
A Stepping Stones with Children DVD Handbook

to accompany the DVD

About Us...

Salamander Trust. Salamander Trust was created to challenge, catalyse and transform the way we think about HIV and AIDS. It aims to promote the health and rights of people who are marginalised by societies worldwide as a result of their gender, HIV status or sexual and reproductive health and lives.

We achieve this through training, global advocacy and research. We also support the International Community of Practice Network of over 1,000 organisations who are users of the Stepping Stones training programme on gender, HIV, communication and relationship skills.

Website: www.salamandertrust.net

Email: info@salamandertrust.net

PASADA. Pastoral Activities and Services for people with AIDS Dar es Salaam Archdiocese (PASADA) provides quality, caring and compassionate services and support to adults and children living with and affected by HIV in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania.

PASADA maintains a holistic approach and with special emphasis on the values of justice and solidarity. Although sponsored by the Roman Catholic Church, the services offered by PASADA are available to all individuals without discrimination of any sort and completely free of charge

Website: <http://www.pasada.or.tz>

Email: pasada@Pasada.or.tz

About this film project...

In December 2014, Salamander Trust caught up with some of the children and caregivers who had attended the *Stepping Stones with Children* workshop twelve months previously, to provide further training in film-making.

Through a week-long training workshop, each group created, filmed and edited short films, on a topic of their own choosing. Even the 5 – 8 year old participants! These films give great insight into the issues that are important in the participants' lives and to the changes that the *Stepping Stones with Children* training is helping to bring about in these areas.

Film-maker and -trainer, Dominique Chadwick, also made a documentary about the participants and the *Stepping Stones with Children* training programme.

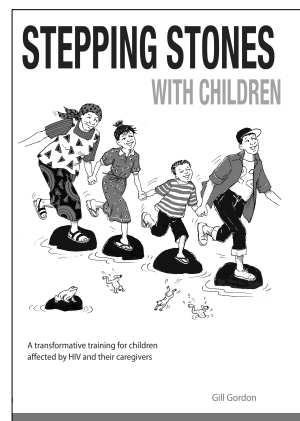
Nell Osborne, Salamander Trust Associate, has created a short animated film to explain the workshop programme structure.



What is Stepping Stones with Children?

Stepping Stones with Children is a training programme that has been developed by Salamander Trust, in partnership with PASADA, for use with children aged 5 – 14 years and their caregivers.

It addresses communication, relationships between caregivers and children, resilience, bringing out the best in each other, bereavement, talking about having HIV and living positively with it, age appropriate sexuality education and livelihoods.



Stepping Stones with Children is intended to create a safe, supportive training environment to enhance sharing, communication and support for children and their caregivers alike.



You can order it at: www.practicalaction.org/publishing

Why do we need Stepping Stones with Children?

Stepping Stones with Children was conceived to enable children affected by HIV to follow their aspirations in life and not to be held back by having HIV in the family. Children can be wise beyond their years in the face of adversity. They often know there is some family secret but that they can't voice it. This is very stressful for them.

Meanwhile adults fear that talking about their own or the child's HIV status will overwhelm the child. Adults find it hard to talk about sexuality. So since children have heard that HIV is about sex, adults fear all the more to talk about the existence of HIV in the family.

Yet many children have been tested and are being given ARVs while being told that they have some other condition. If children find out what they have from sources other than their caregivers, they can feel anger that they have been lied to, or guilt that they are alive whilst their parents or siblings are dead. Or they can blame themselves for their parent's deaths and experience unexpressed grief. These emotions can also result in poor ARV adherence.

Many caregivers are relatives – especially grandmothers, aunts or single mothers - who have lost their own children or a sister or partner through AIDS and lack support in their new, unexpected roles. They can often feel isolated and overwhelmed.

They may project their desperation onto the children and use physical punishment and threats such as "if you don't behave, you will grow up like your dead mother (or father)!" This does not support

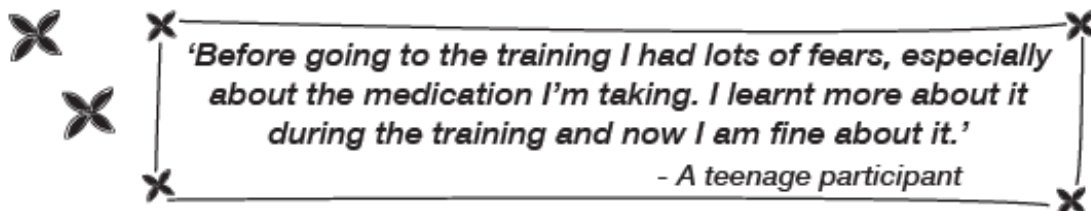
the child who needs to remember its parent with love and know that they had no intention of sharing HIV with their child. Also, the child's behaviour is often caused by anxiety and grief. All this can have huge knock-on consequences as children enter adolescence, often resulting in higher levels of risk-taking and abandonment of ARVs.

This is why *Stepping Stones with Children* was conceived.

The programme is positive in outlook. It helps people affected by HIV to realize they can still follow and achieve their dreams. It is holistic in that it weaves together psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and spiritual aspects of people's lives.

It enables children and caregivers to realize we have some choice over how we live our lives. This includes choice over whether or not to test for HIV or to talk about having HIV with someone else. If anyone *does* choose to test or to talk about having HIV, the programme offers them full support to do so in a caring, respectful way.

That's why *Stepping Stones with Children* helps both children and their caregivers. The programme enables them to support each other in a holistic, respectful and supportive environment.



What does *Stepping Stones with Children* achieve?

- It supports children and caregivers to strengthen their psycho-social well-being
- It educates about HIV-related issues, including the impact of the virus on the body, how treatment works, using the health service and how to live positively
- It supports caregivers on how to talk about HIV with children
- It strengthens loving relationships, which support child development, between children and caregivers
- It supports children to grow up happy, healthy and safe as emerging sexual human beings



How can you use the Stepping Stones with Children films?

- ♦ View them with your colleagues to see whether you would like to use this programme, or fund others to use it.
- ♦ Use them as a preparation for starting to run the programme through your own organization.
- ♦ Show them to leaders or other community members, to see if they would be interested in a workshop like this in their community.
- ♦ Use them with staff who are not directly related to the programme. Then they can understand what issues children and their caregivers face and what this workshop can do to support them.
- ♦ Use these films as extra material for participants in relevant sessions, during or after the workshop.
- ♦ Show them to government or NGO managers or at conferences or meetings about caregivers and children affected by HIV to see if they would be interested in implementing the programme.
- ♦ For all film showings, make sure you find a quiet space at a good time when there is also time for discussion afterwards. Consider whether to watch the films in separate age- and/or gender-based peer groups.

1 Animated film – Why did we develop Stepping Stones with Children?

This brief animated film explains what challenges children affected by HIV and their caregivers face, who the *Stepping Stones with Children* programme is designed for, the topics covered by the programme and how the peer groups are formed. We recommend that you watch this first.



2 Documentary – Children First

‘Before the training my mother had not told me I was HIV positive but I had my fears. I was happy when she told me the truth. So I told her to advise her friends to do the same with their children.’

- A teenage participant

We recommend that you watch this short documentary film next. It follows some children and their caregivers who were involved in the *Stepping Stones with Children* training, to see the impact it has had on their lives since then.

‘I learned how to get closer to my son and how not to be harsh on him. There are issues I wasn’t aware of before.’

- A male caregiver

The documentary features interviews with the trainers, caregivers and the children who were involved, as well as examples of exercises from the workshop. It is intended to give a sense of what *Stepping Stones with Children* is about and how it can support communities affected by HIV towards more safety, well being and peace.

Participatory Films made by adults

3 Shall We Tell Him?

John overhears his parents talking about his HIV clinic appointment. Later, he is feeling so sad that he doesn’t want to play football. His good friend, Alex, asks him what’s wrong but John won’t say.

Alex has seen John taking the same medication as him, medication for HIV, during the *Stepping Stones for Children* workshop. He suspects that John is feeling scared and confused about HIV, as he did before he was told the truth about his own HIV status. He asks his granny to advise John’s caregivers to tell him the truth about his status.

Alex’s caregivers talk to John’s parents about telling him about his HIV. They’re afraid but they agree to tell him, when they feel ready. They sit down with John and tell him that he has HIV in a supportive way. At first John is worried. However, his caregivers reassure him that he can go on to fulfill all of his dreams, and that as long as he is careful with his medication, he will be healthy as he grows up. They tell him that above all, it is important that he feels peaceful and happy.

Questions

- What is good about the way that John’s caregivers tell him that he has HIV? Would you do anything differently?
- How do you think John feels at the beginning of the film? How does he feel at the end of the film? Why do you think this is?
- Alex is a good friend to John. What virtues does Alex practise in his friendship towards John?

Participatory Films made by adults

4 Volcano

Martha is finding it hard to sell her juice as she has become ill. People stigmatize her and will not buy her products.

Her husband has also been sick. When he goes for an HIV test he is found to have HIV. He believes that Martha knew he was living with HIV. He becomes aggressive and demands to know how she knew. A community educator from PASADA is passing by and hears them quarrelling. She intervenes to suggest that the couple attend a *Stepping Stones with Children* training.

They attend the *Stepping Stones with Children* training together. They carry out an exercise called 'Volcano' that helps them to understand and manage their feelings and control their anger. Afterwards they spend time together as a family. They share the knowledge they learned about caring for children, loving one another and managing emotions like anger with others in their community.

Questions

- Do you think that HIV can be shared through juice that someone has touched? What would you say to the people who refused to buy Martha's juice?
- How did Martha suggest that her husband goes for an HIV test?
- How did the husband respond to her suggestion? Why do you think he responded like this? Was this fair?
- How might women respond to the suggestion of an HIV test?
- Does this happen in our communities?
- How would you like to see a husband or wife respond to a request to go for an HIV test?
- What did the husband recommend to his friends? Are there times when we forget to listen to our children? How can we make more time to listen to their needs?

Participatory Films made by children 9 – 15 years

5 Give Her a Chance

Yusra has been taken out of school by her parents so that she can do the housework but she can't keep up with all of her parent's demands. She is washing clothes, feeling tired and fed up, when her brother, Yusuph, comes home from school. She feels upset because her parents have kept her home from school just because she is a girl.

Sometime later, Yusra's parents get home to find her asleep on a mat. They are annoyed and tell her to get on with her chores. She starts crying. Yusuph finds her like this and promises to help her.

Yusra, Yusuph and their parents all sit down together to talk. The children try to convince their parents that it is a good idea for Yusra to return to school. At first, the parents worry that the chores won't get done if Yusra goes to school every day but her brother promises to help her out after to school to make sure they do.

The teacher is invited to their home to discuss Yusra's return to school. The teacher has missed Yusra and is happy to welcome her back.

Questions

- Why did Yusra's caregivers take her out of school?
- What other ways might they have found to get the housework done?

- Does this happen in our communities?
- What benefits will Yusra and her family gain in later life from her going to school?
- How did Yusra's brother support her to go to school?
- What can support him to help with the housework?
- In what other ways can men and boys use their influence to help women and girls?
- How can we support each other to send our daughters to school?

Participatory Films made by children 9 – 15 years

6 Out on The Streets

Children go out into their communities to interview other children and their caregivers who have completed the *Stepping Stones with Children* training. They ask the participants what they learnt from the training, how the training has affected their relationships and what challenges they have faced since.

The adult interviewees report an increased understanding of how best to care for children, children's rights and how to access services for children. They have been sharing what they learnt with people such as their neighbours.

The child interviewees reported learning how to help others, to avoid fighting and about their own rights as children. One child reported that before the training she used to go to school without breakfast. Now, her caregivers give her food each day.

Questions

- What impacts did adults who attended the *Stepping Stones with Children* workshops talk about?
- What impacts did children who attended the *Stepping Stones with Children* workshops talk about?
- What do you think are some of the reasons that the programme brought about these impacts?
- Why is it important for all children to eat breakfast everyday before school? Why is it especially important if we are living with HIV?

Participatory Films made by children 5 – 8 years

7 Kigodoro

What is a 'Kigodoro'?

Kigodoro is a form of dance party that is popular in some areas of Tanzania, such as Dar Es Salaam and other coastal regions. These parties are held outside in residential areas. People come together and often stay up through the night. There is often sexy dancing, stripping, alcohol and drug use. Young children sometimes attend these parties. Since 2015, the Tanzanian government has tried to restrict these parties, claiming that attendees were being targeted by people involved in crime.

Hamisi saw his classmate, Wanda, at the Kigodoro last night, being touched by an older man. He discusses what to do about it with his classmates. They decide to tell their schoolteacher.

The teacher thanks the children for telling her. She calls Wanda's mother into the school to discuss with her how to support Wanda and to prevent her from going to any more. The teacher then holds a

session about Kigadoro to explore what the children already know and what dangers they could face there. She advises the children not to attend any of these parties.

Later, one of the children tries to persuade the children to go to a Kigadoro again that night but the children refuse, after repeating what they learnt about the dangers of the Kigadoro for children.

Questions

- Was there anything that surprised you about the film?
- Do people hold Kigadoros or similar events in our communities?
- Why did the children attend the Kigadoro – what did they like about it?
- Do you think their caregivers attend? Do they know that their children attend?
- Why didn't the teacher also call the caregivers of the boy who reported the girl?
- How do you think caregivers will respond when the teacher tells them that their boy or girl attends Kigadoros?
- How can we support each other/our children to keep ourselves safe as a community?



Acknowledgements:

Handbook written by Nell Osborne for Salamander Trust

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© Individual films – see each film for details

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