

Additional Counseling Techniques

SESSION 14



1. Prioritize Topics

- Start with less sensitive topics. Save the sensitive topics until later.
- Ask about sensitive topics indirectly (e.g., instead of asking, “Are you sexually active?,” ask first, “Do you have a girlfriend?”)
- Here is an example of how to prioritize topics:

1. Prioritize Topics, cont.

NOT PRIORITIZED:

1. Pain from the VMMC procedure
2. Condom use
3. Wound care
4. Benefits of VMMC
5. HIV/sexually transmitted infection (STI) transmission/prevention

PRIORITIZED:

1. Benefits of VMMC
2. HIV/STI transmission/prevention
3. Pain from the VMMC procedure
4. Wound care
5. Condom use



2. Ask Open-Ended Questions

- Closed questions lead yes or no answers and do not allow for open communication.
- Open-ended questions lead to details that stimulate communication.

Closed questions	Open-ended questions
Do you know what VMMC is?	Can you tell me more about what boys your age are saying about VMMC?
Are you saying that girls like boys who have undergone VMMC?	What do you mean when you say that girls like boys who have undergone VMMC?
Can you clean your wound by yourself during the recovery period?	How do you feel about cleaning your wound by yourself during the recovery period?
Do you plan to use condoms consistently with your sexual partner?	How do you feel about using condoms consistently with your sexual partner?

3. Respond Appropriately

- Remain neutral:
 - Withhold judgement.
 - Do not express your own opinions (this can cause the adolescent to become defensive and shut down).
- Use neutral language.
- Vary your tone of voice.
- Ask for more information:
 - What do you think?
 - What's your opinion?
 - I have my own ideas, but I am interested in knowing what you think.
 - What seems right to you?

3. Respond Appropriately (cont.)

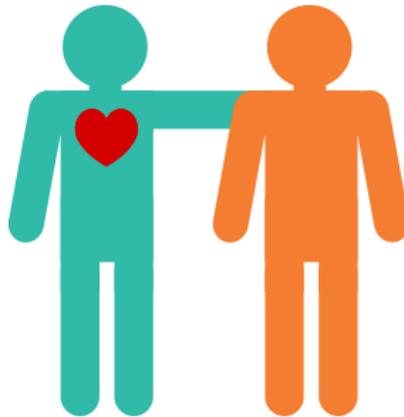
- Do not express shock or dismay at responses.
- Just listen! You may decide to offer guidance later.
- Do not interrupt. Stay on point!
 - Interrupting is a waste of time. It frustrates the adolescent and limits your capacity to fully understand what he is saying.
 - Allow the adolescent to finish each point before asking questions. Do not interrupt with counterarguments.
 - Avoid abruptly changing the subject.
- Ask the adolescent if he wants your advice. If he says he does, he will be more likely to listen to what you have to say.

4. Show Empathy

- Treat the adolescent client as you would want to be treated.
- Acknowledge feelings. Show him you care about what he is feeling, but do so respectfully.
 - “I may not understand what you are saying correctly, but you see, sad/concerned about what you are talking about.”
 - “You seem to be feeling anxious about this. Am I understanding you correctly?”

4. Show Empathy (cont.)

- Be candid, open, and honest in your response.
- Follow up and show concern.
- Assert your opinions respectfully.
- Do not push the adolescent beyond his comfort zone (respect his boundaries).



What Are Boundaries?

- Adult typically have imaginary boundaries—lines that it is clear others are not allowed to cross out of respect. For example, in some cultures, it is rude if a person stands too close to another person.
- Adolescence is a time when people are exploring and setting those boundaries.
- Boundaries are often set verbally: when somebody clearly says no to something.
- Boundaries are sometimes set with physical cues that mean no.
- Counselors needs to establish an environment of trust with the client and make sure they understand the boundaries set by the client.

Questions

Are there any questions?