

## **Subject area: Research**

**Title:** Reflection on Practice: Exploring management approaches to managing HIV/AIDS, with specific reference to research

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**Target Audience:** Teachers, Caregivers, Health Care Providers, Parents, HIV-AIDS Programme co-ordinators/ personnel, Youth Programme co-ordinators/ personnel, Social Workers

### **Key Transferable**

- Lessons:**
- (1) Stigmatisation and discrimination against Persons Living With HIV-AIDS (PLWHA) remain widespread
  - (2) In addition to stigmatisation and discrimination against PLWHA, several new issues need to be addressed, such as changes in youth behaviour and attitudes towards HIV-AIDS

### **Introduction**

My experience on practicum included working in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Save the Children Fund (VINSAVE), through the Caribbean Internship Project (CIP) and with the Sondai Project, University of the West Indies. This paper focuses on **research** in relation to HIV/AIDS.

CIP and VINSAVE operate as partners in Early Childhood Development. VINSAVE networks with other social service agencies, which provided the opportunity for me to work with them in the area of HIV/AIDS. Opportunities also arose given that HIV/AIDS

was a national concern at the time and various agencies were working towards sensitising the public about the epidemic.

With an increase in the number of pregnant HIV positive women, VINSAVE, as the main agency for training early childhood educators and caregivers, recognised the need to put systems in place to adequately support the children, caregivers and parents thereby fulfilling its mandate. Given the focus of VINSAVE as an agency focusing on early childhood development, HIV issues affecting educators, caregivers, parents and children could not be ignored. As such, the agency took a proactive approach and worked to put systems in place to address issues that may arise. Key observations and experiences regarding research will be noted on the following pages.

### **Areas for Research:**

Following my work in this area, I realised that some questions need to be explored further in order to promote better management of the epidemic. Some include:

1. Are the current methods of HIV/AIDS education effective?
2. A radical change in youth behaviour has not been noted? Are we sending effective messages?
3. What are some ways of managing the level of ignorance and misinformation that lead to widespread stigmatisation and discrimination?
4. What factors contribute to stigmatisation and discrimination?

### **Some factors to be considered for future research:**

1. There is also the need to conduct research in the area of sexual activity/ practices among young people so that policies can be informed or created to address issues more seriously
2. There is the need for research concerning attitudes toward HIV/AIDS.
3. We may need to re-evaluate the strategy of exposing infecting persons in intervention strategies.
4. The use of spirituality and other alternative methods in building resiliency and promoting prevention should be considered.
5. How do the rural youth perceive HIV/AIDS and how does it impact on their lives?
6. What are the psychosocial issues of an adolescent being tested?
7. Adapting to the epidemic: the rise of new sexual practices (for example, lesbianism, oral sex, the female as aggressor)