

IT TAKES COURAGE!

An Overview of the *ITC!* Youth Curriculum and Training Program

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E D U C A T I O N

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ITC! Youth Curriculum: A Life Skills Curriculum Building Character and Courage in the lives of Youth

Goal: The goal of this curriculum is to equip caring adults with an educational tool that will help youth live healthy, meaningful and productive lives by developing character, healthy life skills and the courage to put them into practice.

Authors: Jennie A. Cerullo, Ph.D., and Marcia L. Ball, Ed.D., of Kerus Global Education

Target Audience: Youth ages 10-24 years, living in Africa. With additional training the curriculum could be easily adapted for use with older teens and single adults.

Design: Comprises a total of 16, one-hour lessons (4 sections, 4 lessons each)

Key Themes: Dimensions of Health and Wellness; Character and Courage; Life Skills; Abstinence and Faithfulness; Spiritual Foundations and Encouragement

Section Topics: A Vision for Life, Building Healthy Relationships, Making Wise Decisions, and Putting it All Together (Understanding and Preventing HIV/AIDS)

Materials for the Students: Each student will receive a copy of the *ITC!* Activity Guide and Journal, a lesson-by-lesson booklet where each youth can write exercises and personal reflections about the lesson.

Requirement for Receiving the Curriculum: Any caring adult can teach this curriculum after completing a 4-Day Youth Curriculum Certification Workshop

Availability: The curriculum is available in the following languages: Amharic (Ethiopia), Runyakole/Rukiga, (Uganda), Tshwa and Portuguese, (Mozambique) and Kimeru, (Kenya).

Current Use: Over 6,000 professionals have been trained to use the *ITC!* Youth Curriculum. As of Fall 2006, over 130,000 youth throughout Uganda, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique and South Africa have been exposed to the *ITC!* Youth Curriculum.

***ITC!* Youth Curriculum Overview**

Section 1: Creating a Vision for Life

Many young people go through life aimlessly, without an idea of where they want to end up. We believe that many young people engage in risky behaviors out of a sense of hopelessness and an inability to see that they are unique, exceptional, precious in the sight of God, significant, and free to make their own choices in life. This section will help youth to identify who they want to become as individuals and to begin to discover how their unique giftedness can make a difference in the world.

Life Skills Taught in this Section

- Identifying and developing gifts and talents
- Setting personal goals
- Distinguishing between right and wrong choices
- Developing relationships with people of good character
- Avoiding dream-damaging behaviors

Lesson 1: A Vision for Life

Lesson 2: One of a Kind

Lesson 3: Who Do You Want To Be?

Lesson 4: Growing in Character

Section 2: Building Healthy Relationships

The desire to love and be loved is something we all have in common. Relationships are what make our lives interesting and meaningful. Our relationships with ourselves, our families, and our community require a commitment to practicing the Golden Rule if they are to be strong and long-lasting. This section will help young people to discern the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships, recognize the tactics of someone who is taking advantage, and learn the basics for effective communication.

Life Skills Taught in this Section

- Analyzing the healthiness of a relationship
- Interpreting nonverbal cues in communication
- Noticing the difference between a person's words and actions
- Communicating in assertive ways
- Identifying the tactics of an abuser
- Extending and receiving forgiveness

Lesson 5: Healthy Relationships

Lesson 6: Communicating Effectively

Lesson 7: Detecting Counterfeits

Lesson 8: The Power of Forgiveness

Section 3: Making Wise Decisions

We create a path for ourselves one choice at a time, and few of us are aware of our direction until experiences in life make that path obvious. The goal of this section is to enable young people to live purposeful lives—to see the effect their current choices are having on their lives and to recognize that unhealthy choices, such as alcohol or drug use, and early

sexual involvement, may quickly sabotage their dreams. This section will help young people to focus their decisions toward realizing their dreams, to learn effective ways to communicate their values, and to stand up under pressure.

Life Skills Taught in this Section

- Thinking logically
- Anticipating and avoiding negative situations
- Setting and maintaining personal boundaries
- Practicing sexual self-control
- Saying no in assertive ways

Lesson 9: Reaching a Wise Decision

Lesson 10: Choices and Consequences

Lesson 11: The Choice to Abstain and Be Faithful

Lesson 12: Handling Peer Pressure

Section 4: Putting It All Together

The final section turns the spotlight on the unique challenges of living in a world with HIV/AIDS and what it means to “love your neighbor as yourself” when it comes to those who are suffering. This section covers the basic facts about HIV/AIDS and how it is spread, tips for caring for persons who are ill, or staying healthy for as long as possible for those who are infected. Youth are encouraged to get involved by creating a group project to help others. Each individual is asked to make a personal commitment that will help those who are hurting in the community or help to end the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Life Skills Taught in this Section

- Sharing accurate information about HIV/AIDS
- Safely caring for someone with HIV/AIDS
- Influencing a community with healthy life messages
- Speaking out against stigma and discrimination toward persons with HIV/AIDS
- Making and keeping commitments to self and others

Lesson 13: Understanding and Preventing HIV/AIDS

Lesson 14: Living with HIV/AIDS

Lesson 15: Caring Communities

Lesson 16: A Bright Future

***ITC!* 4-Day Youth Curriculum Training**

The *ITC!* Youth Curriculum Training is specifically designed for persons who are interested in teaching the *ITC!* Youth Curriculum lessons in their schools, specifically headmasters who are interested in the lessons being taught in their school and the actual teachers who will be teaching the lessons. The training is compulsory for any person receiving a copy of the *ITC!* Youth Curriculum.

Facilitators: Three trained facilitators will lead the training; this team is anchored by the authors of the curriculum, Dr. Marcia Ball and Dr. Jennie Cerullo, both former university professors with degrees in Education and with experience training school teachers in over 45 nations.

Goals:

1. Prepare school teachers to teach each of the lessons of the curriculum according to the key concepts mentioned in the text, yet with the freedom to adapt for cultural settings.
2. Discuss practical ways to help youth develop character and learn essential life skills
3. Encourage and promote the use of interactive learning strategies in the classroom.
4. Equip teachers to discuss the value of abstaining from sex before marriage and remaining sexually faithful in marriage
5. Increase the knowledge concerning HIV/AIDS related prevention, treatment and care issues.

Methodologies: A variety of teaching strategies are used throughout the training program including:

- Group discussion
- Lecture
- Storytelling
- Activities
- Demonstrations
- Practicum teaching experience

Main Topics:

- Meeting the emotional needs of youth
- Helping youth to build a vision for their lives which includes being a person of character and discovering their unique gifts and talents.
- The Iceberg: Understanding behavior
- Identifying healthy relationships and avoiding manipulators/abusers
- Teaching youth how to be good decision makers
- Understanding HIV/AIDS