

# UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL HEALTH AND RISK.

- ✓ To understand the different modes of transmission of HIV.
- ✓ To understand risk of HIV transmission associated with various sexual activities.

25 minutes

- ★ 1. Information sheet: 'Sexual Behaviours and Risk' (provided).
- 2. Cards: 'Sexual Behaviours' (provided).
- 3. Board and markers/chalk; Sticky tape or magnets.

## PROCEDURE

### PRIOR TO CLASS

- 1 Print and cut out the risky behaviour cards.
- 2 Draw a continuum on the board marked 'No Risk' on the far left-hand side to 'Most Risk' on the far right-hand side. This continuum should be as long as possible, because you will need space to order and re-order the 'risky behaviour' cards based on feedback from the learners.

### PROCEDURE

- 1 Prior to beginning the exercise ask learners to define what the word 'risk' means. Learners should come up with a definition that addresses exposure to danger, harm or damage.
- 2 Then, tell learners that you will be playing a game in which they will be asked to assess the level of risk of transmission of **HIV** (and other **STIs**) that is associated with different kinds of sexual activities.
- 3 As preparation for the activity, ask learners to name the five bodily fluids by which HIV can be transmitted. Learners should identify:
  - a. Blood
  - b. Semen
  - c. Vaginal Fluid
  - d. Breast Milk
  - e. Anal Fluid

Learners may also mention fluids like saliva, tears, urine and sweat. Remind them that these fluids cannot transmit HIV.

- 4 Hand out a 'risky behaviour' card to each learner. Randomly select one learner to read out the behaviour that they have been given. Ask each participant to place the activity (behaviour) at the appropriate point on the continuum.
- 5 As the activity continues, learners will (by consensus) be able to shift and re-order their risky behaviour cards. There should be lively discussion about the levels of risk for each behaviour. The aim is to get a consensus continuum that is ordered from those behaviours that carry least risk of transmission of HIV and STIs to those that carry most risk.
- 6 Guide and encourage learners to come to consensus by asking questions such as:
  - a. How many people are involved in the activity?
  - b. What body fluids are involved?

- c. Can they transmit HIV?
- d. How severe is the STI in question (longevity, treatment, impact)?

- 7 Afterwards, debrief with the class and let them know if there are any behaviours placed incorrectly on the continuum of risk.
- 8 Understanding risk, respectfully discussing options with a partner, consensual exploration, and protecting against transmission of HIV (and STIs) is the foundation of healthy, informed sexual behaviour. Remind learners that assessing risk of transmitting or contracting HIV based on faulty or incomplete information can have life-long consequences for health of an individual and their partner(s).



### References:

Table adapted from:

Muller, A. *Sexual and Reproductive Health for Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People: Guidelines for Health Care Workers in Primary Care*. Cape Town: Gender Dynamix; 2013

## TEACHER TIPS



### General

This activity discusses explicit sexual behaviours, so teachers can expect learners to giggle and laugh at first. However once the complexity of the activity sinks in, learners should engage actively with the content, and debate the risks involved.

This exercise requires that teachers are comfortable talking about sexual practices. Teachers should carefully monitor learners' reaction to terms used, and be prepared to explain those that are unfamiliar (for example, dental dams).

This exercise is useful because it introduces learners to evaluating risks of sexual activity without arguing against sexual experimentation. The format of the activity also introduces learners to sexual activities that they may not be familiar with, but about which they have been curious or had questions. With guiding questions and discussion from the teacher, learners may get answers without having to ask their (perhaps embarrassing) questions out loud.

Teachers can adapt or select risky sexual behaviours from the list provided as appropriate to the size of the class and the level of maturity of the learners. The exercise works best if the list of behaviours is

relatively comprehensive and complex, since peer-to-peer learning depends on lively debate on where to place the behaviours on the risk continuum.

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### Making the Link with Gender and Violence

An individual's exposure to violence impacts their sexual health and risk of HIV exposure, as well as their ability to seek information and make decisions about sex and reproduction. For example, women who are in violent relationships are seldom able to negotiate condom use albeit they may be aware of the risks. Many of the myths around HIV transmission (for example, that having sex with a virgin will cure someone of HIV/AIDS) give rise to gender-based violence.



### Assessment Ideas

For each activity that is listed as high risk for transmission of HIV and STIs, learners should suggest methods that can be used to reduce the risk involved. In their answers, learners should explain why the changes they propose will reduce or negate risk.



# CARDS: 'SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS'

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Print out the following worksheet. Cut along the dotted lines to create individual cards.

**Masturbation**  
(alone)

**Mutual Masturbation**  
(touching each other's genitals)

**Mutual Masturbation**  
(touching your own genitals in the presence of your partner)

**Phone/Skype/Online Sex**

**Touching breasts**

**Kissing breasts/nipples**

**Kissing**

**Fingering**  
(bare handed)

**Fingering**  
(with glove)

**Hand jobs**

**Oral sex without a barrier**



# ‘RISKY BEHAVIOURS’ CARDS

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Print out the following worksheet. Cut along the dotted lines to create individual cards.

Oral sex with a barrier

Sharing a toilet

Sharing a cup/plate/fork/knife

Sharing a razor

Rubbing genitals against each other  
(no penetration)

Using a public toilet

Anal sex with a condom

Anal sex without a condom

Vaginal sex with a condom

Vaginal sex without a condom

Vaginal sex with two condoms

# ‘RISKY BEHAVIOURS’ CARDS

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Print out the following worksheet. Cut along the dotted lines to create individual cards.

**Vaginal sex, but where the boy withdraws  
before ejaculating**

**Showering together**

**Bathing together**

**Swimming together**

**Licking skin/biting**

**Ejaculating on someone’s skin**

**Rimming without a dental dam**

**Rimming with a dental dam**

**Vaginal sex using a condom and  
Vaseline as lubricant**

# SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS AND RISKS

SEXUAL PRACTICE	HIV AND STI RISK	PREVENTION METHODS
VAGINAL SEX	HIGH RISK FOR <b>HIV</b> HIGH RISK FOR <b>STIs</b> RISK OF PREGNANCY	USE MALE CONDOMS (PENIS) USE FEMALE CONDOMS (VAGINA)
ANAL SEX	HIGH RISK FOR <b>HIV</b> HIGH RISK FOR <b>STIs</b> HIGH RISK OF INJURY	USE MALE CONDOMS (PENIS) USE WATER-BASED LUBRICANT
ORAL SEX	MEDIUM-LOW RISK FOR <b>HIV</b> MEDIUM-LOW RISK FOR <b>STIs</b> (HERPES, GONORRHEA, CHLAMYDIA)	USE CONDOMS (FOR PENIS) USE DENTAL DAMS, OR NON-MICROWAVEABLE CLING WRAP (FOR VAGINAS)
FINGERING AND HANDJOBS (MUTUAL MASTURBATION)	LOW RISK FOR <b>HIV</b> LOW RISK FOR <b>STIs</b>	WASH YOUR HANDS. ENSURE THERE ARE NO CUTS ON YOUR HANDS.
RIMMING (LICKING OR SUCKING THE ANUS)	LOW RISK FOR <b>HIV</b> HIGH RISK FOR SOME <b>STIs</b>	WASH THE AREA, USE DENTAL DAMS.
RUBBING GENITAL AREAS AGAINST EACH OTHER WITHOUT INTERCOURSE (ALSO CALLED DRY HUMMING OR SCISSORING)	LOW RISK FOR <b>HIV</b> LOW RISK FOR <b>STIs</b>	WEAR UNDERWEAR
MASTURBATION (SEXUALLY STIMULATION OF SELF)	NO RISK FOR <b>HIV</b> OR <b>STIs</b>	NONE
KISSING	LOW RISK FOR <b>STIs</b>	DON'T KISS SOMEONE IF YOU (OR THEY) SUSPECT THEY MIGHT HAVE AN OUTBREAK OF HERPES (A COLD SORE)
KISSING/TOUCHING BREASTS OR NIPPLES	NO RISK FOR <b>STIs</b>	NONE
PHONE/SKYPE/CHAT SEX	NO RISK FOR HIV OR <b>STIs</b> , THERE IS A SAFETY RISK IF YOU ARE DOING THIS WITH SOMEONE THAT YOU DON'T KNOW. THERE IS ALSO A RISK OF EXPOSURE, FOR EXAMPLE IF THE OTHER PERSON SHOWS OTHERS YOUR PICTURES OR POSTS YOUR CHATS.	ASSESS WHETHER YOU CAN TRUST THE OTHER PERSON. THINK CAREFULLY BEFORE SENDING PICTURES OF YOURSELF TO OTHERS – ESPECIALLY SEXY OR REVEALING PICTURES.  THINK WHETHER YOU WOULD BE COMFORTABLE WITH OTHERS (NOT THE RECIPIENT) SEEING THE PICTURE. IF NOT, DON'T SEND IT!