| 6th grade HIV/AIDS EDUCATION | KNOW  •  PROGRAM |
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**What is HIV/AIDS**?

Answer: HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. HIV is the virus that causes AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome). HIV attacks your body’s immune system.

**What is the Immune System**?

Answer: The immune system is your body’s defense system, it protects your body from bacteria, germs and viruses. The immune system has two main parts: skin and white blood cells.

The skin is the barrier that keep germs out of your body. The white blood cells fight germs, bacteria and viruses that have made their way into your body. Your immune system protects you and keeps you healthy.

**Why should I care about HIV or AIDS Education**?

Answer:

1. Sometimes, we hear things about AIDS and HIV infection that may confuse us or that doesn’t make sense.
2. Some of the things people say about AIDS just aren't true, you need to have accurate information.
3. HIV is a very serious virus that can lead to AIDS which can lead to death. We still have people with HIV/AIDS living in America today with new cases diagnosed every year.
4. There is no cure for AIDS right now. There are medications that can help but there is not a cure. The medications are expensive and not available to everyone in the world.
5. With the help of doctors, many people with HIV live a long time.

**How do people get HIV?**

Answer: If a person has HIV, the HIV virus is in their body fluids such as blood. Many people who have HIV do not know that they have it and can unknowingly pass it to other people. You can’t tell, just by looking at someone, if they have HIV/AIDS or not.

1. One way that a person can pass the virus to another person is by sharing needles for drugs, tattooing or body piercing.
2. If a woman has HIV when she is pregnant, sometimes the baby can get HIV during pregnancy or birth.
3. A person can’t get HIV from hugging or kissing or playing with someone who has it. They **can’t** get it from a mosquito bite, from a toilet seat or drinking from a water fountain.

**What are some ways young people can prevent becoming infected with HIV?**

Answers: Kids your age almost never get HIV but it is important to know about it to protect yourself for when you are older. HIV transmission can be prevented. Here are some ways to keep you safe.

1. Avoid contact with other people’s body fluids such as blood.
2. If you see that someone is hurt and bleeding, hand them something to compress/clean the wound while you go get help. There are other diseases that are spread when a person comes into contact with blood of an infected person.
3. If you see blood on the playground or gym floor, notify an adult and they will clean it properly.
4. Don't use drugs, or share tattooing or body piercing needles.
5. If you find a needle, report it to an adult immediately. DO NOT TOUCH IT.

**Protecting yourself by learning to say NO.**

Part of your HIV educations involves practicing how to say “no” to risky behaviors or situations that make you uncomfortable. Think of a time when someone has tried to talk you into something that you knew wasn’t right or you were not allowed to do. For example, someone asked you to steal something or lie to your parents, maybe you were asked to watch a movie that your parents will not allow. You have to practice saying “no” in order for it to be effective and to let the person know you mean it. Here are four steps to a refusal (saying no):

1. Say “NO” in a clear, strong and sure tone of voice.
2. Explain why you are saying no such as “my mom does not allow me to watch that type of movie”.
3. Suggest an alternative activity that is safe and that you are allowed to do such as taking a walk or playing outside.
4. Leave the situation if you need or want to. For example, call your parents to come and pick you up so that you can get away from the situation that is making you uncomfortable.

Saying “NO” to risky behavior is a skill that will benefit you greatly all through your life. You should have a discussion with your parents/trusted adults about how they say “NO” when confronted with a situation for which they not comfortable. You can also create a “safe word/safe code” with your parents/trusted adult. The predetermined safe word/safe code can help you manage peer pressure situations you are not comfortable with without jeopardizing the friendship. Ask your parents/trusted adults about safe word/safe codes.

Remember, HIV/AIDS is something you should know about but not worry or stress about. Kids your age almost never get the HIV Virus. This information is so that you can protect yourself as you get older and so that you will know the facts about HIV/AIDS.

Please let me know if you have any questions. Your parents can email me at: [bjoja@rosaliaschools.org](mailto:bjoja@rosaliaschools.org)

Take care and stay safe.

Nurse B.J