

WHAT ARE HIV AND AIDS SERVICES?

HIV and AIDS services include education, empowerment, and voluntary testing and counselling for individuals who may be at risk of infection; mental health (e.g., psychosocial counselling) and nutrition services for those who are infected or affected by HIV and AIDS; access to medical care, including antiretroviral treatment; housing; vocational support; case management; and adherence support.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ENHANCE HIV AND AIDS SERVICES, CARE, AND SUPPORT?

- ▶ The education sector has the potential to reach and support hundreds of thousands of individuals in the Caribbean who are infected or affected by HIV and AIDS. The education sector can provide treatment education for people about where to go for services and the potential outcomes.
- ▶ People who have been tested, receive care and are able to return to their communities to care for their children bring hope and the message of prevention to others.
- ▶ The earlier in the course of the disease that a person's HIV status is known, the more likely it is that treatment will be effective. By partnering with the health care community, the education sector can bring knowledge and hope to those who, for so long, have not known where to turn for help.
- ▶ By creating a caring and supportive environment, schools can greatly increase morale and self-esteem among learners and educators.

WHAT CAN THE EDUCATION SECTOR DO TO IMPROVE HIV AND AIDS SERVICES TO OUR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS?

- ▶ Train all education personnel in HIV and AIDS prevention and awareness.
- ▶ Train all education personnel about HIV testing and counselling, including where to seek services, how to prepare for being tested, what testing entails and what post-test counselling encompasses.
- ▶ Provide training and professional development opportunities to guidance counsellors and school staff so that they can address the broad range of HIV and AIDS-related psycho-social issues that students and educators may be facing in their lives.
- ▶ Implement workplace policies and training programmes that ensure the confidentiality of students and educators who seek HIV and AIDS treatment and counselling services.
- ▶ Collaborate with the medical community to ensure that educators and learners receive services in a timely and confidential manner.



ENSURING CONFIDENTIALITY

A key factor in enhancing care, support and services related to HIV and AIDS is to ensure that students and educators know and trust that their HIV status or the status of a loved one will always remain confidential. If people do not believe that information about HIV status will be kept confidential, they will not be willing to disclose their status and get the help they need. National HIV and AIDS workplace policies for the education sector must include rules and regulations that protect private and confidential information disclosed by students, teachers and staff related to HIV and AIDS.

No student (or parent on behalf of a student), or educator, is compelled to disclose his or her HIV and AIDS status to the institution of employer. Any person to whom information about the medical condition of a student, educator or other employee with HIV and AIDS has been divulged is required to keep this information confidential.

—National Policy for HIV/AIDS Management in Schools
Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture, Jamaica

WHERE CAN WE GO FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ENHANCING HIV AND AIDS SERVICES, CARE AND SUPPORT IN OUR SCHOOLS?

- ▶ Kelly, M., and B. Bain. *Education and HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean*. Kingston: UNESCO, 2005.
- ▶ International Labour Organization Subregional Office for the Caribbean: www.ilocarib.org.
- ▶ International Labour Organization Code of Practice on HIV and AIDS in the Workplace: www.ilo.org.
- ▶ Jamaica Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture. *A National Policy for HIV/AIDS Management in Schools*. Kingston: Jamaica Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture, 2001.
- ▶ Haiti Ministère de L'Éducation Nationale de la Jeunesse et des Sports [MENJS]. *Plan stratégique sectoriel de l'éducation pour la prévention et la lutte contre la VIH/SIDA*. Port au Prince, Haiti: MENJS, 2002.
- ▶ The National AIDS Coordinating Committee in your country.

