

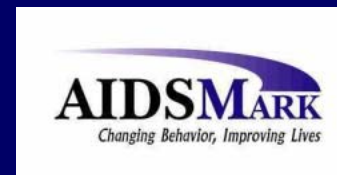
# *Safe from Harm:* NGO/FBO Implementation of a Parent-Youth IPC Program

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# Project Background

- Early Sexual Debut
  - Lengthens period of exposure to HIV & STDs
  - Increased number of lifetime sexual partners
  - Increased risk for STIs, unwanted pregnancy, and riskier sexual behaviors later in life
  - Youth, especially younger females are not always able to negotiate safer sex

# Project Background

- Zimbabwe
  - Over half of new HIV infections occur among youth
  - Nearly 1/3 youth (age 15-19) sexually active
  - Over 1 million orphans age (1-17) living with HIV/AIDS

# Project Background

- PSI began regional behavior change communications campaign focused on delayed debut in 2004
- Message content based on focus group discussions with youth in 8 African countries
- Interpersonal Communication (IPC) Campaign to supplement mass media – also based on focus group discussions

# Parent-Child Communication

- Adolescents needed reliable source of information about sex
- Non-sexually active youth had more open, honest relationships with parents
- In general, youth were open to the idea of talking to their parents



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# Parent-Child Communication

- “In the sexual life of children, parents must always give more advice to their children to bring them a better future.” (Togo, not sexually active female, age 17-19)
- “The role of parents is that they advise their children not to engage in sex by warning them they will contract AIDS... Once they do that, once the child hears that it is a parent saying that, he feels he has to follow the advice.” (Rwanda, sexually active male, age 14-16)

# Parent-Child Communication

- “Some parents neglect the part of sex, don’t say anything to the child about sex, so the child is obliged to do it by curiosity to see. But if the parents educate the child, explain to her a little about sex, because there are some parents who talk a little about sex, they insult you, they warn you. So these parents must be intimate friends to their children.”

(Togo, not sexually active female, age 14-16) © 2007 PSI

# Barriers to Parent/Child Communication

- Inadequate information – health issues, HIV and AIDS facts, pressures faced by adolescents
- Embarrassment & taboos to discuss topics related to sex
- Common belief that talking about sex promotes sexual activity
- Lack of any training or exposure to communication skills



# Safe from Harm: Objectives

- Equip parents with knowledge and skills
- Give adolescents opportunity to enhance skills & risk perception
- Provide parents & adolescents with forum to practice and utilize skills
- Ultimately encourage youth to delay sexual debut

# Pilot Test Results

- 2005 pilot test in South Africa and Zambia
- Among adolescents:
  - Increased risk perception
  - Increased self-efficacy for peer pressure
  - Increased acceptance of romantic relationships without sex
- Among parents:
  - Reported increase in communication about HIV
  - Reported increase in comfort communicating with children

# Safe from Harm In Zimbabwe

- PSI/Zimbabwe adapted the Safe from Harm Program so that it incorporates a faith-based perspective and religious principles
- Pastors and religious leaders used as program facilitators



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# Design/Methods

- Four small group participatory sessions with parents and their youth, individually at first, and then for one final joint session
- Each session based on structured material:
  - Group discussion
  - Case studies
  - Role plays
  - Homeworks
  - Audio-visual
  - Lecture



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# Design/Methods

- Key program components:
  - Debunk myths about communication about sex
  - Children's sexual life starts at birth; can tailor conversations to appropriate age
  - Open lines of communication not just about sex
  - Teachable moments
  - Communication skills



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# Outcomes

- Since program launch in September 2005:
  - 345 pastors/religious leaders trained
  - 2217 adolescents reached
  - 2003 parents reached



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# Results

- Campaign not yet evaluated
- Qualitative follow-up research:
  - Positive response to the program and use of religious leaders as moderators
  - Enhanced mutual respect
  - Broke down communication barriers
  - Created enabling environment for discussions about HIV and reproductive health
  - Youth empowered by program

# Recommendations

- Close NGO-FBO collaborations should be used to conduct community based programs
  - especially with abstinence messages
  - ensures broad program reach
- Linkages capitalize on existing structures: more cost-effective
- Ensure synergy of messages
- Use of curricula in schools and other settings

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# Challenges

- Widespread scale-up continues to be a challenge
- Ensuring consistent participation
- Monitoring & Evaluation



# THANK YOU!



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