



THE YOUTH WARRIORS

COMBATting HIV
THROUGH THE ARTS

A DVD AND MANUAL
FOR HIV AND
AIDS EDUCATION

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Collage by: Lori Maracle



Collage by: Samantha Jourdain

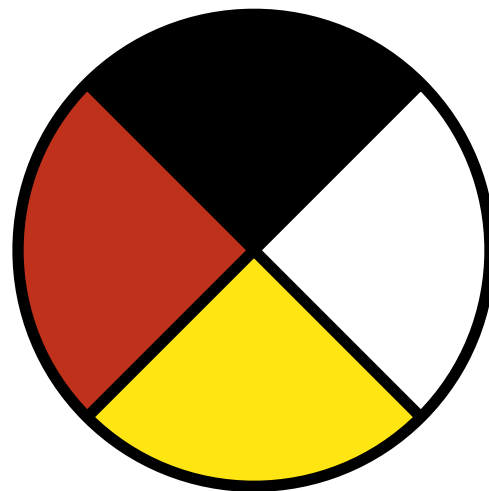


Photovoice by: Tiffany Nelson and Dwane John

► WHY WE DID THIS PROJECT

What do Aboriginal youth have to say about HIV/AIDS in their community? In a research project, on reserve and off reserve youth were asked how HIV/AIDS affects Aboriginal youth and their communities. The youth talked about the stigma around HIV/AIDS, the ways risk is connected to colonialism and structural inequities, the challenges of using condoms, the value of tradition and the important role for Elders in HIV/AIDS awareness. They had great ideas for engaging youth in creative forms of HIV prevention education. This project follows up on some of their suggestions.

This DVD and manual were created by The Youth Warriors (Allen Colley, Dwane John, Samantha Jourdain, Lori Maracle, Tiffany Nelson, Christarr Smillie, Kenny Vancoujhnott), a group of Aboriginal youth concerned about the high HIV rates in their communities. They turned the youth stories from the research project into scripts, monologues collages and photographs for HIV education. Like the youth who shared their stories, The Youth Warriors believe that the strength of culture, the power of the arts, and the leadership of youth are important resources for stopping the spread of HIV.



Anishnawbe Medicine Wheel

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

This manual is a guide to using the DVD for HIV/AIDS education. While designed for Aboriginal youth, the DVD is a valuable teaching tool for any group.

The manual is divided into two sections. The first section includes basic information about HIV/AIDS: what the terms mean, how HIV is transmitted, and the impact on Aboriginal communities. Anyone using this teaching tool should begin by reading this section.

The second section of the manual includes the scripts the Youth Warriors performed in the DVD. Each script is followed by a message and discussion question to get youth talking about HIV/AIDS along with quotes from the Aboriginal youth whose stories informed the scripts. Their quotes can be used as a starting point for discussion or as a follow up to the ideas generated by the group. The artwork sprinkled throughout the manual can also be conversation starters.

After viewing the DVD the group may want to perform the scripts and/or create their own artistic work. This is a great way to get youth involved in HIV and AIDS education.

▶ WHAT IS HIV?

HIV is the virus that can lead to AIDS. HIV weakens the body's ability to fight disease and infections, making it easier for people to become sick. One person with HIV can pass HIV to another person through activities such as sharing needles or having unprotected sex with someone who has HIV.

Human: HIV only infects humans. Anyone who engages in risky activities can get HIV.

Immuno-Deficiency: HIV weakens the immune system, making it hard for our bodies to fight infection.

Virus: HIV is a virus. HIV reproduces by taking over and destroying human cells that are vital to the immune system.



Photovoice by: Tiffany Nelson and Dwane John

▶ WHAT IS AIDS?

AIDS is a condition that results from the HIV infection. When people with HIV develop AIDS, everyday infections, like pneumonia, may become life-threatening. AIDS stands for **Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome**.

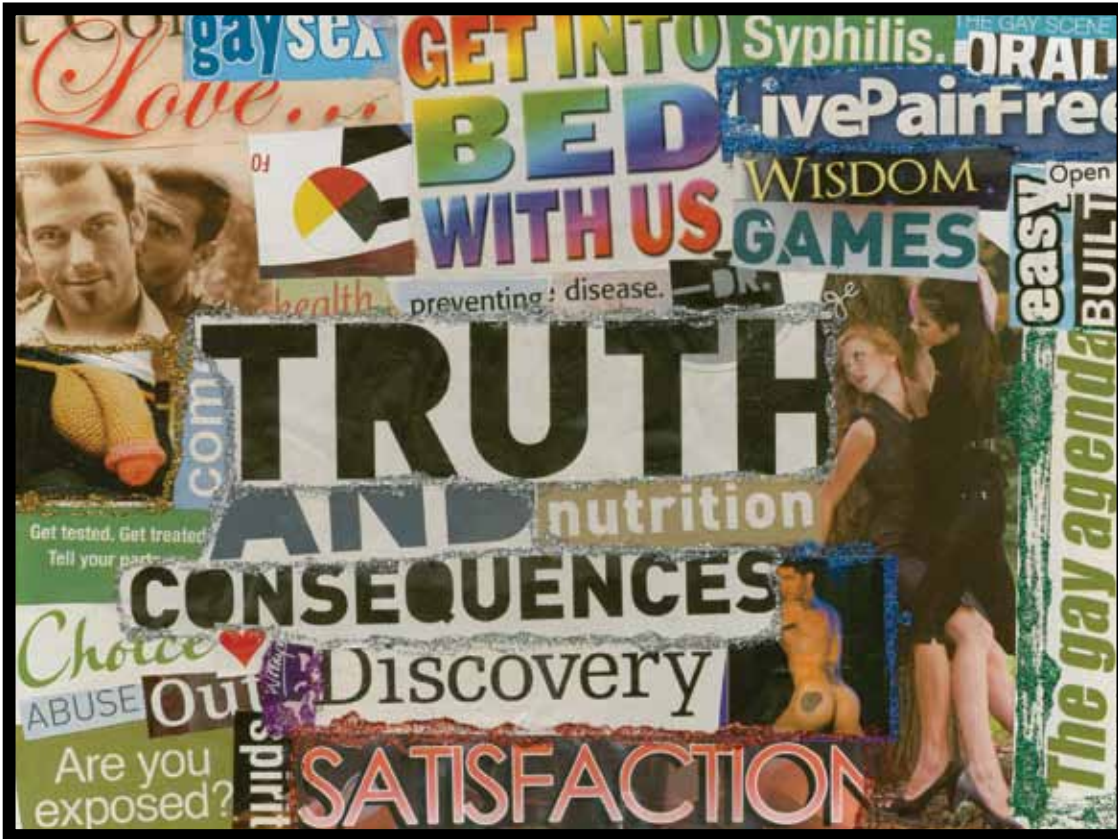
Acquired: Acquired means to "get" something. AIDS is not an illness that is inherited genetically or that occurs spontaneously.

Immune: HIV affects the body's immune system-the part of the body which usually works to fight off germs such as bacteria and viruses.

Deficiency: The immune system no longer works properly.

Syndrome: A syndrome is a collection of illnesses or symptoms that describe a particular condition.

► HIV/AIDS: LET'S TALK ABOUT IT



Collage by: Lori Maracle

Myths About Getting HIV

You cannot get HIV from:

- Saliva
- Urine
- Tears
- Cups, plates
- Silverware
- Hugs
- Towels
- Kisses
- Bathrooms
- Swimming Pools

▶ LET'S TALK ABOUT IT (CONT'D)

Facts: How can you protect yourself from HIV/AIDS?

- Abstinence—not having sex
- Practicing Safer Sex—using condoms or other latex barriers (e.g, dental dams, plastic food wrap, latex gloves, etc.)
- Not sharing sex toys
- Getting tested regularly for HIV and other STIs
- Educating yourself and those around you about HIV basics
- Not sharing needles or equipment for injecting drugs such as spoons, saucers, rigs, etc.



Captain Condom vs. HIV/AIDS, by Christarr Smillie

"I created this collage to show how something so **small** can be so **mighty**!"

– Christarr Smillie

"Don't be silly, cover your Willy!"

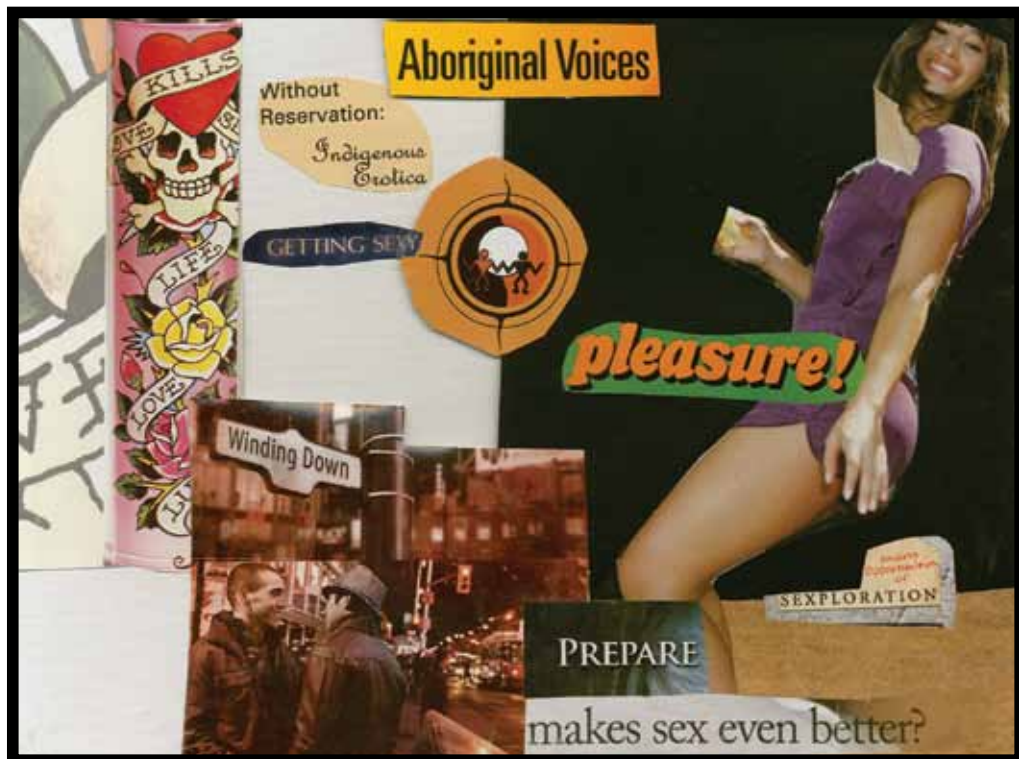
- Captain Condom

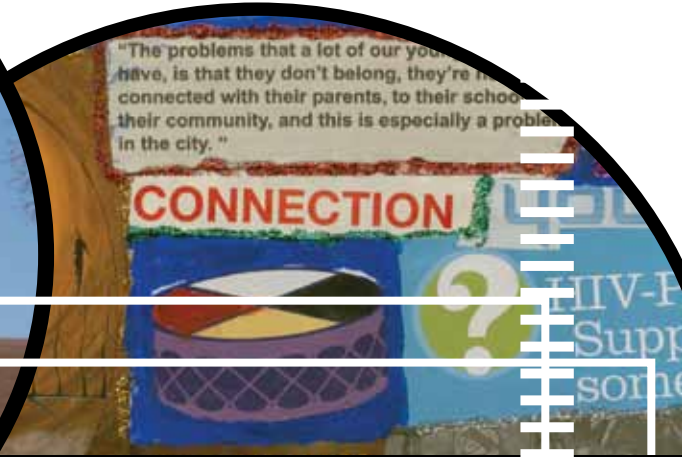
▶ LET'S TALK ABOUT IT (CONT'D)



HIV/AIDS is not something most people want to talk about. All too often it is thought of as somebody else's problem, not something that will happen to us, our families or our communities. But the numbers tell us that HIV/AIDS is a problem that all Aboriginal people must be concerned about.

Aboriginal people remain over-represented in the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Canada. Factors such as poverty, substance use, sexually transmitted infections, and limited access to health services increase vulnerability. Injection drug use is the main mode of HIV transmission for Aboriginal people. Aboriginal youth are being infected with HIV at a younger age than non-Aboriginal youth. HIV/AIDS has a significant impact on Aboriginal women who make up a higher proportion of the HIV rates compared to non-Aboriginal women. So HIV/AIDS is a serious problem for Aboriginal people. Let's talk about it!





PERFORMANCES SCRIPTS PHOTOS



STEPS FOR DEVELOPING THE SCRIPTS



1

Read Through Quotes From Report



2

Create Images from Quotes



3

Write Scripts from Images



4

Rehearse Scripts



5

Perform!



► CROSSROADS

Setting:

There is a sign post on a road. The road splits into two. The sign post has two signs: one reads "wrong way", the other reads "right way." The cast, coming from behind the audience walk up to the sign and split in two directions. Just as they go off, one person from the "wrong way" stops to tie his shoe. He is approached by someone from the "right way" that grabs him and leads him down the "right way" path.

Message: HIV/AIDS—LET'S SUPPORT EACH OTHER.

► CROSSROADS: DISCUSSION

Discussion Question:

What are some of the factors that make it difficult for youth to make healthy choices that will protect them from HIV?

What Aboriginal Youth Have to Say:

"If you have low esteem, then you don't care about things, so why use a condom?"

– Female urban youth

"Some guys won't wear condoms and force women to have sex anyway."

– Female on-reserve youth

"I don't think most youth care too much; they don't think anything bad will happen..."

– Female on-reserve youth

"A lot of people experience negative things from people and it makes them think badly of the world and they try to cover their feelings with sex or drugs. They have never had the feeling that they are even worthwhile..."

– Female on-reserve youth

"[Someone at clinic] they'll tell my grandma...guess who's at the clinic getting condoms and an HIV test."

– Female on-reserve youth



► KIDS ON THE REZ

Setting:

A woman goes to the backyard to hang her laundry. She starts talking to her neighbor. She holds a load of laundry under one arm while her neighbor is carving a drumstick. They begin a conversation.

- Woman 1** Tommy was home with the flu last week.
- Woman 2** You don't have to tell me. Both Robbie and Daniel brought it home.
- Woman 1** Once one kid gets it on this Rez, they all get it.
- Woman 2** True, true, true.
- Woman 1** What did you use last month when the lice went through the school?
- Woman 2** What do you mean?
- Woman 1** Don't give me that! Once one kid gets it on this Rez, they all get it.
- Woman 2** True, true. I used oil and vinegar, it's traditional.
- Woman 1** I guess.
- Woman 2** I hate to bring this up but have you heard young William is sick?
- Woman 1** Really? Well here we go again.
- Woman 2** Once one kid gets it on this Rez...
- Both women** They all get it! (they both laugh)
- Woman 2** What does he have?
- Woman 1** AIDS...

They both pause, look at each other, then quickly walk away.

Message: HIV/AIDS IS IN OUR COMMUNITY—LET'S TALK ABOUT IT!

► KIDS ON THE REZ: DISCUSSION

Discussion Question:

Why are people in the Aboriginal community afraid to talk about HIV/AIDS?

What Aboriginal Youth Have to Say:

"The Elders don't know enough about HIV/AIDS and they don't want the community to have anything to do with them [people who are HIV positive]. In my community the Elders say they didn't have HIV/AIDS when they were young and they are afraid if one person has it the whole community will get it."

– Male on-reserve youth

"A lot of people don't talk about it [sex]. My Godmother she won't talk about it, only now she's starting to talk to me about things but not really. Her mom wouldn't talk to her about it; she's like, 'It's just not something they talk about.' I guess they don't feel comfortable with it."

– Female urban youth

"There is no problem asking for help about tonsillitis because it's not dealing with an area that most people feel kinda private about. Like cancer... to say I have cancer you get sympathy and support. But HIV you are getting really personal and the person is afraid they'll be shunned."

– Female urban youth

"There is a stigma that goes with it. There is also a lot of fear associated with it."

– Female urban youth



▶ VIP/HIV DANCE

Setting:

Three girls line up in front of a club. They all have VIP badges on and show them to the bouncer. Inside the club they see a group of men who soon approach them. They all find partners and begin dancing. One male takes a girl to the back of the stage and when they appear again, her tag doesn't read VIP but HIV. The dancing continues until all the badges are turned from VIP to HIV. When the girls wave good bye to the men they notice the sign change on themselves. They hurry off stage upset.

Message: BE AWARE! KNOW WHO YOUR PARTNER IS!

► VIP/HIV DANCE: DISCUSSION

Discussion Question:

What are some reasons youth in this script are not practicing safe sex?

What Aboriginal Youth Have to Say:

"I don't think most youth care too much; they don't think anything bad will happen."

– Female on-reserve youth

"Sometimes youth are too high... they have like orgy parties...and they're so drunk they don't care who they're with."

– Male on-reserve youth

"Some youth don't care about their future...there's nothing else to do so they just do what feels good at the time."

– Male on-reserve youth



► BROKEN TELEPHONE

Setting:

One person is checking her text message. Person 1 is sending a text to person 2. Person 2 calls person 3 on her cell phone. Person 3 passes the message on to person 4 when they meet walking down the street. Person 4, who is confused, repeats the mixed-up message. A group of kids are standing in a circle playing Broken Telephone. The first child whispers to the next:

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| Person 1 | You must use a condom to save your life. |
| Person 2 | You use a condom with your wife. |
| Person 3 | Don't use condoms all your life. |
| Person 4 | Don't use condoms it will take your life. |

Message: STOP THE BROKEN TELEPHONE, GET THE MESSAGE RIGHT.

► BROKEN TELEPHONE: DISCUSSION

Discussion Question:

What are some good ways to educate Aboriginal youth about HIV/AIDS?

What Aboriginal Youth Have to Say:

"I know that school is not the best way to learn because that's not the traditional way."

– Male urban youth

"Like you just don't go and talk about HIV if you know nothing about sex. The parents don't talk to their kids because they think the school should do it and the school thinks the parents should do it and there are those people who think nobody should talk about it."

– Female urban youth

"...I think video conferencing would be good then you could connect all the communities together and everyone would be getting the same information and then the Elders and other people could watch and find out the truth and stop banishing people with HIV/AIDS."

– Male on-reserve youth



Setting:

Three game show contestants stand at their podiums. Alex is the game show host.

Contestant 1	What are the ice flows?
Alex	Incorrect!
Contestant 2	Things that are on the extinct list for 1000.
Alex	This group of people, believed to be extinct, actually have the fastest growing population under the age of 25.
Contestant 1	Who are the North American Indians?
Alex	Correct! Where would you like to go now?
Contestant 1	Numbers that will blow your mind for 200.
Alex	Injection drug use makes up for this percentage of HIV transmission within the Aboriginal population in Canada.
Contestant 2	What is 53%?
Alex	Right!
Contestant 2	Numbers that will blow your mind for 400.
Alex	The percentage of Aboriginal women compared to Aboriginal men with HIV/AIDS.
Contestant 1	What is 50%, Alex?
Alex	Right you are!
Contestant 1	Numbers that will blow your mind for 600.

▶ JEOPARDY (CONT'D)

Alex	The percentage of Aboriginal people under the age of thirty that account for the total infection rates for Aboriginal people.
Contestant 2	What is 32.4%?
Alex	Good!
Contestant 2	Numbers that will blow your mind for 800.
Alex	The percentage of non-Aboriginal people under the age of thirty that account for the total infection rates for non-Aboriginal people.
Contestant 3	Oh! Oh! Um, what is 21%!
Alex	Yes, a difference of over 10% compared to the Aboriginal population.
Contestant 3	Let's close off the category for 1000.
Alex	This is a daily double. What would you like to wager?
Contestant 3	My life.
Alex	What is the most prevalent way HIV is contracted in the Aboriginal community?
Contestant 3	Oh I know this. What is sex?
Alex	Incorrect. The correct answer is intravenous drug use. Unfortunately you're dead. Thank you for watching Jeopardy and this is Alex Indian saying goodnight.

Alex waves to audience while 2 contestants take the dead contestant off stage.

Message: LEARN THE FACTS. BE INFORMED.

▶ JEOPARDY: DISCUSSION

Discussion Question:

Why is HIV and AIDS such a problem for Aboriginal communities?

What Aboriginal Youth Have to Say:

"We didn't have AIDS or HIV before. I guess it is the fact that they put us in a really bad position and they stuffed us on reserves and stole our land and told us that we don't have the right to do this."

– Female urban youth

"We need Canadians to understand our issues. They are ignorant about our problems..."

– Female on-reserve

"What about our land rights..."

– Male urban youth

"Like our water, the government doesn't care about AIDS and all the other health problems we have in our communities: diabetes, suicide, alcoholism. The government doesn't do enough to help our communities."

– Male on-reserve

"I'm telling you we should have left them [Europeans] all in the boat ... I'm telling you they would have died, they didn't even know what to eat."

– Female urban youth

"I think the whole residential schools had a huge effect on self-esteem. Safe sex has a lot to do with self-esteem. Like saying the way you want to respect yourself and it has to do with social problems."

– Female urban youth



▶ SCARY MOVIE

Setting:

A chilling sound track is played. A scream is heard. A woman comes running looking back in horror. Her breath is heavy and she continues to scream. From the door comes a masked figure. He goes after the woman. She twists her ankle and falls but struggles to keep going. The masked figure catches up to her and takes her into his arms. She takes out a female condom. He looks at it then grabs it and throws it over his shoulder. She pulls out a regular condom. He looks at this and throws it away too.

Message: SEX WITHOUT A CONDOM! THE HORROR!

▶ SCARY MOVIE: DISCUSSION

Discussion Question:

What are some of the reasons youth do not practice safe sex?

What Aboriginal Youth Have to Say:

"Women may take risks they normally wouldn't because they like a guy and want to keep him."

– Female on-reserve youth

"Just going in to buy condoms sometimes is embarrassing for some people, even nerve wracking."

– Male urban youth

"Some women are afraid that a man won't want them if they say they have to wear a condom or they'll think they are easy."

– Female urban youth

"If you have like low esteem, then you don't care about things, so why use a condom?"

– Female urban youth

"I know girls who have sent guys ten blocks to get condoms."

– Female urban youth



▶ FROM THE EDGE

Setting:

A light shines up on stage. A young man sits; he is very upset, rocking back and forth, while voices and noise overpower him. The sound of wind, crashes, screams and car screeches flood the head of the man as he rocks back and forth. Louder and louder the noises become.

On the screen in bold words:

"Do you want to know what he is feeling?"

Then the screen switches to:

*"What he is **really** feeling?"*

On the screen are images and text with words describing street life and violence. The man goes to the screen, closer and closer, looking at the screen until an image of the edge of a building appears. He stands looking over the edge. The noises are loudest now but then are suddenly stopped. Faintly in the back ground comes the Elder playing her drum; soft at first, then harder and harder until it is loud. More words fill the screen.

What will it take to lead you from the edge? "COMMUNITY"!

Message: COMMUNITY IS OUR BEST RESOURCE IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HIV AND AIDS.

▶ FROM THE EDGE: DISCUSSION

Discussion Question:

How can community support youth who feel they are “at the edge”?

What Aboriginal Youth Have to Say:

“That’s one of the strong things we have about our community [traditions]; it’s still there and it’s still relevant too.”

– Female on-reserve youth

“The whole community needs to be informed to understand so they don’t make anyone an outcast who has it and so people better understand the risks.”

– Female on-reserve youth

▶ CREDITS

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