



Aim

that participants discuss their own prejudices and values around HIV/AIDS and to highlight that anyone can be HIV positive

Age

13 years and over

Time

20 minutes

Materials

hat or bag, set of character cards, pens and paper, fact box on STIs and HIV/AIDS

Note to Leader

It is important to challenge any discrimination that arises in this activity. Agree ground rules in advance of using the activity.

What to do

Begin by discussing STIs and HIV/AIDS. What are they? How are they spread?

Make a set of character cards, ensuring one for each participant, and put them in a hat or bag. Participants take one each, but keep it secret. Explain that they are to move around the room, introducing themselves as their character. Some of the characters are HIV positive and others aren't. Each time they meet someone, they decide if they think the person is HIV positive. After five minutes, ask each person to make their list of the people they met that they believe have HIV/AIDS. Get feedback, one choice at a time, from participants. Now explain that the game is over.

In the large group, ask if there was agreement between the participants on who was most likely to have HIV/AIDS. Which choices surprised them? How did they feel if others thought they had HIV? What factors led to them making their choices? Do the choices reflect fact or prejudices/stereotypes about people with HIV/AIDS? Make the point that anyone can be HIV positive. Read out the facts on STIs and HIV in the fact box.

Explain that while everyone has prejudices, when the prejudices are used as the basis for how we treat people, it leads to discrimination.

Which forms of discrimination towards people with HIV are obvious and which ones are hidden?

Do you think there are differences in the way people with HIV/AIDS are treated in Ireland and in developing countries?

How can these forms of discrimination be challenged?





Character Cards

A scout or guide

A prostitute

A young unemployed woman

A haemophiliac

A business man

A Traveller

A priest

A gay teenager

A teacher

A drug addict

A doctor

A youth leader

STIs and HIV/AIDS Fact Box

- A Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) is an infection passed from one person to another during sexual intercourse. Examples include chlamydia and gonorrhoea.
- STIs can be cured with medicines, but some can have long-term effects, e.g. chlamydia can cause infertility in women
- HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus that damages the body's defence system.
- AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) is the late stage of HIV infection. People who have AIDS become weaker and eventually die because their bodies are more susceptible to a wide variety of illnesses.
- You cannot tell if someone has HIV by the way they look. The onset of AIDS can take 10 years or more.
- People who have Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) have a greater risk of being infected with HIV.
- HIV is transmitted through sexual contact, blood transfusions, injection drug use or from mother to baby.
- HIV is not transmitted by everyday contact such as hugging, shaking hands, using swimming pools or sharing cups.
- There is no cure for AIDS but recently developed medicines called anti-retroviral drugs (ARV) can help a person with HIV/AIDS to stay healthier for longer periods of time.
- The "ABC" slogan – Abstain, Be faithful, use a Condom – is the main message of many HIV prevention programmes.