

Instructor Notes

Break the Ice: Arm Yourself with Knowledge

SECTION 2 SET THE STAGE

Background Note

The *STD and AIDS Awareness* curriculum is divided into two parts. The first half of this module is intended to support participants in learning about STD symptoms, determining whether they are at risk for infection, and learning if and how often they should be tested for STDs.

Objectives

- Discuss the goals of Sections 2–5 of the *STD and AIDS Awareness* module:
 - Learn about STD symptoms and treatments;
 - Learn if and how often they should be tested for STDs;
 - Discuss the fears people have about testing and about STDs.

Instructor Preparation

Collect related news articles and internet resources to bring the topics covered in Sections 2-5 into context. Good examples are articles with statistics about STDs relating to youth, personal stories of young people dealing with STDs, and medical advancements in the treatment of the AIDS virus.

(optional) Ask participants to bring in journals that will be used throughout the unit. You should also prepare a modeling activity to demonstrate what is expected of the participants during journaling activities.

Materials

News articles (optional); internet resources (optional); journal (optional); and the *STD and AIDS Awareness Curriculum Guide*.

Instructional Procedures

- In order to introduce and demystify the sensitive and potentially embarrassing subject matter of this module, conduct a brief “Break the Ice” to introduce the topic of STDs without judgment and to create a non-threatening environment for the participants to openly discuss this pressing public health issue.
- Get the participants excited about the activities in *STD and AIDS Awareness* with a glimpse of *We Got Game: Perpetrating Rhymes*.
- Announce the seriousness of the topic with a statistic like, “Every year 3 million teens become infected with a sexually transmitted disease or infection. Sexually transmitted diseases can have serious consequences such as cancer, damage to the heart or brain, losing the ability to have children, or even death.”
- Explain that it’s very normal to feel uncomfortable talking about sex and STDs in a group, but it is important to educate and make teens aware of how they can be impacted by these rapidly spreading diseases. Ask questions like:
 - Did you know the statistics were so high?
 - Why do you think they are so high?
 - Why do you think that people are uncomfortable talking about STDs?
 - How does the lack of communication and education help to increase the number of teens who are infected each year?
 - Which STDs do you know about?
- Review the objectives of the unit with participants.
- Read selected articles or internet resources with participants to bring these issues into context.

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Instructor Notes (continued)

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Learning Extensions (optional)

If you need to provide additional support for students with little prior knowledge of the objectives in this activity, here are some suggested activities:

Journal writing affords participants with time to reflect and speculate on paper, confident that their thoughts will be accepted without criticism. Ask participants to begin their journals by writing down a goal they would like to achieve during the *STD and AIDS Awareness* module.

Ask participants to reflect on the discussion questions by writing in their journals. Model the desired journaling techniques and format requirements by providing a sample journal entry.

Enrichment (optional)

Here are some suggested activities to extend participants' knowledge:

Create a bulletin board for the *STD and AIDS Awareness* module. The purpose of the board is to chart participants' progress towards reaching their goals. Participants can post work, submit work for their individual portfolios, or generate a "Wall of Ideas." A "Wall of Ideas" is place where participants add questions and comments as the unit progresses. Encourage participants to seek out the answers to these questions independently. Acknowledge those who actively submit answers by creating a rewards system, an example would be to record their names on an area of the bulletin board entitled "Wall of Ideas: Leaders."

Assessment

Use this discussion as an opportunity to assess the level of understanding the participants have of the topics in this module. This will help you to develop an approach to teaching the curriculum that targets the specific needs of the participants.