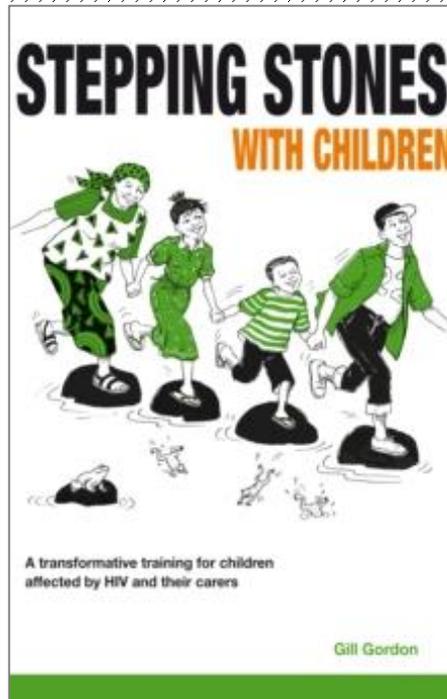


Handouts for *Stepping Stones with Children*



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 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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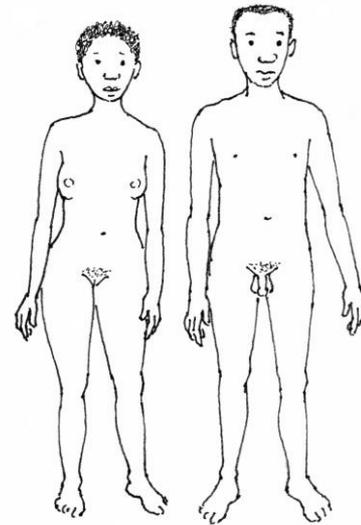


GENDER AND SEX

1. The difference between 'sex' and 'gender'.

The word **sex** tells us about the differences between male and female bodies.

Only females can have periods, get pregnant, give birth to children, and breastfeed. Only males can produce sperm, which is needed to make pregnancy happen. These differences are the work of nature and we cannot change them except by surgery and medication.



The word 'sex' is also used to mean sexual intercourse, for example "she is not old enough to have sex".

Gender describes differences in the way that males and females are expected to behave: our dress, the work we do, the way that we speak, and our status in society. These differences are created by our culture, and we can change them.

ACTIVITIES

What job is each of these people doing? For each job, talk about whether a person of the other sex could do this job.



In the pictures below, males and females are making a wall together and carrying babies to the clinic. Does this happen in our community? What do we like and not like about it?



Gender identity refers to our internal, personal sense of being a female or a male.

2. Our gender beliefs

ACTIVITY

Think back to the activity where we discussed gender beliefs, and if we agreed or disagreed with them, or didn't know. Could you use this activity to talk about difficult issues with your friends or family?

For example: If in your house boys are sent to school while girls stay at home to look after the younger children, you could tell each other whether you agree or disagree with this with your reasons. What would you like to change?

Our gender beliefs affect how we feel about ourselves, our relationships and our behaviour. They may stop us from doing and being everything we could do and be in our lives.

Some gender beliefs put everyone at risk of HIV. For example, if females are expected to be quiet and obedient, they find it difficult to say "no" to unsafe sex.

We usually act out our gender beliefs by how we behave. If children see their fathers beating their mothers, what does this tell them about how males and females should behave?

3. Using courage to change gender norms

Courage is personal bravery in the face of fear. It is doing what needs to be done, even if it is hard and makes us afraid. Courage is going ahead when we feel like giving up. Courage is needed in trying new things, such as changing gender roles.

ACTIVITY

Remember the situations you talked about which needed gender courage.

For example:

- Your teacher asks a question about safer sex in class. You know the answer, but you feel shy to say it because the boys will call you a 'prostitute'.
- Your friends call you names because you like cooking with your sister.

Choose a gender situation that you or your child is facing or might face. What would you like to happen? Talk together about how you could each show courage and mindsight in this situation.

You can use courage to talk about gender situations with family or friends when they arise. You can also acknowledge it when people show virtues to promote gender fairness.