Chapter 4
LEARNING ABOUT DISEASES

OBJECTIVES
Participants will:
1. Differentiate between “communicable” and “non-communicable” diseases.
2. Describe what an acronym is, and state what the acronym AIDS stands for.
3. Identify AIDS as a communicable and deadly disease.
4. Explain that HIV is the virus that causes AIDS.

OVERVIEW OF ONLINE MATERIAL

The chapter begins with a discussion of communicable and non-communicable diseases. It then introduces the concept of acronyms as a lead-in to discussing HIV and AIDS. There is also mention of Hepatitis B, and C and STIs. The information provided about these diseases is very general and should be addressed during group session.

LESSON OVERVIEW

ACTIVITIES
1. WARM UP ACTIVITY (5 min.)
2. REVIEW (5 min.)
3. QUESTION BOX (5-10 min.)
4. DIRTY GLOB (10 min.)
5. WAYS DISEASES ARE TRANSMITTED (10 min.)
6. LEARNING ABOUT STI’S, HEPATITIS AND AIDS (15 min.)

MATERIALS NEEDED
1. Hand lotion, glitter
2. Copies of the worksheet for each participant*
   *Provided at end of lesson plan

PREPARATION
Activity 3: Review questions in question box and prepare responses.
Activity 6: Print worksheets for youth.
ACTIVITY 1: WARM UP (5 min.)
Purpose of Activity: To reinforce the idea of an acronym.

1. **Ask:** Can anyone give an example of an acronym? Can anyone give an example that was not used online?
2. **Ask:** Who knows what the following acronyms stand for?
   - KISS (keep it simple stupid)
   - LOL (laugh out loud)
   - TD (touch down)
   - SWAT (special weapons and tactics)
   - ASAP (as soon as possible)

ACTIVITY 2: REVIEW
Last time we talked about decision making and today we are going to shift gears and talk about HIV and AIDS as well as some other serious diseases. Although the diseases we are going to talk about are very serious, they are also preventable. The diseases that were talked about online were AIDS, hepatitis B and C and a group of diseases that are called sexually transmitted infections. These diseases are all considered communicable diseases.

**Ask:** Does anyone know what the word communicable means? It sounds like the word communicate doesn’t it?

**Explain:** A communicable disease is a disease that can be spread (communicated) from one person to another.

**Ask:** Who can think of a disease that can spread from one person to another? Example: a cold.

**Explain:** The diseases that we are going to talk about today are much more serious than a cold. The effects can last for your whole life. But these diseases also don’t spread as easily as a cold. And, just like there are things you can do to prevent getting a cold, or spreading a cold if you have one, there are things you can do to prevent yourself from getting these diseases and spreading them.

ACTIVITY 3: QUESTION BOX
Purpose: Allows youth to ask questions anonymously.
**Materials:** The question box.
Preparation: Review questions in question box before class and prepare responses.

Instructions:
Remind youth about using the box to ask questions.

ACTIVITY 4: THE DIRTY GLOB (10 min.)
Purpose: To show how easy it is for communicable disease to be passed from one person to another.
Materials: Hand lotion, cinnamon, pepper or glitter
Preparation: Gather materials needed.

Instructions:

1. Take a good sized “glob” of hand lotion and mix it with cinnamon, pepper or glitter. Place the “glob” on the palm of one volunteer’s hand. Have youth pretend that the “glob” of lotion is a germ or a communicable disease. Then have the volunteer shake hands with another youth. Have the two participants with the pretend germ on their hands continue to shake hands with other youth.

2. **Explain:** communicable disease can be passed from one person to another. It only took one person to pass the glob/disease onto so many others. Non-communicable diseases (like diabetes or asthma) cannot be spread to other people.

3. **Ask:** who can name the 5 senses? (Answer: seeing, tasting, smelling, touching and hearing). Which of those 5 senses could you use to detect the presence of the pretend germs or disease? [Answer: seeing; touching; smelling (the lotion will probably have a scent); tasting (although they shouldn’t try to taste the lotion, technically they could)].

4. **Discuss:** Unlike this practice situation, none of those senses are useful in a true germ transfer situation. Germs are very tiny. You can’t use your senses to know if there are germs around so the best way to avoid them is to always do things that prevent you from getting germs.

5. **Ask:** What should we do to protect ourselves from communicable diseases? (Answers: wash our hands, cover mouth when we cough, do not share food with others.)

**Explain:** Although we should do these things all the time, we often forget. If we know someone is sick because they have a runny nose or is coughing we are usually more careful.
Did you know that a person can spread an illness even before they have any symptoms? For example, even before you know you have a cold, you can spread cold germs to others.

This is also true about the diseases we are talking about today: AIDS, Hepatitis B and C, and STIs. Often with these diseases there is a long period of time before a person has any symptoms. During that time, even though a person does not know they have the disease, it is still in their body. This means that they can pass the disease to someone else without knowing it.

It is important that you always protect yourself from disease—not just when you know that a person has a disease.

**ACTIVITY 5: WAYS DISEASES ARE SPREAD (10 min.)**

**Purpose:** To teach youth that there are different ways diseases can spread.

**Instructions:**
1. **Explain:** When we did the glob game we saw how germs can spread from one person to another. With the glob you could see, smell and feel the germs. But germs are so small we can’t see them.

There are many different types of communicable diseases and many different ways that diseases can be spread. List the different routes and ask the class to name diseases that spread by that route:

- **Airborne:** Germs that travel in the air can be spread by sneezing or coughing. What is an example? Colds, TB.
- **Waterborne:** These germs live in water. They can stomach problems or diarrhea.
- **Insects:** Mosquitos and ticks can spread diseases like malaria and spotted fever.
- **Sexually Transmitted Diseases:** The diseases that were mentioned online are ones that can be spread by **sexual contact**. These can be very serious diseases. Some of them have no cure.

**ACTIVITY 6: LEARNING ABOUT STIS, HEPATITIS AND AIDS (15 min.)**

**Purpose:** To teach youth about STIs, AIDS and hepatitis.

**Materials:** Worksheets for each youth. You could also write the worksheet on a large white board or pieces of poster paper.

**Instructions:**
Pass our worksheets and go over correct answers together as a group.
What are STIs?
STI stands for _sexually_ transmitted _infection_. Another name for STI is sexually _transmitted disease (STD). STIs is the name used to describe a group of _infections_ that are spread through intimate contact. Some of the effects of these infections are pain, itching, rashes, blisters and genital warts. Having an STI also increases a person’s risk for getting infected with _HIV_, for developing certain types of cancer, and they can lead to infertility (being unable to have a __baby__).

What is AIDS?
_AIDS_ is disease that is caused by a virus called HIV. One of the ways that HIV can spread is through _sexual_ contact. If a person becomes infected with HIV the virus attacks their _immune_ system. There is no __cure__ for AIDS but there are __medicines__ that a person can take that will help them live longer. It usually takes a long time before a person has _symptoms_ of AIDS. During that time, they may not know they are infected with _HIV_. Even though the person may not have symptoms they can still __spread__ the disease to others.

What is Hepatitis?
Hepatitis means inflammation of the __liver__. The liver does many important things in your body and having hepatitis can make you very __sick_. Hepatitis can be caused by different things. Two types of hepatitis, called hepatitis __A__ and hepatitis __B__ are very serious. These viruses spread from person to person through _blood_ or _body fluids_. A person can get infected through __unprotected__ sex or sharing needles.

Summarize: There are some things that are the same about these diseases:
• They can be passed through sexual contact (does not have to be sexual intercourse).
• A person can have the disease and not know it.
• If a person has the disease and does not know, they can still pass it to others.
• You can’t tell by looking if a person has the disease.

Explain: There are tests that can be done to find out if a person has these diseases. It is important that people who are at risk for these diseases get tested so they know if they have the disease. But many people do not get tested so they do not know.
Learning about STIs, AIDS and Hepatitis

What are STIs?
STI stands for _______ transmitted __________. Another name for STI is sexually ___________ disease (STD). STIs is the name used to describe a group of ____________ that are spread through intimate contact. Some of the effects of these infections are pain, itching, rashes, blisters and genital warts. Having an STI also increases a person’s risk for getting infected with ______, for developing certain types of cancer, and they can lead to infertility (being unable to have a ________).

What is AIDS?
_______is disease that is caused by a virus called HIV. One of the ways that HIV can spread is through __________ contact. If a person becomes infected with HIV the virus attacks their ___________ system. There is no __________ for AIDS but there are ___________ that a person can take that will help them live longer. It usually takes a long time before a person has __________ of AIDS. During that time, they may not know they are infected with ______. Even though the person may not have symptoms they can still __________ the disease to others.

What is Hepatitis?
Hepatitis means inflammation of the ________. The liver does many important things in your body and having hepatitis can make you very ______. Hepatitis can be caused by different things. Two types of hepatitis, called hepatitis ____ and hepatitis _____ are very serious. These viruses spread from person to person through __________ or __________. A person can get infected through __________ sex or sharing needles.