

Using an Evidence-based HIV Prevention Program as a Platform for Integrating Child Sexual Abuse Prevention in Africa

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VAC Study Findings

- Just 52% of girls and 31% of boys ages 13-24 who experienced child sexual violence reported it to someone
- Of those who reported the sexual violence, only 36% of girls and 28% of boys sought services

Possible Barriers to Reporting Sexual Violence and Seeking and Accessing Services

- Stigma, fear and shame
- Lack of cultural dialogue
- Taboo talking about sex and sexuality
- Lack of understanding about what CSA is
- Not recognizing CSA as a problem to report





What is Families Matter!?

- The Families Matter! Program (FMP) is a 5-session evidence-based, parent-focused intervention designed to promote positive parenting and effective parent-child communication about sexuality and sexual risk reduction for parents/caregivers of 9-12 year olds.

Purpose of the Families Matter! Program

- **Helps parents understand:**
 - the risks their children face
 - their unique role in helping their children make decisions about sex and communicating their own values to their children
- **Enhances positive parenting skills to:**
 - Strengthen their relationship with their child
 - Monitor and supervise their children and protect them from health risks and peer pressure
- **Gives parents the knowledge, skills, comfort and confidence** to talk with their children early, often, comprehensively, and effectively about sex and sexuality.

Families Matter! Program

- Delivered to primary caregivers of pre-adolescents ages 9-12
- Delivered to groups of 12-18
- Male and female local facilitators
- 5 session program delivered over 5 consecutive weeks
- 3 hour sessions
- Delivered at local community venues
- Child participates in the last session

Aim

- **Short term:**

- Improve positive parenting, parental monitoring, and effective communication between parents/ caregivers and children about sexuality and sexual risk reduction

- **Longer term:**

- Delay sexual initiation
- Reduce sexual risk behaviors
- Prevent HIV, STIs, and unplanned pregnancy

Changing Social Norms

- Engagement of community
 - Formative and Adaptation Phase
 - CABs
 - Facilitators and Mobilizers
- Community saturation

Next Steps

- Plan for Module 6 - CSA
- Consult with DVP and CDC-TZ
- Hire Expertise
- Review the Research Literature

What we Know from Research

Mediating Factors for Child Sexual Abuse:

- ❑ Children are vulnerable to sexual abuse when they are poorly supervised (De Francis 1969).
- ❑ Children who feel their family life is unhappy, live in one parent households and/or have poor relationships with their parents are at greater risk for sexual abuse than their counterparts (Berliner and Elliott 2002, Finkelhor 1984)
- ❑ A lack of disclosure by survivors of CSA in Tanzania may have to do with social taboos about discussing any topic having to do with sex within the family setting and the threat of stigma by their family and community (Kisanga 2011).

FMP as a Platform for CSA

- Teaches parenting skills that closely map on to protective factors identified in different studies on CSA
- Provides a strong foundation for discussing CSA
- Provides opportunity to reduce an additional risk factor for sexual risk-taking behavior
- Widely accepted within communities

Acceptance of FMP

- Widely accepted in 8 countries
- More than 60 Non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations and Ministries of Health
- Over 600 facilitators certified to deliver FMP
- Over 100,000 families in Kenya
- Strong start in Botswana, Ivory Coast, Tanzania, Zambia, South Africa, Mozambique
- High retention across countries, with 81-96% of participants completing all 5 intervention sessions

Session 6 :Learning Objectives

- *After completing this session, participants will be able to:*
 - Acknowledge that their children could be at risk for child sexual abuse
 - Explain why parents play an important role in protecting their children from child sexual abuse
 - Describe the things parents can do to protect and support their children when preventing and responding to child sexual abuse
 - Apply the main parenting strategies of FMP towards protecting their children from child sexual abuse and helping support their children, as needed, if they have experienced child sexual abuse

Session 6: Intended Outcomes

- Raise parents' awareness of CSA—what it is, how to recognize potential signs of abuse, and what services are available if there is sexual abuse
- Increase parents' self-efficacy to initiate conversations about child sexual abuse with children, family, and friends/community
- Increase parent-child communication and open lines of communication for children to report sexual abuse to a trusted adult

Next steps

- Pilot and evaluate the cultural acceptability and appropriateness of the recently developed FMP Session Six– Understanding Child Sexual Abuse (CSA).
- Conduct an outcome evaluation on FMP Sessions 1-6

Summary



Families Matter! Program



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