



What is HIV?

HIV = Human Immunodeficiency Virus

The virus is transmitted from one human to another human and breaks down the immune system and makes it 'deficient' to fight against diseases.

What is AIDS?

As HIV gradually destroys the immune system, a person living with HIV will start to develop illnesses related to the HIV infection. Having a number of these specific illnesses together means the HIV infection has become 'symptomatic' ('having signs'). This collection of symptoms becomes visible in the body and the immune system almost stops functioning. This condition is known as AIDS (= Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome).

Facts about HIV in Vietnam

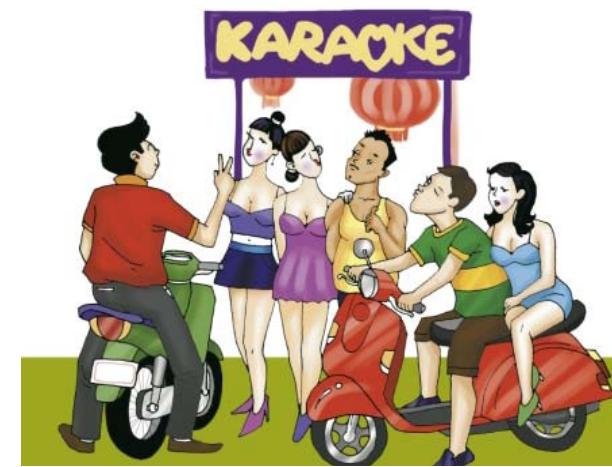
Vietnam's HIV epidemic is still in a concentrated phase, with the highest infection rates among key populations at higher risk. These include injecting drug users, female sex workers and men who have sex with men. People living with HIV are getting younger and heterosexual transmission is becoming more significant.

In 2010, HIV exists in all 63 provinces/cities, in 96% of the 659 districts and in more than 66% of the 10,732 wards/communes. An estimated number of 254,000 people are living with HIV. For the adult population (15-49 year) this means an infection rate of 0,44%.

Sources:

UNAIDS Vietnam

UNESCO Bangkok (Building knowledge about HIV and AIDS: an interactive course for educators)



How can HIV be transmitted?

- Through unprotected sex (including vaginal, anal and oral)
- Through infected blood contained in needles used to inject drugs
- An HIV-infected woman can pass the virus to her baby during pregnancy or breast-feeding
- Through contaminated, unscreened blood supplies

How can HIV NOT be transmitted?

HIV is not an easy virus to pass from one person to another. The virus does not survive well outside the body. So, it cannot be transmitted through casual or everyday contact such as shaking hands, hugging or kissing. Sweat, tears, vomit, faeces and urine do contain small amounts of HIV, but they have not been reported to transmit the disease. Mosquitoes and other insects do not transmit HIV.

How to protect against HIV?

Avoid key risk behaviors for HIV transmission:

- Unprotected anal and vaginal intercourse
- Having multiple sex partners
- Using nonsterile drug injection equipment

Correct and consistent use of latex condoms can significantly reduce the risk of transmission.

Pregnant women who are HIV-positive can reduce transmission to their children through HIV antiretroviral treatment

Sources:

UNAIDS Vietnam

The Body (www.thebody.com)



Say NO to stigma & discrimination of people and children living with and affected by HIV

People living with HIV and their husbands, wives, partners, children, other family members, close friends and carers can be affected by stigma and discrimination.

This means that their social relationships, social status and their access to opportunities are negatively affected.

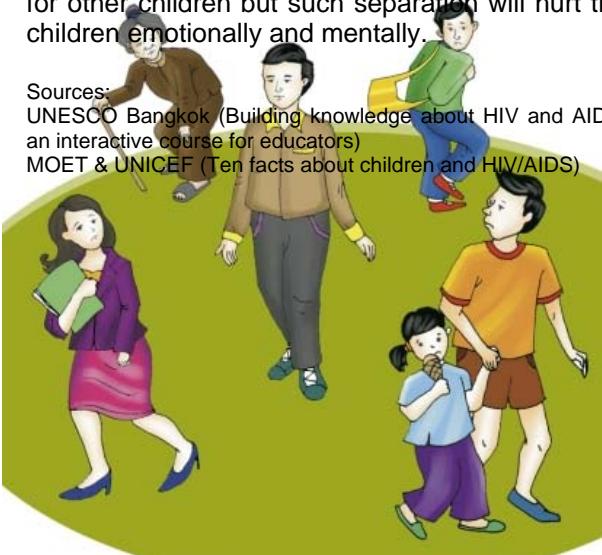
Stigma is social disapproval or non-acceptance of a person. This happens when members of a community believe that certain personal characteristics, conditions, behaviors or beliefs are undesirable, inferior or against common customs or practices.

Discrimination is when someone or a group of people does not allow a person the same opportunities and human rights as other people because that person has certain characteristics, conditions, behaviors or beliefs.

In the case of children, it can result in not having access to education.

Many people say that it is necessary to separate HIV positive children in schools, classes, recreation places and shelters in order to prevent HIV transmission. Separating HIV infected children is not the solution for preventing HIV transmission for other children but such separation will hurt the children emotionally and mentally.

Sources:
UNESCO Bangkok (Building knowledge about HIV and AIDS: an interactive course for educators)
MOET & UNICEF (Ten facts about children and HIV/AIDS)



The role of schools in the HIV response

The school can have two main roles – an educational role and a supportive role:

Educational role:

- providing HIV and AIDS education
- acting as community learning and action centres for HIV prevention
- advocating for nondiscriminatory attitudes towards people living with or affected by HIV and AIDS

Supportive role:

- providing counseling, advice and psychological support for those living with or affected by HIV
- making sure that students living with or affected by HIV and AIDS stay in school
- linking students to HIV and AIDS related services
- providing a place to get together for self-help or support groups of people living with and affected by HIV and AIDS

Did you know that?

Studies from around the world show that young people provided with correct information, knowledge and skills, will not only delay starting their sexual activity, but once they start having sex, they will also be more likely to protect themselves against sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV

Sources:

UNESCO Bangkok (Building knowledge about HIV and AIDS: an interactive course for educators)
UNESCO Bangkok (HIV/AIDS and Education. A Toolkit for Ministries of Education)



More information

HIV information in Vietnamese

<http://www.vaac.gov.vn>

<http://www.aids-cd.hiv.com.vn/>

<http://www.gioitinthuoiteen.org.vn/>

<http://www.tamsubantre.org/>

<http://www.hiv.com.vn>

<http://www.hoanhiptim.vn/>

<http://www.nam-man.vn/>

Resources in English:

<http://www.unaids.org.vn>

<http://www.unescobkk.org/education/hivaids/>

<http://www.thebody.com>

<http://aidsinfo.nih.gov/>

Law on HIV/AIDS Prevention and Control
Chapter II, Section 1, Article 9

"Information, education and communication on HIV/AIDS prevention and control shall aim at raising awareness, changing attitude and behavior, and fighting stigmatization and discrimination against HIV-infected people."

VVOB Vietnam

Address: Thao Vien Guesthouse A3 (room 307),
1B Bac Son. Ngoc Ha, Ba Dinh, Hanoi

Tel: 84 43 848 9394

Fax: 84 43 734 7290

Website: www.vvob.be/vietnam