

#### 4 Get Involved

- **Join the "One Man Can" Campaign:** Sonke Gender Justice Network has developed the "One Man Can" Campaign to encourage men to work together with other men and with women to help create a better, more equitable and more just world, and to encourage men to get involved in the struggle to prevent HIV and AIDS and violence against women. You can make an extremely valuable contribution and help make the world safer for yourself and future generations.
- **Provide Care to Those Who Need It:** At the moment, women and girls provide most of the care for orphans and people suffering from AIDS-related illnesses. This often leaves women and girls physically and emotionally drained and it prevents them from going to school and work. Some men are already involved but more need to be. Show that you care by providing regular support to people who need it wherever and whenever you can.
- **Advocate for Full Access to Health Services:** Our Constitution gives us "the right to have access to health care services." Government is working hard to make HIV treatment and care available to all who need it, but it is a huge challenge. We can all make a difference by joining an AIDS advocacy organization like the Treatment Action Campaign to keep up the pressure for full access to essential health services.
- **Advocate for Equal Access to Female Condoms:** At the moment, very few female condoms are available, which is an infringement of women's rights. Speak out, and insist they are made available from the clinic near you – and contact Sonke, TVEP or an HIV and AIDS-based organization near you if you need assistance.

Remember, the more people challenge the stigma, discrimination, secrecy, denial and inaction related to HIV and AIDS, the healthier the world will be for all of us!



#### For More Information or Assistance

##### Eastern Cape:

Siyakhanyisa HIV / AIDS Support Group  
13 Main Street, Qumbu, Mhlonlo  
Tel / Fax: 047 553 0072

Umtata Child Abuse Resource Centre (UCARC)  
Nelson Mandela Drive, Mthatha  
Tel: 047 531 1103  
Fax: 047 531 3494

##### KwaZulu-Natal:

Nkandla HIV / AIDS Network:  
292 Marree Road, P.O. Box 161  
Nkandla 3855  
Tel: 035 833 0067  
Fax: 035 833 0402

Tholusizo Community Relations Initiative  
Chwezi Area, Nkandla  
Tel: 072 075 9568 / 072 702 6116

##### Limpopo:

Centre for Positive Care  
91 Tamboti Street, Sibasa  
Tel / Fax: 015 963 1184  
Web: [www.posicare.co.za](http://www.posicare.co.za)  
E-mail: [posicare@mweb.co.za](mailto:posicare@mweb.co.za)

Munna Ndi Nnyi?  
P.O. Box 204, Shayandima 0945  
Thulamela Municipality, Vhembe District  
Tel / Fax: 015 965 2754

Thohoyandou Victim Empowerment Programme  
2 Old Embassy Grounds,  
PO Box 754, Sibasa 0970  
Tel: 015 963 1222  
Fax: 015 963 1973  
Web: [www.tvep.org.za](http://www.tvep.org.za)  
E-mail: [info@tvep.org.za](mailto:info@tvep.org.za)

##### Sonke Gender Justice Network

Sonke Gender Justice Network strives to build a southern Africa in which men, women, youth and children can enjoy equitable, healthy and happy relationships that contribute to the development of just and democratic societies. To achieve this, Sonke works to build government, civil society and citizen capacity to achieve gender equality, prevent gender-based violence and reduce the spread of HIV and the impact of AIDS.

##### Johannesburg Office

Sable Centre, 41 De Korte Street, 16th Floor  
PO Box 31166, Braamfontein 2017  
Tel +27 11 339 3589  
Fax +27 11 339 6503  
Email [info@genderjustice.org.za](mailto:info@genderjustice.org.za)

##### Cape Town Office

Westminster House, 4th Floor  
122 Longmarket Street, Cape Town 8001  
Tel +27 21 423 7088  
Fax +27 21 424 5645  
Web [www.genderjustice.org.za](http://www.genderjustice.org.za)

##### Information and Counselling Services:

- **LifeLine National Counseling Line:** LifeLine's National Counseling Line provides free, anonymous, confidential telephonic counseling 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call toll free: 0861-322-322.
- **The National AIDS Helpline:** The National AIDS Helpline offers information, telephonic counseling, referrals, and information on treatment of HIV / AIDS, TB, STIs, and is free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call toll free: 0800-012-322



## WHAT CAN ONE MAN DO TO STOP HIV, AIDS AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN?



Thohoyandou Victim Empowerment Program

## The Challenge

By the end of 2007, almost one in five South Africans between the ages of 15 and 49 was HIV-positive.

With 5.7 million people living with HIV at the end of 2007, South Africa has the largest number of people living with HIV and AIDS of any country in the world. We also have one of the highest levels of domestic violence and rape, and in 2004 the Medical Research Council found that every six hours, a woman in South Africa is killed by her intimate partner. This is the highest rate recorded anywhere in the world.

This violence reflects the unequal power that exists between men and women. It is also one of the root causes of the rapid spread of HIV in South Africa. Almost one-third of sexually active women reported that their first sexual encounter was coerced. As a result, young women in South Africa are much more likely to be infected than men.

Of young people between the ages of 15 and 24 who are HIV-positive, three out of four are young women.

Other research reveals that men are significantly less likely than women to get tested for HIV, even when they know they are at risk. The less men test, the faster the virus is spread, because people who do not know their status are less likely to protect themselves and others. Men's reluctance to test also means that they often seek treatment late, when their immune system is too weak to recover.

Only one in five South Africans aware of voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) has been tested.

## What Can One Man Do?

So, what can you do to prevent HIV and AIDS and violence against women? Plenty! Here are a few ways to start:



### 1 Know Your Status

If you are sexually active, the only way to know your status is to be tested.

According to the Charter of Rights on AIDS and HIV, you have a right to anonymous, confidential HIV testing. Many people, especially many men, are afraid to test. They are afraid of knowing their status, and they are afraid of being stigmatized by their colleagues, friends and family. But it is only by getting tested that you can begin to make decisions about your life and the people you care about based on facts, and most people find love and support when they disclose their HIV+ status. Besides, to combat HIV and AIDS we must challenge and eradicate stigma – not fear it. Ubuntu does not tolerate stigma!

HIV is a lifelong and life-threatening illness, but it does not have to be a death sentence! Like diabetes and high blood pressure, it is a chronic illness that can be managed.

Some men refuse to get tested based on the mistaken belief that they are somehow “safe” from infection, or that to know their status can spoil their fun. If you have ever had unprotected sex, you are not safe! And certainly you can still have fun, knowing your status and protecting both yourself and your partner.

### 2 Educate Yourself

Before getting tested, educate yourself on HIV and AIDS, and learn what resources are available in your area. Literature can usually be obtained from clinics, hospitals, NGOs, churches and municipalities.

If you want to know more about HIV or AIDS, testing, counseling or treatment, feel free to contact Sonke Gender Justice Network, or the nearest of our partners listed at the back.

### 3 Protect Yourself and Others

Whether you have tested positive or negative, you still need to practice safe sex. If you are positive, you must be very careful not to be exposed to other strains of the virus that can make you more sick. If you test negative – you will want to stay that way! Here are some tips for protecting yourself and others:

- **ALWAYS Use Condoms!** They have proved to be the most effective barrier available against HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) at the moment. Have you tried female condoms with your partner yet? If not, ask for some from your nearest clinic, and if they don't have any, insist that they order some. Although they can be difficult to use when you first try, don't give up because they can be most enjoyable for both of you! Using either a male or female condom can also encourage open discussion with your partner about sex, which can lead to a more exciting, fun and fulfilling relationship.



There are a lot of myths about condoms which are causing HIV and AIDS to spread even faster. Most of these myths simply serve as an excuse not to wear one! Condoms are by far the safest way to protect ourselves available at the moment – unless abstinence is an option for you. But of course, condoms will only work if you use them properly and every time!

- **Reduce the Number of Sexual Partners You Have:** The virus is most easily passed along soon after a person has become infected, so people with multiple partners spread the virus to all of them quickly – and those partners then quickly pass on the virus to others.

Having more than one sexual partner in the same month puts you at VERY high risk of being infected with HIV.

- **Be Responsible About Your Relationships:** Avoid “one-night stands” – they are not worth the risk. Always get to know someone well and get tested before starting a new sexual relationship. Space your relationships and avoid having overlapping or consecutive sexual partnerships. All of these will help you to stay healthy – and happy!

- **Reduce Your Alcohol Consumption:** You know that alcohol encourages you to take risks. Is it worth your life?

- **Consider Getting Circumcised:** Recent studies have shown that men who are circumcised have some protection against HIV infection. Not enough to stop wearing condoms, however, so condoms must still be used. If you have not been circumcised, we recommend you consider being circumcised at your local clinic or hospital. Remember, it is not a guarantee that you will not become infected.

SO: if you are empowered, well-informed on HIV and AIDS, always use condoms, stick to one sexual partner and get tested regularly, THEN you can say you are SAFE!

- **If You Are HIV-Positive:** Get anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment when needed and stay on it! Although there is currently no cure for AIDS, ARVs allow people who are HIV-positive to live happy, productive and satisfying lives. However, once you start on the drugs you must never stop, unless advised to do so by your doctor. Stopping and starting again weakens the effect of the drugs so that they will eventually stop protecting you.