



HIV/AIDS in South Africa Fact Sheet

Information taken from the UNAIDS Report on the Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic 2010 unless otherwise noted. Additional sources available at www.globalcampsafrika.org.

The Epidemic

South Africa has the largest HIV epidemic in the world. Among those infected with HIV are hundreds of thousands of children. Millions more have been orphaned by AIDS.

- 5.6 million South Africans are living with HIV. 330,000 of them are children.
- HIV prevalence in South Africa is 18.1% compared to an average of 5% in the rest of sub-Saharan Africa and less than 1% worldwide.
- AIDS is responsible for 35% of deaths in children under the age of five there, and it is the leading cause of death for women with children.
- Nearly 28% of women in South Africa between the ages of 15 and 24 are HIV-positive, as are nearly 8% of men in the same age group.
- 90% of the 16.6 million children who have lost their parents to AIDS live in sub-Saharan Africa.

The Impact on Children

Beyond the trauma of the death of a parent, children orphaned by AIDS are subject to stigma and discrimination, abuse, and exploitation. They are also at higher risk for contracting HIV. Children affected by AIDS are more likely than their peers to:

- lag behind in both communication and decision-making skills
- be depressed and/or aggressive
- abuse drugs or alcohol
- be expected to work to earn money rather than attend school
- be the victims of sexual abuse, enter the sex trade, and/or engage in sexual activities at a younger age

Education and Empowerment Key to Preventing Infection

Currently fewer than half of young people in South Africa are able to correctly answer five simple questions about HIV and how it is spread. However, access to curriculum-based sex and HIV education programs is a powerful tool for prevention. Many adolescents who participate in curriculum-based HIV education programs experience delayed or decreased sexual behavior and/or increased condom use.

- Studies that track youth who have participated in these educational programs have demonstrated that young people's behavior can be changed for the long term
- Young women who are empowered in their relationships are less likely to contract HIV. In South Africa, a study has shown that HIV infection rates are higher among young women who are in abusive relationships with men.
- Programs for children and adolescents are most effective when they include life skills, especially those that enhance their ability to refuse sex, insist on condom use, and avoid unsafe situations.

Global Camps Africa changes the lives of South Africa's vulnerable children and youth by providing HIV/AIDS prevention education and training through high-impact residential camp and day camp experiences and continuing education. Thousands of vulnerable South African children participate in camp and Kids Clubs activities each year through generous contributions from donors from around the globe. Learn more about Global Camps Africa at www.GlobalCampsAfrica.org