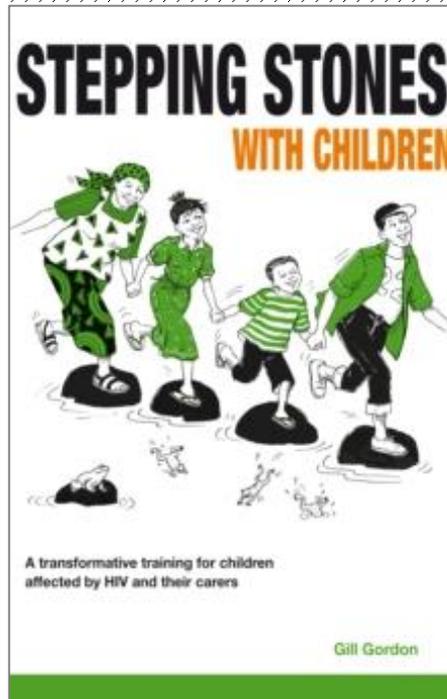


## Handouts for *Stepping Stones with Children*



This *Handout for Stepping Stones with Children* is to be used with the *Stepping Stones with Children* training manual published by Practical Action Publishing, 2016.

You can download this handout for free for use with this training manual from the [www.stepsstonesfeedback.org](http://www.stepsstonesfeedback.org) website.

On this website there are also many other resources to support you with this training manual and the original *Stepping Stones* training manual.

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## **LIVING WELL WITH HIV**

### **1. We can work together to strengthen our immune systems by:**

- Keeping ourselves and our home extra clean.
- Eating healthy food, frequently during the day.
- Getting enough sleep (at least 7 - 8 hours) and rest every day.
- Doing some physical work and exercise every day, but not too much as that can weaken our immune system.
- Going to the best clinic that we can get to, for regular check-ups.
- Getting the usual immunizations but not live vaccines, such as polio.
- Going straight to the clinic or doctor for treatment if we are ill.
- Going back to the clinic if the medicine does not help us.

In addition, if we have HIV:

- We might be given vitamin A injections twice a year and multi-vitamin drops to take daily, though these are not necessary if we have a good diet.
- We might be given Co-trimoxazole (Bactrim) if our CD4 count is low. This helps to prevent chest infections and malaria. But note, this drug is dangerous to take during pregnancy.
- We can ask for painkillers if we are uncomfortable or in pain.

### **2. The importance of cleanliness for those of us with HIV**

There are many different germs in our bodies and all around us. Usually we are not aware of them because our CD4 cells control them and stop them harming us. When a member of our family with HIV has a low CD4 count, and is not on ARVs, they may have low immunity. This means that germs can more easily attack them and make them sick. They get sick more frequently, and more severely, than people with strong immune systems. It takes them longer to get better. So, everyone needs to be extra careful about cleanliness to reduce the harmful germs as much as possible.

#### **How to keep our bodies clean**

Protect the skin and it will protect us: keep skin clean and free from cuts and rashes, so it keeps out germs. We can use skin cream to make our skin feel lovely and soft again if it is dry.

Cleaning our hands: wash hands with soap often, especially before cooking, before eating, after using the toilet, and after handling dirty items. If we don't have any soap, we can scrub the hands well with clean water and rinse well by pouring water over them. If we have no soap, it is best to use running water, as using water in a basin, or cloths, can spread germs.

Cleaning our fingernails: Keep fingernails clean and short. Take care not to damage the skin under the nails. Wash clippers in hot soapy water.

Checking our mouths and throats every day when we brush our teeth: White patches may be caused by an infection called thrush, and need to be treated at once with medicine.

Drinking clean water after any milk or sugary drink or sweets because germs can grow if these drinks and sugar stay in the mouth and decay teeth.

Brushing teeth when you get up and before going to bed. Use fluoride toothpaste or tablets. Every member of the family should have their own tooth stick or toothbrush, and should only use their own one.

### **How to Keep Our Homes Clean**

We all make dirt, and create rubbish, and have germs in our bodies – this is normal. We need regular routines to keep germs under our control.

We can control germs with: high and low temperatures; water, bleach and soap; and by drying out the moist places in which they multiply.

In the latrine: Faeces contain a lot of germs, which can cause diarrhoea and vomiting. Put them in a latrine, flush them down the toilet, or bury them deep so nothing can dig them up.

In the bathroom: Germs love damp and dirty cloths. Give each person their own cloth or towel for them to use. Wash these every week and, if possible, hang them in the sun each day to dry.

In the kitchen:

- Wash hands before preparing food.
- Rinse vegetables and fruit with clean water before eating.
- Cover any cooked food that you are storing for later – store in a cool, dry place.
- Reheat food until it is bubbling hot (just warming food may not kill germs).
- Add a tablespoon of bleach to the water when washing dishes and wiping your kitchen surfaces.
- Let dishes drip dry rather than drying them with a cloth.
- Boil dishcloths, or wash them very well, and hang them in the sun to dry.

Drinking water: If the water does not come from a borehole or safe tap, either boil it for one minute, or add bleach as instructed on the bottle, or put it in a clear bottle in the sun all day to kill germs. Cover water to stop dirt getting into it.

Cleaning up blood spills: All blood can carry germs and viruses, most of which are much easier to get than HIV. Blood may also be found in diarrhoea or urine. It is good practice to:

- Wash away blood spilled on the floor with bleach or hot soapy water, or cover it with sand.
- Protect your hands with rubber gloves or plastic bags if touching blood or any body fluids. Cover any broken skin, like such as sores, with plasters. Wash hands thoroughly with soap afterwards.
- Rinse any cloth that has blood on it (for example, sanitary cloths) in very hot soapy water or water with bleach in it, and soak overnight. If you are throwing them away, put them in the latrine, bury them deep, or burn them.

### **3. Foods for a healthy diet**

Eating a nutritious diet, made up of a mixture of foods from all food groups, strengthens our immunity.

**Carbohydrates:** These are the main food for energy. These staple foods are quite easy to digest. The healthiest kinds are 'unrefined', such as brown rice and brown bread. This means that the outer husk of the grain is included, which is good for us. This group includes rice, maize, millet, wheat, sorghum, bread, yam, cassava, and potatoes.

**Proteins:** These are food for growing. They help us to grow and develop strong bodies, keep our immune systems strong, and repair our bodies after illness. This group includes certain plant foods such as cereals (wheat, rice, millet, maize, and sorghum) and legumes and nuts (beans, seeds, peas, lentils, soybeans, and groundnuts); and animal foods such as eggs, milk, cheese, yoghurt, fish, chicken, insects, meat, liver, and snails.

**Vitamins and minerals:** These are things in foods for keeping healthy. They support our bodies in keeping healthy and overcoming diseases. We can get different vitamins and minerals by eating lots of different kinds of fruits and vegetables.

Foods that are particularly helpful for people with HIV and HIV-related illnesses include: spinach and other dark green leafy vegetables, squash, carrots, green beans, okra, tomatoes, oranges, papaya, mango, bananas, shea-nut fruit, guavas, and baobab fruit.

**Fats:** These are food give us extra energy and also help the body to absorb nutrients from other food. People living with HIV may have to eat fats a little at a time because they can cause diarrhoea, but they are still important for extra energy. Seeds and nuts contain healthy fat. Avocado is the only fruit which contains fat as well as protein and vitamins. Oil, butter, margarine, whole milk, and fatty meat are also rich in fats.

#### 4. What is stress and how does it affect us?

If we feel so anxious that it gets in the way of our everyday life, we are said to be suffering from stress. Stress affects us in different ways. It can make us feel tired, miserable, bad-tempered, angry, and tearful. It can lead to panic attacks, not being able to sleep, depression, and physical problems such as migraine, asthma and eczema. Over a long time, stress weakens our immune system.

#### 5. What happens if we stop taking ARVs?

When we stop taking ARVs, HIV is able to multiply and damage new CD4 cells. We may become ill as HIV weakens our immune system. But as HIV multiplies, it can change. It knows the ARVs we used to control it, and may change so that it is no longer harmed by them. This is called drug resistance. If our HIV becomes resistant to the ARVs we were using, our doctors will need to try and find other ARVs that can control our HIV. These may be hard to find.

#### Children's tips on how to take medicines correctly

What helps?	How does it help?
Understanding why it is so important to take the medicine.	Now I know how the medicine works and what could happen if I stop, I am motivated to do it well for my future.
Getting praise from my Auntie.	It makes me feel strong, and that I'm practising my virtues
Linking each time I should take pills to an action, so it has become a habit to take them.	The actions fit with when I should take pills: getting out of bed, getting back from school, and brushing teeth before going to bed.
Setting an alarm on my mobile phone.	The alarm reminds me every time.
Making a chart and marking a tick every time I take my medicine, and a cross if I forget.	I show my chart to my Auntie and get hugs for the ticks. We talk about what happened with the crosses and how to prevent it.
Being able to take the medicine in private.	We organize it so I can take my medicines privately whether at home or away.