

# Using this guide

This guide will help peer educators share information and lead discussions with their peers on physical and emotional changes during adolescence, staying healthy, planning for the future, making good decisions, and preventing pregnancy and HIV and AIDS. This guide can be used to help facilitate discussions with peers and as a reference for peer educators to learn more about the different topics. The information in this book can be shared widely among students. However, not all material may be appropriate for younger students. Talk with your teachers to plan what subjects you will talk about in your groups. Also, talk with your teachers if you have any questions about any of the information in this book or need any more information.

This guide is divided into 26 different sections. Each section has the following parts:



## Objectives

Objectives help peer educators stay focused during the section by thinking about what members of their group should be able to do after participating in that section.



## Background notes

Peer educators should read the background notes before they lead a discussion with their peer group. Background notes can also be used to answer group members' questions during a session.



## Session guide

The session guide gives instructions for peer educators to follow when they are leading a discussion with their group. The session guide has questions that can be asked to get people talking about the topic.



## Main points

There is a lot of information in the background notes section, and the information in the main points section helps peer educators know which is the most important. The main points list the information that group members should know when that meeting is finished.



## Activity

Some sections have activities or games to play with your group. Activities allow group members to continue learning about a topic in a fun way.

Some sections can be talked about during one group meeting; others can be divided up and talked about during several group meetings. Peer educators can decide how much information they want to talk about at one time. It is normal for some topics to take longer and other topics to take less time. Each group is different and can do things in their own way and on their own schedule. Some topics will be more interesting to the group members than others and this is also normal. Also, feel free to do sections out of order. If group members are interested in a topic that is later in the guide, talk about it first and then go back to the other topics. It is better to talk about topics that are of the most interest to the group first. However, there are some topics that should be covered before beginning others. The graphic below shows different ways to plan when you will study different topics. If you have any questions about how to plan your topics, talk with your teacher.

### Everyone should begin with the session

#### 1. Getting started

The following sessions can be done at any time and in any order:

- |                              |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 2. Values                    | 13. Setting goals               |
| 6. Gender                    | 15. Sexual violence             |
| 8. Liking yourself           | 22. Caring for people with HIV  |
| 9. Good relationships        | 23. Stigma                      |
| 10. What is love?            | 24. Managing stress             |
| 11. Standing up for yourself | 25. Managing anger and conflict |
| 12. Making decisions         | 26. Drugs                       |

The following sessions should be done in order, but can be done in any order within each column. For example if you want to talk about HIV and AIDS. It is best to have talked about all of the topics in 1, 2, and 3 before you begin.

1	2	3	4
3. Adolescence	5. Female reproductive system 4. Male reproductive system	7. Sexuality 14. Saying no to sex 16. Why wait to have children	17. Preventing pregnancy 18. Condoms 19. Sexually transmitted infections 20. HIV and AIDS 21. Getting tested for HIV

This manual is very flexible and should be used in the way that works best for you and your group. If group members want to talk about HIV and AIDS and you have not talked about all six of the suggested sessions yet, you can decide to talk about HIV and AIDS first. Just be sure you have read all the background notes from the other chapters so you are able to answer group members' questions that may come up.

# Who is a peer educator?

A peer educator is someone who likes sharing information, leading talks, and supporting their friends and agemates. A peer educator is not a teacher and is not expected to know everything. Peer educators share information but do not tell others what to do. They do not judge or talk badly about peers to others. Peer educators help members of their groups talk about their thoughts, feelings, and experiences, and also help them think about how they will use the new information in their lives. Peer educators listen to others with interest and respect.

## Qualities of good peer educators

- Friendly
- Honest
- Good listeners
- Respectful of others and people who are different from themselves
- Comfortable talking with a group and leading discussions
- Do not judge others
- Comfortable talking about issues related to health, relationships, growing up, and sex
- Want to help other people
- Interested in learning and sharing information
- Know when to ask for help
- Make good decisions and can help others to do so
- Admired by peers
- Supportive of others
- Will not talk about group members private information outside of the group

## Facilitation

Peer educators must also be able to lead a group discussion. Below are tips to help with that.

### How to lead a group discussion

- When a person talks, thank them for speaking. People like to feel that they have been listened to.
- Do not interrupt people when they are talking. If you must stop someone who is talking too long, be sure to apologize.
- Try to have as many different people talk as possible, one at a time. Encourage people to talk by saying, "Does anyone else have something to say?"
- Listen carefully when people are talking.
- When a person gives a very short answer to a question, you can encourage him or her to say more. You could say, "Can you tell us more about that?"



## **Making people feel comfortable**

- Do not judge or embarrass people in front of others.
- Some topics may be difficult to talk about in a group. Be careful not to use words or movements that are offensive.
- Some topics may be emotional. Pay attention to people's feelings.
- Look people in the eye and show that you are listening. You can do this by facing them, leaning forward, and nodding your head.
- People need to feel that their ideas are important. Thank people when they talk.

## **Sharing information**

- Prepare for your talk before it begins. Review the session guide and background notes and think about what you will say or do. Try to avoid reading straight from this guide during a group meeting.
- Do not speak too quickly because it can be hard for people to listen and understand what you are saying.
- Do not speak too slowly because they may get bored.
- Look at your peers when you are talking. Even if you are reading the information, look up from time to time so that people do not feel ignored.
- If people seem confused, stop and ask them if they have any questions.

## **Asking questions**

The kinds of questions you ask and the way you ask them can make people want to talk. Good questions are open-ended. This means that they cannot be answered yes or no; instead they need to be explained. Good questions often start with "what" or "how." It is important to think about the kinds of questions you ask and how you ask them.

## **Responding to questions**

In your peer education groups, people should be encouraged to ask questions. Remember:

- Listen carefully to understand why someone is asking the question.
- Do not answer too quickly. Take a moment to think about your answer.
- Repeat the question (to be sure that you understood it and that the group has heard it).
- Thank the person asking the question.
- Never make fun of someone who asks a question.
- If you do not know the answer to a question, admit it, and promise to look for more information.
- Ask another student, or the group, to answer the question or to give their opinion.
- Try to take questions from all members of the group.

## **Asking for help**

It is important to ask for help when you need it. It is good to share your experiences and challenges with other peer educators. If a member of your group has a problem that requires help from an adult, act quickly by talking with a teacher, administrator, or other trusted adult. Asking for help shows that you are responsible and care about the members of your group.



## Role play

In role plays, group members use their imagination to create and act out characters, conversations, and stories. Role play is a way to talk about experiences, feelings, and beliefs in a safe environment. Anyone can participate in a role play – it does not require any special skill or talent. In role plays people act out a scenario in front of a group. Group members volunteer to act as a certain character. If a person is acting it does not mean that they are like that character. In fact, girls can play the roles of boys, students can play teachers, and young people can play elders. All we need is our imaginations. Role plays are not like dramas. They are not practiced before and they should not last for a long time. Peer educators should never comment on the quality of the role play but instead they should thank people who volunteer. Role plays are a good way to explore a problem or situation on a certain topic. For example, group members can play the roles of a teacher and a girl and the teacher is offering to give the student a better grade if she has sex with him. The person playing the girl can think of what she would do in that situation.



## Steps for a role play

1. Read a situation to the group.
2. Ask for volunteers to play the roles of the characters in the story in front of the other group members.
3. Ask the volunteers to act out the situation.
4. Ask group members to talk about the role play.
  - Do they agree with what the character decided to do?
  - Would they have done anything differently?
5. Ask for another set of volunteers to act out the same situation.
6. Talk about this role play and compare it to the one before.
7. Summarize the actors' decisions and lead a discussion about the role plays. Ask group members:
  - Is what happened similar to what would happen in real life?
  - How will the decisions the actors made influence their lives?
  - Who else could the actors have turned to for help or advice?