things that you can do to help stop the spread of AIDS to yourself and others:

1. Abstinence -- This means not having sexual intercourse. Abstinence can keep you from getting AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).
2. Delay having sexual intercourse until you are married.
3. Avoid sex outside of marriage.
4. Have sexual intercourse only with one non-infected partner who has no other sexual partners.
5. Use a condom each time you have sexual intercourse. Be sure you know how to use it properly.
6. A woman should avoid getting pregnant if she or her sexual partner is infected with HIV.
7. Do not share things which cut or pierce the skin.
8. Avoid unnecessary injections and get them only from trained people.
9. Avoid contact with other people's blood if you have an open wound.



**34. Be careful around bleeding wounds.**

**EXERCISE:** Can you answer these questions?

1. What are "high-risk behaviours"?
2. What are five examples of high-risk behaviours?
3. What are five things you can do to avoid getting AIDS?

TOPIC 8  
TAKING CARE OF PEOPLE WITH AIDS

AIDS has no known cure. If a person gets AIDS, he or she will die from the disease someday. People suffering from AIDS are often worried, sad and afraid. They may feel alone because people are afraid to be near them, even members of their family. We should remember that AIDS patients have the same needs and should be treated the same way, in general, as patients with other kinds of diseases. Here are some of the things we can do to be sure AIDS patients get the care and support they need:

1. Looking after their physical needs -- We should see that the patient gets enough healthy food and plenty of liquids to drink. We should be sure that the patient has clean clothes and dry, clean, comfortable shelter.



35. Eating with an AIDS patient.

2. Looking after their spiritual needs -- We should make AIDS patients know they still have friends by visiting them, talking with them, eating with them, touching them and offering comfort when they need it. We should encourage AIDS patients to lead as normal a life as possible. We can set a good example for the patient by being cheerful and positive at all times.



**36. Praying with an AIDS patient.**

It may be hard for some people to do these things because of their fear of being infected. We must remind them that you cannot get AIDS from normal contact. As more people get sick with AIDS and hospitals fill up, many patients will have to be cared for in the home, so it is important that we learn how to give the best care we can. Patients can live longer and be more at peace when they are surrounded by people who care about them.

As when caring for any patient, there are some basic things we need to be careful about:

1. We should keep people with other infections away from AIDS patients because people with AIDS cannot fight off other diseases.
2. We should wash our hands with soap before and after caring for AIDS patients.
3. We should cover any cuts or open sores on our body before caring for AIDS patients.
4. We should handle any blood, body fluids and body wastes very carefully and should dispose of them properly.

**EXERCISE:** Can you answer these questions?

1. What are some of the needs of AIDS patients that we can supply?
2. Why are AIDS patients sometimes neglected, even by their own families?
3. Why should we keep people with other infections away from AIDS patients?
4. Why is it becoming more important that we all learn how to take care of AIDS patients?

## TOPIC 9 THE IMPACT OF AIDS

The effects of AIDS are being felt at many levels: in the family, in the community and in the nation. As more people get sick with AIDS and die, these effects will become stronger.

At the family level, income is lost when parents die. This can lead to great hardship and the breaking up of families. The death of parents also results in a large number of orphans who must be cared for.

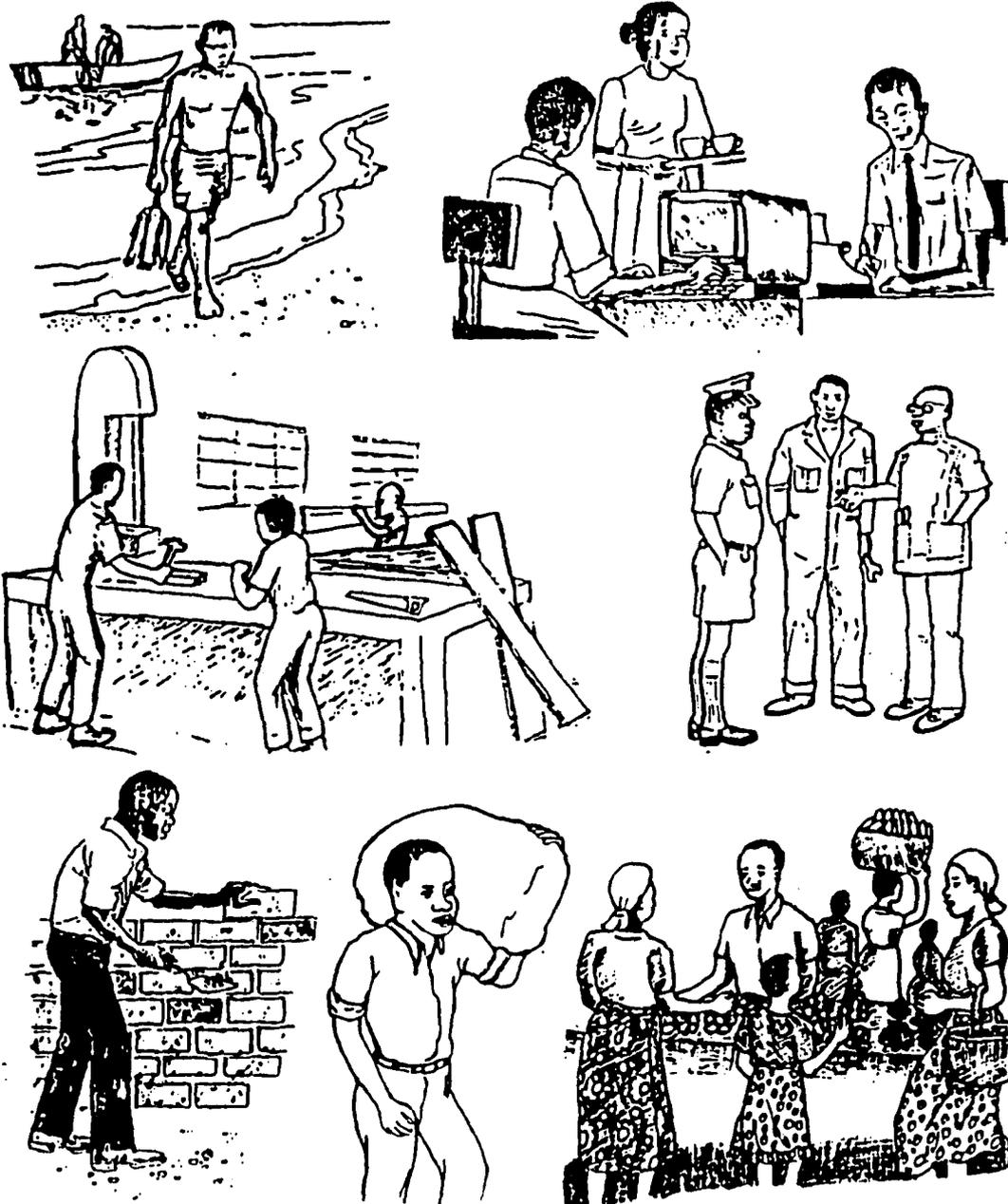
As the number of AIDS patients increases, hospitals and clinics will have a harder time caring for all the sick people needing help. It may mean that some patients will be turned away. The more AIDS patients needing care, the greater the cost to families and the nation. Therefore, it can be said that the impact of AIDS is emotional, social and economic.

All groups within the society are important, the young, the middle-aged and the old. Young people contribute to the society in many ways. They help with chores, they sometimes earn money for the family and they help build things needed in their village or town, such as school blocks. They help care for younger children, and in later life, help care for their parents. The loss of this group would make life more difficult for others.

Middle-aged people are often the people who help manage and run our society. They are the wage earners--teachers, drivers, health workers, clerks, mechanics, police, government workers and, of great importance, the parents who raise our children and teach them to be good citizens. If large numbers of this group die from AIDS, it could have a very serious effect on all our lives and the development of the country.

Elderly people carry the wisdom of our society. They advise the young and give our country its sense of tradition. When they die, we lose our past and the guidance they can provide.

The death from AIDS of any members of our society creates sadness and hardship. We must do all we can to see that the spread of AIDS is stopped.



37. Everyone is important to the society.

**EXERCISE:** Can you answer these questions?

1. At what three levels can the effects of AIDS be felt?
2. What can be some effects on the family if parents die from AIDS?
3. What are some things young people contribute to the society?
4. Why are middle-aged people so important to the country?
5. What group carries the wisdom and traditions of our society?

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Acknowledgement and thanks are due the many institutions, agencies, organizations and individuals who have contributed so generously to the preparation of these materials, including representatives of governmental and non-governmental bodies and the Malaŵian religious community, Protestant, Catholic and Muslim. While the many individuals who have participated in the writing and editing of these booklets are far too numerous to mention, their efforts to provide the youth of Malaŵi with the information they need to protect themselves from HIV infection deserve the gratitude of all the nation.