

STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING THE OCCURRENCE OF HIV / AIDS AMONG WOMEN AND CHILDREN

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Introduction

The HIV/AIDS it is estimated that over 30 million people world wide are living with HIV or AIDS. Nearly 22 million people have died from this disease, including 4.3 million children. Every minute, six young people under the age of 25 become infected with HIV.

HIV / AIDS Prevention

The goal of HIV prevention is to help people to learn how to eliminate or reduce their risk of becoming infected with HIV or of transmitting HIV to others.

HIV prevention takes place at two levels – The Primary and Secondary Prevention

Primary HIV prevention focuses on keeping people from becoming infected with HIV and on helping people who are HIV Positive to help individuals develop skills for reducing the risk of infecting others.

Secondary HIV Prevention focuses on keeping prevent HIV positive people for developing opportunistic infections, preventing the infection from progressing to AIDS and preventing HIV transmission to others.

Primary prevention among young people is the greatest hope to defeat the virus. UNICEF has been carrying out focused popular campaigns to raise awareness among the children and young people.

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Prevention of Parent – to – child transmission (PPTCT) focuses on both women and their partners with a view to create an AIDS free generation. UNI CEF is supporting the Governments PPTCI. Services in 2433 centres across the country. Women and their partners will have to access to confidential testing and counselling. The Prevention of Parent – to child transmission (PPTCT) programme supports women in minimizing the risk of HIV transmission through breast feeding and followup care.

Transmission and Prevention

The three main routs of HIV are Sexual contact, and from mother to yetus or child during prenatal period. Preventing HIV transmission among w omen who have sex with women (W.S.W).

Women also should by aware of appropriate barrier methods they can use for different sexual activities to prevent transmission of HIV.

Key actions

- Protecting and promoting the sexual and reproductive rights of all youn g people
- Empowering girls an young women to control that own lives and in particular their sexual relations
- Providing comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information, education and services to young people, both in and out of school, before and after they become sexually active.
- Involving young people in planning, implementing and evaluating HIV/AIDS prevention and care programmer
- Recognizing the role of peer education in combating HIV/AIDS
- Ensuring wide access to male and female condoms and promoting their use.
- Preventing and treating, other sexually transmitted infections, which increase the transmission of HIV

Recognizing the part played by poverty and deprivation in spreading infection, only by investing in poor communities, can the AIDS challen ge be

- met, as AIDS disproportionately, affects the most disadvantaged in developing countries.
- Ensuring that pregnant women living with HIV receives access to antiretroviral as part of their ongoing treatment of HIV/AIDS before, during and after pregnancy, both to reduce mother – to – child transmission of HIV and to maintain women’s health after delivery.
- Ensuring that orphans and children in families affected by HIV/AIDS have access to social services, particularly education and health services, on an equal basis with other children and
- Countering the shame, stigma, discrimination and silence surrounding sexually as well as HIV/AIDS

Role of Media

An affective media can raise the awareness level and can also bring about sustainable behaviour change there by reducing vulnerability to the virus. Media is capable of performing the following role in preventing HIV/AIDS.

- A channel for communication and discussion: On the role of media is to open the channels for communication and foster discussions about HIV and interpersonal relations. Addressing HIV/AIDS in the entertainment programmes can have an enormous impact on the society at risk.
- A vehicle for creating a supportive and enabling environment : Mass media can be instrumental in breaking the silence that envelopes the disease and in creating an encouraging behaviour for combating with existing social norms and making positive changes in the society
- WHO has various extraordinary stories of HIV people who are not only fighting the virus but are also playing an integral / role in prevention of AIDS.

A tool for creating a knowledge base for HIV / AIDS related services. The collaborative efforts of all models of media in association with NGO’s state organizations, service providers have brought to the limelight, the

- availability and sources of beneficial services like counselling, testing and condom provision, treatment and social care. The broadcasters and print media have a specific role to play as their efforts have tremendous recall value
- Education through entertainment. For creating an efficacious awareness about HIV/AIDS, the messages need to be informative, educative as well as entertaining as these are mutually exclusive.
- Thus a holistic approach for dealing with the emotional, psychological and physical realities is to be adopted.
- Putting of HIV/AIDS on the news agenda and encouraging learners to participate
- Capacity building: Successful partnership need to be with other media outlets. Alliances of NGO, Government departments and foundations. Can bring significant benefit for both the parties.
- Media as an institution of oversight, restraint and collaborative effort: The media has the potential to influence public opinion and attitudes about HIV/AIDS, including attitudes towards people living with HIV/AIDS. The media can be a great facilitator for preventing process while imparting the need for a healthy behaviour towards the section of the society and those individuals most vulnerable to HIV/AIDS and those individuals affected by it.

Conclusion

World is a beautiful place and so is the experience of living in it. It would be tragic if this beautiful experience of living life is shortened by HIV/AIDS, when its prevention is within one's control, though not the cure. Multimedia strategies work to be most effective wherein messages related to HIV/AIDS may be disseminated using materials like charts, posters, flash cards, films, slides and discussions, role play dramas and puppetry.