

# Making a Difference! Curriculum

The goals of the *Making a Difference!* program are to:

- Help young people change behaviors that place them at risk for HIV, STDs and pregnancy.
- Delay the initiation of sex among sexually inexperienced youth.
- Reduce unprotected sex among sexually active youth.
- Help young people make proud and responsible decisions about their sexual behaviors.

The *Making a Difference!* curriculum includes a series of fun and interactive learning experiences designed to increase participation and help young adolescents understand the faulty reasoning and decision making that puts them at risk for HIV/STDs and pregnancy. Activities are designed to increase comfort with practicing abstinence, address concerns about practicing abstinence, and provide strategies for overcoming concerns and obstacles to practicing abstinence.

The activities incorporate social cognitive-behavioral skill-building strategies (i.e., presentation, modeling, and the practice of abstinence negotiation skills). The curriculum involves culturally sensitive video clips, games, brainstorming, role-playing, skill-building activities and small-group discussions that build group cohesion and enhance learning. Each activity lasts a brief time, and most are active exercises in which the adolescents get out of their seats and interact with each other. In this way, it is possible to maintain interest and attention that might fade during a lecture or lengthy group discussion.

Below are some example activities used in *Making a Difference!*:

- The goals and dreams activity focuses on having the adolescents consider their goals for the future and how participating in sexual activity at their current age might thwart the attainment of their goals. It makes clear that their best strategy is to abstain from sex.
- Video clips are used to depict young adolescents in various situations. These videos evoke feelings, thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, and stereotypes about HIV/STD and pregnancy, and the importance of practicing abstinence.
- The role-play scenarios are designed to provide participants with the confidence and skills to negotiate abstinence and delay sexual involvement. These realistic role-play scenarios provide young adolescents with a variety of ways in which they could use the negotiation-refusal skills that they learn in this program.
- The curriculum incorporates the “Make a Difference! Be Proud! Be Responsible!” theme that encourages the participants to make a difference and abstain from sex, to be proud of themselves, their family and their community, and to behave responsibly for the sake of themselves, their family and their community.

## Length of Program

- The standard curriculum has 8 hours of content divided into eight 60-minute modules. It can be implemented in 8 classroom sessions of 60 minutes each or in four 2-hour sessions. In community settings, it can be implemented in a 2-day format (four modules each day), 4-day format (two modules each day) or 8-day format (one module each day).
- The School Edition of the curriculum has 8 hours and 40 minutes worth of content divided into thirteen 40-minute modules. It can be implemented in thirteen sessions of 40 minutes each, as

laid out in the facilitator curriculum, or in whatever format is conducive for the needs of the site. The modules must be implemented consecutively.

## Program Elements

Core intervention materials include:

- Facilitator Curriculum
- Activity Set (handouts, cards, posters)
- Curriculum DVDs
  - Tanisha and Shay
  - The Subject Is: HIV (Abstinence Version)
  - The Subject Is: Puberty (Abstinence Version)
- Student Workbooks (classroom set of 30)

The *Making a Difference!* implementation set for both editions includes the facilitator's guide, activity set, a classroom set of 30 student workbooks and 3 DVDs. The curriculum requires the use of a monitor with DVD capabilities.

## Parent/Guardian Notification

It is essential to inform parents and guardians regarding the nature and scheduling of this or any sexual health education program. Prior to implementation of the curriculum, families should receive written notice describing the goals of *Making a Difference!* and the nature of the content to be covered. Parents also should be given an opportunity to view the curriculum and related materials if they wish. The vast majority of parents want their children to receive appropriate instruction and be given the information and skills they need to protect their sexual health, but parents/guardians also must be allowed the chance to opt out or exclude their children from participating in the program, if they wish.

## Curriculum Review

If you would like to view the *Making a Difference!* curriculum, please follow the directions in the link below:

**Link:** <https://www.etr.org/sample/?c=madreg&p=1>

\*Please note you must use the link to request 30-day review access\*