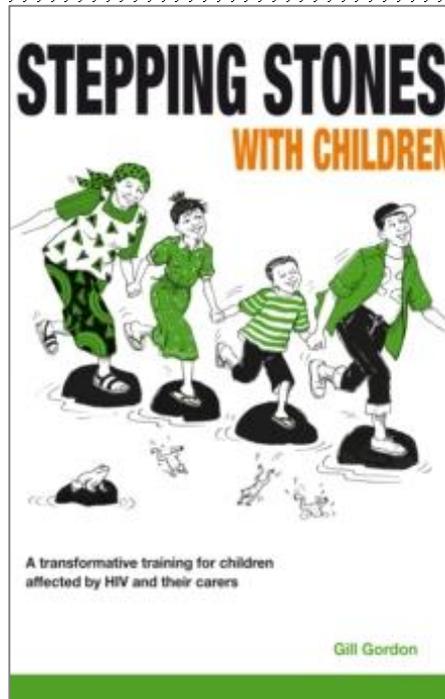


Handouts for *Stepping Stones with Children*



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.

Stepping Stones and *Stepping Stones Plus* as well as *Stepping Stones with Children* are both programmes created and supported by Salamander Trust, www.salamandertrust.net

Stepping Stones with Children was created by Salamander Trust with PASADA. It was funded by Comic Relief.

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ALL ABOUT CONDOMS

Some people believe that young people should not learn about condoms because it will encourage them to have sex. There is no evidence for this. But having good knowledge helps them prepare them for the future, when they have a sexual partner.

1. What are condoms?

- The 'outside' or male condom is a thin rubber tube closed at one end that fits over the male's hard penis. 'Inside', or female condoms vary in design, but all of them are tubes that are closed at one end. They fit inside the woman's vagina, with the open end staying on the labia.
- Both types of condom stop semen, vaginal fluids, and blood going from one partner into another during vaginal, anal, or oral sexual intercourse. They give protection from sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV. They also protect against unwanted pregnancy and infertility caused by STIs.
- When condoms are used perfectly they are very effective: 98% effective for outside condoms, and 95% for inside condoms. In typical use, taking into account errors often made by users, they are about 80 to 90% effective, or 70% for anal sex. That is a lot better than having no protection at all!
- Condoms do not have any bad effects on the body (except for the few people who are allergic to rubber).

2. Can children use condoms?

- Condoms are not designed for use by children. Outside condoms are too large for younger boys and fall off. Inside condoms may be too big and uncomfortable for younger girls.
- Most children need to mature physically for condoms to fit them properly, and so give them and their partners a high level of protection.
- It is always better for children to delay or stop having sex until they are mature in mind and body, and competent enough to have it safely, healthily, and happily.

3. Using condoms correctly

- Get condoms from a place where they are covered, and stored out of the sun.
- Check the package to make sure it is not open or torn. Check there is air pressure in the packet before opening.
- Check the date on the condom. If this is the date of expiry, and that date has passed, the condom is no longer safe. Throw it away and get a new one. If the date is the date of manufacture, add five years to it. If that date has passed, the condom is no longer safe. Throw it away and get a new one.
- If when you open the packet the condom is discoloured, or sticks to your fingers like glue, it is not safe. Throw it away and get a new one.
- Keep condoms in a cool place either in the box they came in, or in a small tin or other container.

- When using a condom, open the package carefully, taking care not to break the condom with your nails.
- If you want or need to use lubricant, make sure it is safe to use with condoms. It must not be oil-based (for example, Vaseline), as oils damage condoms.
- Follow the instructions in the packet about how to put on the condom and when to remove it.

4. The main mistakes that people make when using condoms

- They use a condom which is too old, has been stored in heat or light, or is damaged.
- They damage the condom when opening it, for example, with teeth, a knife, or scissors, or with fingernails or jewellery.
- Before putting on a male condom, they unroll it or blow it up to check for holes. This means they can't put it on correctly, and it doesn't fit properly.
- They start to put the male condom on upside down. When they find that it is not unrolling, they turn it inside out and unroll it. In fact, they should throw it away and get a new one. A condom turned inside-out will have body fluid on its outside.
- They don't squeeze air out of the tip of the male condom. The condom is then more likely to burst, because the tip is full of air when the man ejaculates, so there isn't space for his semen.
- They have intercourse when the woman's vagina is dry. They need to add safe lubrication (for example, saliva) and to do things to make the woman aroused and wetter. The friction of dry sex can make a condom burst.
- They use an oil-based lubricant, such as Vaseline or hand lotion, which can make the condom burst.
- They don't guide the penis into the female condom correctly every time.
- They put the condom on too late, after the penis and vagina have been in contact and body fluids have been shared.
- They take the condom off too soon, before finishing intercourse.
- They use two condoms at the same time. This does not create double protection; it just increases the risk of breakage.
- They use a condom which has been used before. Condoms are only designed to be used once.
- They fail to use a condom at all!

5. What to do if a condom breaks

- If a condom breaks the man should take his penis out of the vagina, bringing the condom out too, if possible.
- If necessary, use fingers to take the condom out of the vagina, trying not to spill any of the fluid inside the condom.
- Go and see the family planning nurse. If there is a risk of pregnancy, she can give you emergency contraception. If one of you has HIV, get Post-Exposure Prophylaxis. She can also check for other STIs.