

**WHY US?**  
LEFT BEHIND AND DYING



**Video Curriculum Modules**



**Lesson 8: HIV –  
Sexual Orientation**

**LEARNING WAS NEVER LIKE THIS**

## Lesson 8: Sexual Orientation

### Standards:

#### Health:

2.12.2

2.12.5

2.12.7

2.12.10

5.12.4

8.12.1

#### Science:

#### Skills Practiced and Gained:

1.1—1.7

2.1—2.5

### Overview

Because of deep-seated notions of male and female roles and norms in mainstream US and African society, sexual orientation and homophobia are controversial topics. This controversy often stems from ignorance and fear. Unfortunately, this ignorance and fear greatly perpetuates the spread of HIV/AIDS. The students in the “Why Us?” project all identified as heterosexual however, they had more questions and discussions about homosexuality than any other topic. The video module, “*Sexual Orientation*,” allows you to see how the students in the “Why Us?” project grappled with notions of sexual orientation. They examined how public and group perceptions of sexual orientation have contributed to the spread of HIV/AIDS. More importantly, the video module shows how negative connotations can be deconstructed and constructed into positive and affirming beliefs.



### Key Concepts

Definitions of male and female roles; sexual orientation

Impact of social and cultural stigmas

Social determinants of health

### Materials for Activities and Educator Background Knowledge

The major activities for Lesson 8 are discussions generated from the video modules and other resources you choose to include (e.g. newspapers, magazines, clips from TV shows or U-Tube, etc.)



## **Procedure**

### ***Part I***

View “*Sexual Orientation*” video module. After viewing the module, use the following questions to facilitate group discussion or give the questions as prompts for journal entries.

### ***Discussion / Journal Questions***

- 1) **W**hat new information did you gather from the video module?
- 2) **H**ow does sexual orientation contribute to the high rates of HIV/AIDS in African and African American communities?
- 3) **W**hat other questions or comments do you have?

### ***Part II***

The students in the “Why Us?” openly admitted that they did not know much about homosexuality. They held many of the beliefs and stereotypes about homosexuality that are traditionally upheld by mainstream African American communities. However, they were open-minded in exploring and examining homosexuality in general and in their community. In fact, their favorite interview subject was Cleo Manago, a same gender-loving man. Use the following questions to facilitate group discussion or give the questions as prompts for journal entries.

### ***Discussion / Journal Questions***

- 1) Rather than using homosexual, Cleo Manago uses same gender-loving to describe gays and lesbians. What was your initial reaction to this concept? What negative connotation of homosexuality did Cleo deconstruct and what is the positive connotation that he constructs?
- 2) Why do you think Cleo was the students’ favorite interview subject?



## *Part II (continued)*

### *Discussion / Journal Questions (continued)*

- 3) If you had the opportunity to interview a same gender-loving person, what questions would you ask?
- 4) List and discuss issues, presented in the video module, pertaining to sexual orientation and the spread of HIV/AIDS.
- 5) In the video module, a lesbian discusses contracting HIV from female partner. What was your initial reaction to this information? Were you surprised? Why/why not?
- 6) Some of the discussion in Lesson 5—Secrecy, Shame and Fear overlaps with this lesson. What concepts or discussion overlap and why?



## **Closure**

Use the following questions to facilitate group discussion or give the questions as prompts for journal entries. You will want to use other resources in this section. (e.g. newspapers, magazines, clips from TV shows or U-Tube, etc.)

### *Discussion / Journal Questions*

- 1) Media representations have great influence on people's beliefs, and the media is often used to uphold social norms. Beliefs about homosexuality are often represented both positively and negatively in mass media. List and discuss examples of positive and negative representations. What makes them positive or negative? What is the potential impact of these representations in general and on the spread of HIV/AIDS?
- 2) Equal rights for the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) has been a continuing political and social topic in the news and in discussions regarding state and federal legislation. What are the equal rights that are at issue? How have states and the federal government addressed these issues? How does legislation or the lack of legislation potentially impact access to healthcare?