



Millennium Youth Project



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Project Summary

Millennium Youth Project: A school based intervention against HIV/AIDS

The Millennium Youth project in collaboration with Zypo Zone and Youth Press bureau initiated a program in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe that will be working with the youth in Matabeleland. It came to be after the realization that not enough is being done to educate the youth about HIV/AIDS issues and HIV prevention thus the need for the mobilization of the youth against HIV/AIDS.

The project deploys trained peer educators in schools to work with anti-AIDS clubs in the front-line of a schools based campaign to mobilize young people against HIV/AIDS. It is the project's mandate to make sure these young people are adequately informed, counseled and empowered with knowledge about HIV/AIDS in a non academic, non-formal student centered and participatory education system. Its main objective is to improve the reproductive health knowledge base of the 12-19 year olds and also decrease the incidences of STIs and teenage pregnancy through peer education by trained peer educators. It has currently been working with youth groups like Echoes of Young Voices.

The issue of teenage pregnancy and HIV infection within this age group has remained a tad bit high because AIDS education is not really being implemented within the school set-up and young people are still dying of ignorance.



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History Of Millennium Youth Project (MYP)

Millennium Youth Project was born and bred in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. A region that has come up close and personal with the effects of HIV/AIDS and remains with the highest HIV Prevalence rates according to the latest statistics from the National AIDS Council . It's not about underdevelopment only that the region has the highest HIV prevalence rates but to a larger extent ignorance. People die because they are ignorant of the truth.

Millennium Youth Project realizes the need for AIDS education to be taken seriously in schools because there are reports of rape and underage sexual relationships. Most of these are reported in local media and it is evident that there are more cases that remain unreported out of fear of victimization or stigmatization. MYP was developed to be an in-school intervention to extend the HIV/AIDS knowledge base, psycho-social support for school going youths and reduce the effects of this scourge of HIV in our society.

Vision

To spark an HIV prevention revolution amongst the youth.

Objectives

- empower the youth with adequate knowledge about HIV/AIDS to protect themselves
- to reduce the social ills promoting the spread of HIV e.g GBV, Gender inequality, traditional practices
- Empowerment of the girl child
- promotion of Safer sexual behavior



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Project Rationale

HIV/AIDS has come and claimed millions of lives and a lot of our friends, relatives have become slaves to the pandemic. A lot of noise has been made about HIV prevention but little has been done to empower the youth who are dying of AIDS when they are supposed to be the leaders of tomorrow. The HIV pandemic has cost us years of development, each day we lose skilled manpower and young leaders of tomorrow to this pandemic. Most of the people dying according to NAC statistics contracted the disease during the days of their youth. Irresponsible sexual behavior, transactional unsafe sexual practices, rape all come into play but the major factor still boils down to knowledge about HIV/AIDS knowing how its transmitted and how it's not transmitted. A lot of people do not know what it really is, most of the youth have a rough and blurry idea if not superstitious and when it comes to contraception, it is improperly used, shunned by some.

Millennium Youth Project has therefore come aboard to intensify the fight by using the 'catch them young' technique so that they know what HIV is, how to prevent infection and ultimately protect the generation of tomorrow. As part of the project we also provide psycho-social support to those who are in need of it especially the girl child. we realize that the girl child is more susceptible to HIV infection because of their status in society which is traditionally lower than that of men and they are more vulnerable to abuse.

We therefore on an empowerment drive to empower the girl child to know their rights and to them that in most cases or unprotected sexual activity they are ones who are at risk by virtue of them being natural receptors in the reproductive system..

Millennium Youth project will work hard towards achieving its vision in schools across Bulawayo and perhaps even grow to service other parts of the country.



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Getting Started

Target Audience

Primary Target group

-13-20 year olds(from 1- form 6

Secondary Target groups

-20-25 year old out-of -school youth

Objectives

-To empower the youth with knowledge about HIV/AIDS

-To reduce the social ills promoting the spread of HIV/AIDS e.g.

*Gender inequality

*Gender based violence (GBV)

*Human rights abuses

-Empowerment of the girl child-making known to them of their rights as guaranteed by International law

-Promote safer sexual behavior

-Promotion of

* abstinence

* behavior change

* male circumcision-currently being offered for free by PSI Zim

Project Goals

-Discussion of common myths about HIV/AIDS

-Life skills

-traditional practices and beliefs & HIV/AIDS especially in Rural Areas

Project Length

-9 Months in a year leaving out 3 months school holidays for Project Monitoring and evaluation.



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Project Approaches

- Peer Education
- Sexuality/HIV/STI education
- behavior Change
- Substance abuse & HIV
- Gender equality
- Gender based violence
- Child & Human Rights
- Facilitation of (Voluntary Counselling & Testing (VCT)
- Peer Pressure
- Teenage relationships
- Communication & life skills

Activities

Performing Arts

- Poetry, Song & dance
- Role plays
- Essays competitions
- Debate and Public speaking