

Grades 9-12

- There are three ways that HIV/AIDS is transmitted:
 1. Exchanging blood, semen, vaginal secretions or breast milk
 2. Using unsterilized needles when taking drugs, body piercing, tattooing or receiving acupuncture
 3. Being born to a woman who has HIV/AIDS.
- Using drugs or alcohol can put you at risk for HIV/AIDS by leading to risky behaviors like unprotected sex or intravenous drug use.
- People can take a blood or oral HIV antibody test to find out if they have HIV/AIDS.
- The best way to prevent HIV infection is to not have sex (abstinence).

Resources

Information

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National STD/AIDS Hotline, 24 hours, (800) 342-AIDS
- New Jersey AIDS Hotline, (800) 624-2377
- Health Promotion Resource Center, Bergen County Department of Health Services, (201) 634-2703

Internet Information

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, www.cdc.gov
- American Social Health Association, www.ashastd.org
- Planned Parenthood Federation of America, www.plannedparenthood.org

Counseling and Testing

- Bergen County Health Counseling Center, (201) 487-3243 ext. 241



Developed under the auspices of Bergen County Executive Dennis McNerney and the Board of Chosen Freeholders

How to Talk With Your Child About HIV/AIDS



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Why do I need to talk with my child about HIV/AIDS?

- Parents are the most influential teachers of their children.
- AIDS is a fatal disease. In 2001, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that in the U.S., 40,000 people become infected with HIV each year.
- In New Jersey, approximately one quarter of those diagnosed with HIV are between the ages of 20-29. Many of these young people were infected during their teen years.
- Talking with your child at a young age helps establish a pattern of communication that will continue as your child grows up.

How do I talk with my child about HIV/AIDS?

- Find a quiet time and place to talk without interruption.
- Tell your child you love him or her. That is why you want to share this important information.
- If you feel uncomfortable talking about HIV/AIDS, be honest about it, but keep the conversation going.
- Share your values. Your child wants to know what you think.
- If you don't know the answer to a question, promise to find out, and then do it! A list of resources can be found on the back of this brochure.
- Ask your child if he or she has any questions. Let your child know that that he or she can come to you with questions anytime.

What information is appropriate for my child's age?

Grades K-2

- Diseases are caused by germs so tiny we cannot see them with our eyes.
- To protect yourself from most diseases, wash your hands before you eat, after you blow your nose, and after you use the toilet.
- AIDS is a disease caused by a germ called HIV that can live in blood.
- If someone is hurt and bleeding, ask an adult for help.
- Never try to become a blood brother or blood sister with anyone.

Grades 3-5

- Good health habits will help you avoid catching many diseases including HIV/AIDS.
- You can't catch HIV/AIDS from someone else if you just touch them. It's okay to shake hands or hug someone who has it. It's safe to play a game or swim together.
- HIV/AIDS usually infects adults, but anyone may catch it if they are exposed to the germ, or virus, that causes it.

Grades 6-8

- Being "HIV positive" means a person has the Human Immunodeficiency Virus. Eventually, most people who are HIV positive will develop AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome).
- A person who is HIV positive can live a long time with proper medication, but must be careful not to pass the virus to anyone else.
- HIV can be passed to another person through sexual contact or blood contact.

