

## “HIV and (Street) Youth”

Short presentation for the  
I/C-Consult Partners Meeting  
Toronto, August 2006

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[www.streetkids-SRH.org](http://www.streetkids-SRH.org)

## Innovative ór Effective...

- Examples of **Innovative** HIV-Prevention Strategies for (Street)Youth, BUT I believe “innovative” is NOT the criterion!!
- Too many **fashions** around...
- Suits this tendency for **doing ‘fashionable’ things...**  
‘Mantras’ – *ABC, Rights-based, Peer Education, etc...*
- **Innovative vs. “old-fashioned”**
- But old-fashioned is not necessarily in-**effective!**

*ERGO: It is NOT so much the method, form or strategy  
that has a real impact on the quality/effectiveness  
of intervention programs, it is the CONTENTS (evidence!)  
and the ATTITUDE that really matter!*

## Why should (Street) Youth be our Priority?

- **Youth = Future...!**
- A group at **high risk** →
  - Half of all new HIV infections occur in young people between the ages of 15-24
  - More than 2.5 million young people (10 – 24) contract HIV every year
- Youth are also '**key channels**' for further transmission...
- **Street youth** → at increased risk, because...  
(environment – knowledge, attitudes, behaviours)
- **HIV-prevalence** rates in street youth...

## *DO-s* and *DON'T-s* when working on HIV- Prevention with Youth

-- *A Personal List* --

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<b>DO</b>	<b>DON'T</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Start from them...</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't push <i>your</i> agendas</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Go in-depth...</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't think you can change their behaviours in a weekend</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be realistic...</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't set unrealistic goals</li></ul>

<b>DO</b>	<b>DON'T</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work towards well-being and positive sexual development...</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't deny their sexuality</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Love them and show it – Be human...</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't be some 'cold outsider' to them</li></ul>

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<b>DO</b>	<b>DON'T</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Adjust your program to the specific age group and target group...</b></li><li>● <b>Understand their (sexual) life-worlds (in-depth)...</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Don't think that one-size-fits-all</li><li>● Don't do <b>anything</b> without in-depth understanding of their lives, their psychologies, feelings, thoughts, behaviours</li></ul>

<b>DO</b>	<b>DON'T</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>Have a positive approach / Accept...</b></li><li>● <b>Talk <i>with</i> them, not to them...</b></li><li>● <b>Have FUN! Use creative/interactive methods. Humour!...</b></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Don't preach, moralize, forbid</li><li>● Don't teach</li><li>● Don't bore them to death</li></ul>

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<b>DO</b>	<b>DON'T</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be open and understanding...</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't judge / patronize</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use positive and easy language...</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't use dictionary language or language that unnecessarily moralizes</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dare to discuss feelings, attitudes...</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't give only technical information / knowledge</li></ul>

<b>DO</b>	<b>DON'T</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Also build <b>SKILLS</b>...</li></ul> <p><i>Etcetera...</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Don't stop at 'awareness' and discussion</li></ul> <p><i>Etcetera...</i></p>

## Minimum Expertise Staff

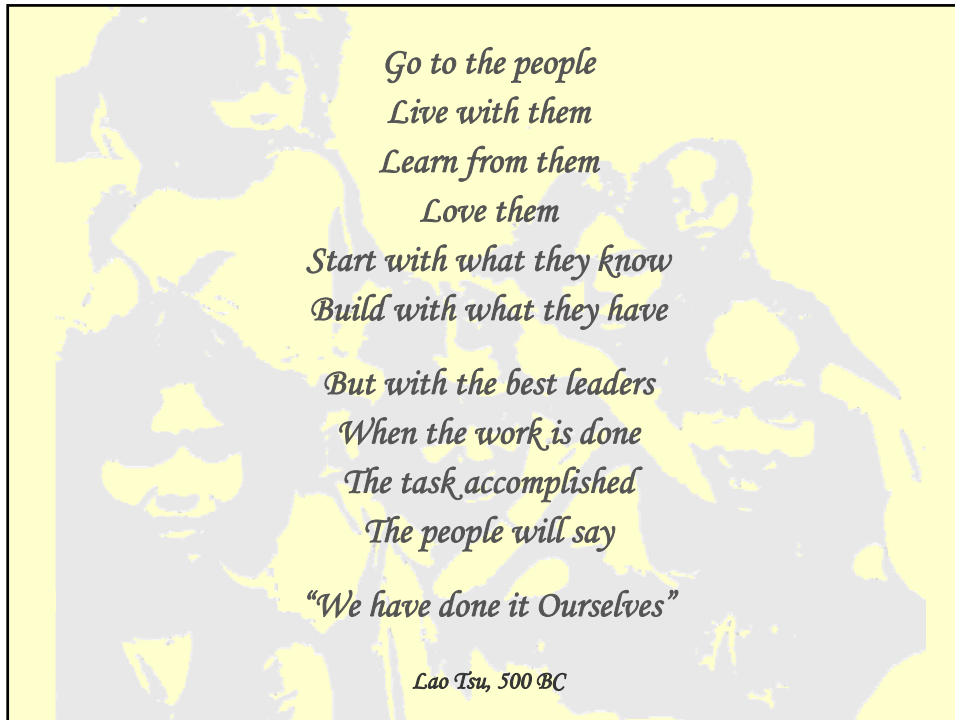
- Not expertise – it is the right ATTITUDES and interpersonal (facilitator/trainer) SKILLS! →
- The children will not judge you on your level of knowledge, or on the number of years of experience...
  - it is whether they can **relate** to you
  - **feel welcomed / cared for / appreciated**
  - whether they **feel real openness to discuss**

**YOU ARE THE METHOD !!!** -- it is YOU who determines the effectiveness of the intervention!!  
*(compare studies on psychotherapy!)*

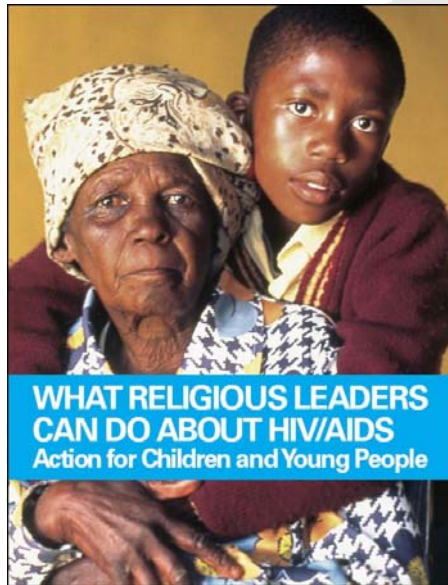
## Some pitfalls in working with Street Children and Youth

- NOT taking enough time / invest in building readiness & first motivation...!!!
- NOT matching to **their** lives, realities, psychologies...!!
- NOT realizing / addressing the many important, positive functions that sex has in their lives...!!
- NOT taking into account all the influencing factors
- NOT going in-depth (*'ingrained' behaviours!*)...
- NOT offering them realistic, positive alternatives...
- NOT offering exercises/sessions that are really attractive to them (*creative, interactive, FUN*)...
- NOT being "one of them" – real relationship...!!

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**Good  
Resource:**

*“What Religious  
Leaders can do  
about HIV/AIDS”*

UNICEF, 2003