Masihambisane
Walking Together
THE REWARDS AND CHALLENGES OF PEER MENTORING

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Study Description

Randomly selected clinics
4 Intervention, 4 Control
All - standard PMTCT programme
  (upgraded by research team)

Intervention
  • Mentors-HIV positive mothers
  • 4 Antenatal, 4 Postnatal groups
Key Messages

Antenatal
- Living positively
- Keeping healthy
- Being prepared
- Feeding choices

Postnatal
- Loving my baby
- Living together
- Being parents
- Enjoying life
Materials - Examples

Session 2: Keeping Healthy

Avoid unhealthy things:
- Smoking
- Alcohol
- Isithandiwe

Do healthy things:
- Good nutrition and vitamins
- Important medications
- Exercise
- Rest

Get practical support
Do what relaxes you

Isifundo 2: Ziczine unempilo

Gwena izinzifanele:
- Ukuthetha
- Utsiwalwa
- Isithandiwe

Yenza izinto ezinempilo:
- IsiXhosa
- Utsiwalwa
- Isithandiwe

Do healthy things:
- Exercise
- Good nutrition and vitamins

Yenza izinto ezinempilo:
- IsiXhosa
- Utsiwalwa
- Isithandiwe

Avoid unhealthy things handout

Things to avoid:
- Smoking
- Alcohol
- Isithandiwe

Izinto ongazigwema:

Parent Card

It is important when a man and a woman are having a child together that they come to the clinic together.

At the antenatal clinic the nurses will help with:
- Important information
- Health checks
- Antenatal classes

Ikhadi lomzali

Kubalulekile uma owesilina
- Isithetha
- Ubuhlungu
- Utsiwalwa
- Isithandiwe
- Izinye ngombiswe

Emitholampilo wokwesinjuka
- Ubuhlungu
- Ubuhlungu
- Ubuhlungu
- Ubuhlungu
- Izinye ngombiswe
Session Outline

**Rhythm Roadmap**

1. Opening (song or prayer)
2. Thanks Tokens
3. Introductions (confidentiality)
4. Pair Sharing
5. Discomfort Cups
6. Core Messages
7. Closing
Selection of Mentors

• Community clinic Sr in charge/health care worker - list of names of HIV positive women who were actively involved in the clinic in community work/volunteering

• Interview process

• Ability to disclose their status in public, public speaking, passionate about community empowerment, literate (manual), language (Zulu and Sotho)
Training of Mentors

- 6 weeks
- Selection after training
- Didactic-actively participating in training
- Experiential-learn from what you see
- Practice
- Video feedback
- On going observation & supervision
- Debriefing with psychologist
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Clinic Sessions</th>
<th>Group 2 Training</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th August</td>
<td>Mentor Mothers in clinics running daily sessions, one on one interventions, schedule to run or practice sessions (sessions 1 in morning) Practice session in afternoon (session 5)</td>
<td>Session 5 Teach, practice, video feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>5th August</td>
<td>Mentor Mothers in clinics running daily sessions, one on one interventions, schedule to run or practice sessions (sessions 2 in morning) Practice session in afternoon (session 6)</td>
<td>Session 6 Teach, practice, video feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>6th August</td>
<td>Mentor Mothers in clinics running daily sessions, one on one interventions, schedule to run or practice sessions (sessions 3 in morning) Practice session in afternoon (session 7)</td>
<td>Session 7 Teach, practice, video feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>7th August</td>
<td>Mentor Mothers in clinics running daily sessions, one on one interventions, Schedule to run or practice sessions (sessions 4 in morning) Practice session in afternoon (session 8) Assessment schedules by clinic research assistant</td>
<td>Session 8 Teach, practice, video feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>8th August</td>
<td>Office training and debriefing All mentor mothers core mentor mother with new mentor mothers, core mentor mother feedback and retraining</td>
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Mentor Activities

• Meet with women undergoing testing, disclose their status and offer support
• Run the group sessions
• Run one on one sessions with women-usually after the women have tested
• Give talks at clinics-information session to all pregnant women
My Role in the Study

• As a Research Assistant collecting data (each clinic was staffed by an RA and a Mentor)
• Supervise mentor mothers and offer support and de-briefing
• Coordinator - plan and coordinate the study
Studying Mentors

• Secondary traumatisation and coping strategies of HIV positive women working with other HIV positive women

• 10 Mentors - open ended semi structured interviews (Interpretive Thematic Analysis)

• Challenges- re-traumatised by the disclosure script - difficulties with reflection - participants evoked some distress by sharing their stories
Rewards - disclosing could also be therapeutic for them as they had realized how long they had come and that they had come into terms with their status.

Disclosing their status was not traumatic for them but rather the reflection “ruminate” which could be avoided.

Individual on going counselling.

Debriefing as a group with a psychologist (out of their work space).
Encounters

- Testing
- Group sessions
- Individual conversations
- Visits at home
- Passing by ...
Rewards

- Empowerment
  - Objected to Mentor *(Mother)*
  - Wanted to be referred to as Mentors, a sense of having a title
- Working and earning money
- Being seen as leaders in their communities
Recognition

Walking together

Project Masiambisane is investigating how extra support can help HIV-positive mothers.

Sharon Dell

BEING pregnant and HIV-positive is a daunting experience for many mothers — and with a baby to care for, it can feel even more so.

To measure the benefits of giving extra support to women entering the government’s prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMCT) programme, a study is being conducted in four districts of the Human Sciences Research Council’s (HSRC) Western Cape office.

The project is directed by Thomas Rochat, a clinical psychologist who has studied the effects of an HIV diagnosis during pregnancy on the mothers’ mental and psychological health. His research group was among the first to identify that not only the mother’s but also the baby’s quality of life is affected.

In an interview in Cape Times, Rochat explained that babies of HIV-positive mothers are more vulnerable to the illness, which can have serious consequences for their future lives.

The study will track the health and well-being of a group of women who are HIV-positive, as well as their children, for two years. The researchers will assess the impact of the additional support on the mothers’ lives and the children’s development.

The study is being conducted in cooperation with the national Institute for Mental Health and in collaboration with the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Cape Town. The study will be funded by the National Department of Health.

The study will also explore the benefits of giving extra support to HIV-positive mothers who are undergoing antiretroviral therapy.

The project is part of a larger research initiative called the HIV-Related Mental Health Program (HRMHP), which aims to improve the mental health of HIV-positive mothers and their children.

The study will be conducted in partnership with the National Department of Health, the Department of Social Development, and the Department of Education.

The study will be conducted in four areas of the Western Cape:

- The Northern Cape
- The Eastern Cape
- The Western Cape
- The Gauteng Province

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Challenges

- No matter how much a person has come into terms and acceptance of their status, it is rather difficult to be labelled as a ‘person with HIV’
- Working with HIV in the same community you live in and also be a neighbour, friend, sister (stigmatisation)

“There is still a human being inside that HIV positive person”