

A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH INTERVENTIONS: TALK 2 ME CASE STUDY

PRESENTED AT THE INT'L CONFERENCE ON FAMILY PLANNING:
RESEARCH AND BEST PRACTICES, SPEKE RESORT & CONFERENCE
CENTRE MUNYONYO, UGANDA ON THE 16TH OF NOV. 2009

BY

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INTRODUCTION

- Over the years it is making more sense that countries should localize strategies with changes that suite their native settings.

THE PROJECT

- The idea was to use peer educators to facilitate discussions in secondary schools on sexuality, HIV/AIDS, STIs and other reproductive health issues.



- The innovative strategy was to get the stories of students as they were discussed and published them in a newsletter (Talk2Me) on a monthly basis.

TALK 2 ME

The voice of our children

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PEER PRESSURE! ARE YOU AFFECTED?

The topic for the month/peer pressure was analyzed thoroughly by the students of the Institute of Continuing Education, Asaba. The students were given a pre-evaluation questionnaire to know their level of understanding of the discussion topic. The class was interactive and participatory which gave an insight into what the students know and what they do not know. Mr Wilson aka RACE facilitated the session. Many students shared their experiences on how they have been affected by peer pressure and how they try to overcome negative peer pressure. The students were motivated when they knew their discussion would be in the Talk 2 Me News Journal. The following students had this to say:

"peer pressure is when your age mates oppose you in school or at home. They might tell you to join bad friends, that you will learn many things like smoking, drinking, intake of hard drugs, how to have boyfriend or girlfriend, etc. sometimes when you refuse they will beat or punish you." - **Judith Oneyibuchi**.

Another participant opine thus: "peer pressure means the pressure a youth receives from his/her peers which may lead into bad things. For example, a girl whose friends are pressuring to join them in prostitution." **Johnson**

Response from Talk 2 Me: *Judith was right in saying, sometimes your peers could gang up against you if you do not comply with them. I will advice that you report such cases to your teachers especially the Guidance & Counseling Officers or your parents. They will be in a position to ensure your security and scare those bad friends from further threats.*

Yes Johnson, you are correct about your opinion most girls go into prostitution as a result of peer influence and most especially greed. Although some say they do it to make money for themselves because of poverty. I believe there are many other ways you could earn money, like learning a trade or hand work. Most young people are just proud, or do not want to start small they want to live a flashy life from the onset. Pornography is something that is rampant among people as a result of peer pressure. Beware of greed.

ways that we can avoid peer pressure, they are by building high self esteem, make good friends, share your problems with your parents, guardians and believe in yourself" - **Kristiana Achom**

Response from Talk 2 Me: *Kristiana has made a very strong point, that peer pressure can be both positive and negative. But like she rightly observed, negative peer pressure is more predominant. Something I tell young people is why should your friends influence you negatively, why don't you influence them positively? You can decide to pressurize your peers positively. Kristiana identified lack of self esteem as one of the major problems, well we could work on that. Please endeavour to discuss issues with your parents and guardians; they will not kill you!*

In our society today we find out that most youths are engaged in one form of crime or the other; this is as a result of peer pressure. Peer pressure is the act of being influenced by your peers, friends and relations depending on how close you are to them. They are either positive or negative. Most times we find out that peer pressure is always negative, this is because most youths do not have high self esteem, or they are not very close to their parents and with that they cannot overcome temptation of any kind thereby leading to increased rate in crime in the society. There are many

Poetikal

HIV IS REAL!

*It has always been a threat
Putting the people in great fear
Stealing everyone's breath
And yet it is avoidable.*

*As deceptive as it looks
It is highly contagious,
You can't tell from people's looks
AIDS is a slow and quiet killer.*

*It really gets insidious
Not only from unprotected sex
But from the use of unsterilized sharp objects
And from mother to child transmission.*

*We could easily and simply help ourselves
By doing our best to abstain from sex
Because our future is at stake.
Because of this message; "HIV is REAL"
By Isaac Akpanni (17 years old)*

"Peer pressure is the experiences young adolescents face kind of keep. They joining in, ity, arnel presti- scam and lots more. These activities expose youths to Sexually transmitted Infections (STIs), HIV and AIDS and other diseases. I advice that young people stay away from such friends who could ruin their future, those who are sexually active should always protect themselves and have themselves tested for HIV." **Isidoma Ogbolu**

Response from Talk 2 Me: *Iv Isidoma is very correct especially the examples given of cultism, prostitution and homosexuality. We have found out that young people indulge in these things as a result of the influence of friends. Isidoma also gave a brilliant advice, that we should keep off from friends who will ruin our future. I want you to know that your future is bright, but you have the choice to make it beautiful or ugly-choose the best. Let no friend steal your future!*

Inspiro Champion's Forum!

Be a part of this glorious gathering of champions. Are you a good singer, dancer, poet, comedian? What is your talent, what do you know to show the world?

Then make it a date with us at ICP every third Saturday of the month appointing Muzins off DLA read at 2.30pm!

We hope to see you soon!!

You are great! You have a part to play!

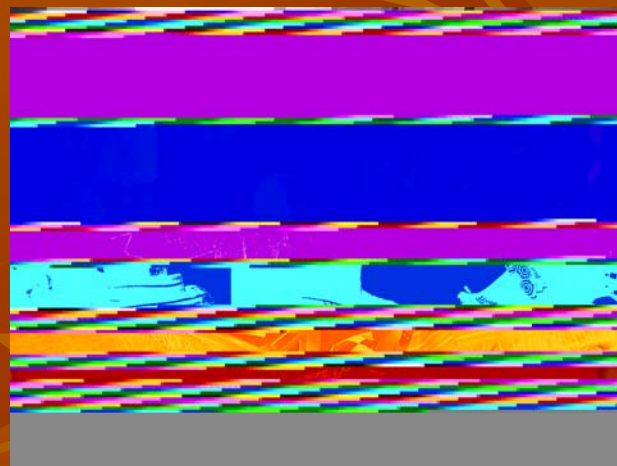
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Special Points of Interest

- Young people need someone who will listen to them.
- Young people have a lot of question they will like to ask their parents/guardians.
- This is an opportunity to ask your question and get the correct answers.
- Young people need the right information!

- The major tool used in gathering information were questionnaires and focused group discussions. Participants shared personal stories which were published. An editorial committee gathered the reports from the different groups and produced them as a newsletter (Talk2Me) on a monthly basis.

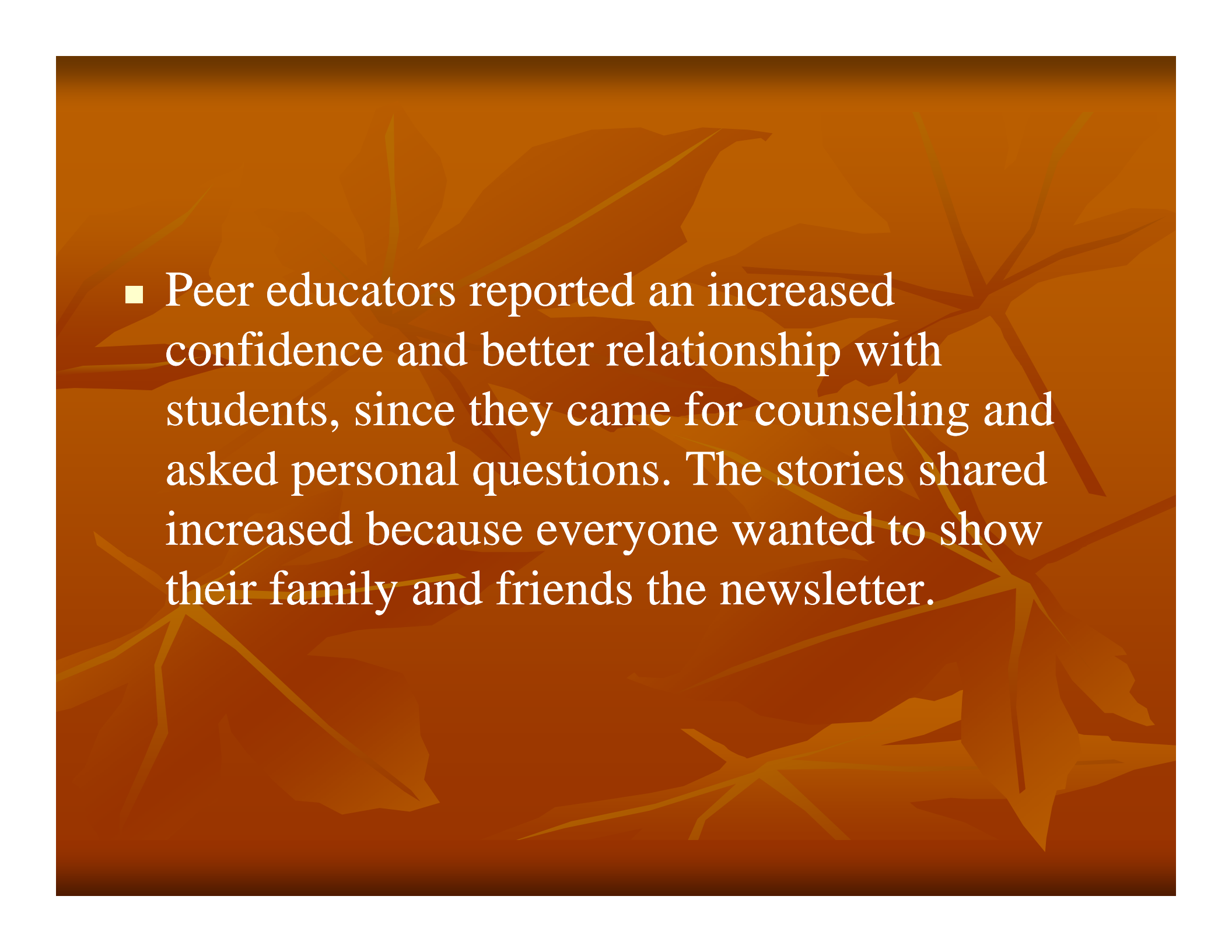


RESULTS



- The young people were very excited about the project and so looked forward to every meeting. A total of 10 schools participated in which 1000 youths benefited directly with over 5000 indirectly through the newsletter.



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- The background of the slide features a pattern of overlapping autumn leaves in various shades of brown and orange, set against a dark brown gradient background.
- Peer educators reported an increased confidence and better relationship with students, since they came for counseling and asked personal questions. The stories shared increased because everyone wanted to show their family and friends the newsletter.

CONCLUSION

- Young people are fun-loving, so every intervention targeting them should put this into account.
- Traditional teaching methods should be scaled-up to more innovative and participatory methods to improve youth-friendly services.



THANK YOU