SESSION 2:  
HIV/AIDS EDUCATION

Rationale:
Session 2 provides the women with some basic information on sex, drugs, HIV and AIDS. Before women are taught how to protect themselves, they must learn how the HIV virus is transmitted. Teaching the women about the transmission modes of HIV is the major focus of this session. Additionally, this session addresses the many myths and misconceptions that people have about HIV and AIDS. Finally, this session intends to bring the reality of AIDS closer to home. That means helping the women realize that AIDS can affect their lives. Therefore, this session will also discuss what the women can do to protect themselves from becoming infected with the HIV virus.

Materials Needed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials Provided in the HAPPA Program Box:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening Poem: “Always There Are the Children”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Key Concepts on Ethnic/Gender Pride” handout</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Statistics on AIDS” handout packet</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Facts on HIV/AIDS” handout packet</td>
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<tr>
<td>“It’s Like This...” videotape</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Myths &amp; Misconceptions” homework</td>
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<tr>
<td>“HIV/AIDS Knowledge Test” homework</td>
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<td>Session 2 evaluation form</td>
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| Other Materials You Will Need for this Session: |
| Flip chart, markers & tape                     |
| “Ground Rules/Expectations” poster, developed after Session 1 (optional handout header sheet included in Program Materials packet) |
| Red, Yellow, Green & Pink cards (one of each color per woman) |
THE SISTA PROJECT
Facilitator's Manual

Goals:

a) To provide factual and statistical information about HIV/AIDS.
b) To explain the difference between HIV and AIDS.
c) To explain how HIV affects the immune system.
d) To correct misconceptions about HIV/AIDS.
e) To describe how people become infected with the HIV virus.
f) To discuss how people can protect themselves from becoming infected with HIV.
g) To discuss how people can get tested for AIDS.
h) To explain what a positive test means.

Objectives:

- Describe the difference between HIV and AIDS.
- Understand how HIV affects the immune system.
- Understand how people become infected with the HIV virus.
- Understand how people spread it to other people.
- Understand how to protect ourselves from HIV infection.

Session 2 Outline

1) Opening Poem: “Always There Are the Children”
2) Review Ground Rules/Expectations
3) Review Session 1, including homework
4) Current Statistics AIDS
5) HIV/AIDS 101: What is HIV/AIDS?
6) The Card Swap Game
7) Video: It's Like This...
8) Homework for Session 2
9) Evaluation of Session 2
10) Closure
I. Opening Poem
   a) Distribute a copy of "Always There Are the Children" to each participant.
   b) Read the poem aloud with and/or to the group.

II. Review Ground Rules/Expectations:
   a) Distribute the optional "Ground Rules/Expectations" handout to each participant.
   b) Using the poster created after the first session, read each of the Ground Rules/Expectations to the women such that they are clear on what is appropriate to do and say.

III. Review Session 1
   a) Distribute and discuss the "Key Concepts on Ethnic/Gender Pride" handout.
      i. Write the concepts on the flip chart to correspond with discussion.
   b) Session 1 Homework
      i. Discuss the homework, asking the women individually about their partner's responses.
      ii. Categorize the responses and write them on the flip chart.
      iii. Discuss the responses.

IV. Current Statistics AIDS
   a) Distribute the "Statistics AIDS" handout. (Or alternatively, create overhead transparencies of the material.)
   b) Give the women a few minutes to look at the handout. Then initiate a discussion about the information.
   c) During discussion, stress that African-American women are over-represented among women with AIDS.
V. HIV/AIDS 101: What is HIV/AIDS?

a) Distribute the “Facts on HIV/AIDS” handout packet

b) Explain that this exercise will address the questions:
1) What is HIV?
2) What is AIDS?
3) How does the HIV virus affect the immune system?

c) Explain the following facts (the text below is written as though spoken directly to the group):

i. What does AIDS stand for?
   A Acquired: something you are given or get
      I Immune: refers to the part of the body that keeps us healthy
   D Deficiency: lacking or not enough
   S Syndrome: a group of diseases

ii. What is AIDS?
   Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is a group of infections and diseases that occur because of a breakdown in the body’s immune system. The immune system is the bodily system that fights off diseases and infections.

iii. What does HIV stand for?
   H Human: a person’s body
   I Immunodeficiency: when the immune system lacks some elements and breaks down
   V Virus: a group of tiny cells that multiply in the body and cause diseases like Chicken Pox.

iv. What is HIV?
   The Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is a virus that enters a person’s body. (“We will talk about how it enters the person’s body in a little while, I am just telling you what happens when it enters the body.”) When the HIV virus enters a person’s body, it multiplies and attacks the immune system. The immune system is the part of the body that protects us from infections like the common
The reason why the HIV virus is so harmful is that the HIV virus kills cells in the immune system that protect us from infections. When this happens, the body is left weakened and we are more likely to become sick from infections and cancers.

v. What is the difference between HIV and AIDS?
HIV does not equal AIDS. AIDS is a disease. HIV is a virus that causes AIDS. A disease is a sickness that occurs when the body functions break down. Diseases are often caused by tiny viruses. A virus is a group of tiny cells that multiply in the body. The virus that causes AIDS is called HIV.

vi. What causes AIDS?
AIDS is caused by the HIV virus, the HIV virus causes a group of infections and cancers. When a person develops this group of infections, they are said to have AIDS. (Review “The Iceberg of HIV Infection” handout.)

So while a healthy person who is infected with a common cold virus might just get a runny nose, someone with AIDS who gets a cold might develop pneumonia because their immune system is much weaker. When a person with AIDS develops pneumonia, it can be life threatening.

vii. What type of diseases do people with AIDS get?
The most common AIDS diseases are opportunistic infections. These infections work somewhat like a thief who finds an open door at Circuit City. When the body is not healthy, infections move throughout the body freely. Tuberculosis, pneumonia and some cancers are common when people get AIDS.

Additionally, people who have AIDS lose a lot of weight, have difficulty remembering things and have a hard time doing simple tasks.

viii. Can AIDS be cured?
People who develop AIDS cannot be cured. AIDS is serious disease that African-American women die from.

ix. Can you tell if someone has AIDS?
You cannot tell just by looking at a person if they have AIDS.
x. Who gets AIDS?
AIDS is not just a disease of gay white men. It can happen to anybody, including African-American women, who do things to put themselves at risk for getting the disease.

xi. How long is it from when people become infected with the HIV virus to the time that they develop AIDS?
When the HIV virus enters the body, it does not immediately attack the immune system. The virus may not multiply in the body for a long while. The virus may stay in the body for as little as one month to more than ten years before AIDS develops.

xii. How does a person get the HIV virus?
There are a lot of rumors about how you can become infected with the HIV virus. The HIV virus requires the transfer of blood, semen, or vaginal fluids. This occurs through the following ways:
- Having sex without a condom;
- Sharing "works," that is, injecting drugs with needles into your skin and sharing the needle with someone.

xiii. Can you tell if someone has the HIV virus?
No. People who have the HIV virus often appear perfectly healthy. One good example is Magic Johnson. He has the HIV virus yet he continued to be able to play professional basketball after his diagnosis.

xiv. Can a mother who is infected with the HIV virus give it to her unborn child?
Yes. A mother may give the virus to her child through pregnancy, delivery (childbirth) and breast-feeding.

xv. Can you get the HIV virus any other way?
No. You can not contract the HIV virus from coughing, drinking fountains, sinks, shaking hands, eating utensils, sneezing, toilet seats, touching, or towels.

xvi. How do you know if you have the HIV virus?
There is a test you can take called the HIV Antibody Test.
VI. The Card Swap Game

Inform the women that this exercise will help them understand how people get HIV and spread it to other people.

a) Pass out four cards to each woman (including SISTA staff). Each woman can receive any combination of colors.

b) Ask the women to write their names on all four of the cards.

c) Tell the women that when you say, "SWAP," everyone will find a partner and trade one card. Make it clear that they should only give away cards that have their own names on them.

d) Have everyone stand up.

i. Do four rounds of SWAPS, telling them to find a new partner for each SWAP.

ii. After all the swapping, have the women sit back down.

e) Explain to them that each card color represents something they've chosen to do.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Card Color</th>
<th>Associated Behavior</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Sharing dirty needles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Safer sex—sex using a condom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pink</td>
<td>Unsafe sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Touching, kissing or talking</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

f) Tell the women that for the purposes of the game, you were HIV positive at the beginning of the swap.

g) Read the names on any red or pink cards you are holding.

h) Ask the women whose names were called to stand.

i. Ask them to remain standing.

ii. Tell the group:

"These people who just stood up were also infected with the AIDS virus because they shared dirty needles (red cards) or had unsafe sex (pink cards) with people who have the HIV virus."
i) Have all the standing women read the names from their red and pink cards.
   i. Ask the women whose names were called to stand.

j) Ask the women standing to read their red and pink names a third time. By now, most of the room will probably be standing.
   i. If anyone is left sitting, ask them to look at their cards.

k) Explain the color code system to the still-seated women:

   “If you have a red or pink card, they should only be from people who are also sitting. This means that you had unsafe sex or shared needles with someone who was not HIV-infected. So it was a gamble, but you were not infected.

   If you have green cards from any of the standing women, that means that you had SAFER SEX with an HIV-infected person. It is most likely that you weren’t infected with HIV, as long as you were careful not to exchange any semen, blood or vaginal fluids. This means using a condom correctly from start to finish of vaginal, oral or anal intercourse with men.

   Green cards from other sitting women mean safer sex with a person who was never exposed to HIV. Both of you are safe from AIDS this time.

   Yellow cards mean that you didn’t have sex or share needles at all with your partner. You talked, hugged, kissed, held hands, ate lunch, and rode the bus or whatever. Either partner could be infected with HIV, but you would not infect the other person by exchanging a yellow card.”

l) Ask the following questions to begin discussion:

   i. What are the ways that you can become infected with HIV?
   ii. Were there any ways you could tell that the person you swapped with was HIV-infected?
   iii. How did you feel when you found out that you were infected?
   iv. How did you feel about your partner?
   v. What could you have done differently to avoid being exposed to HIV?
VII. Video: *It’s Like This*...

a) Show the video to the group (it is approximately 30 minutes long.

b) After the video, begin a guided discussion.

i. What did they like best/least about the video? Why?

ii. What new information did they learn?

iii. How might they incorporate this new information (or debunked myths) into their lives?

VIII. Homework

There are two assignments for this session’s homework.

a) Ask the women to read the “Myths and Misconceptions” handout carefully.

b) Then have them take the HIV/AIDS Knowledge Test.

IX. Evaluation

a) Distribute Session 2 evaluation sheets to all participants.

i. This session will be evaluated as to how the information was presented and the extent to which the session accomplished its goals and objectives.
X. Closure

a) Recitation of the Motto:

THE SISTA PROJECT Motto

SISTA Love is Strong,

SISTA Love is Safe,

SISTA Love is Surviving!