

**“We’re surpassed by our children!”: parents & caregivers demand parenting interventions to support youth HIV/STI risk reduction in rural Mwanza, Tanzania**

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**Issues:** The limited behavioural change impact of MEMA kwa Vijana (Good Things for Youth), an innovative ASRH programme in rural Mwanza, may be due to insufficiently addressing community-wide sociocultural norms and the dynamic context of adolescent sexuality. We investigated villagers’ concerns about ASRH and views of potential interventions. Parents/caregivers called for interventions that address parental responsibility and roles in socializing adolescents.

**Description:** Semi-structured in-depth interviews (IDI) and group discussions (GD) were held with members of different social groups in 4 communities of Mwanza region. Social groups included male (4GD) and female (4GD) parents/caregivers, male (4GD) and female (4GD) youth, school representatives (3GD, 2IDI), village authorities (2 GD, 9 IDI), religious leaders (1GD, 4IDI), traditional healers (6IDI), and health workers (2GD). Content analysis of notes and transcripts identified prominent themes, based on the initial question guide and emerging topics.

**Lessons learned:**

- Societal changes, such as the effects of modernization on social life, household economies, traditional ways of socialization, and intergenerational relationships, as well as the advent of the HIV epidemic, presents parents/caregivers with important parenting challenges.
- Parents recognize their responsibility in guiding youth through adolescence towards a healthy and safe adulthood, but report a lack of parenting skills and ASRH knowledge to deal with changed circumstances. While ‘good things’ are done for youth in schools and health services, parents also demanded ‘good things’ such as participatory training.
- Parents and adults strongly influence young people’s lives and sexuality as well as the community contexts in which youth grow towards adulthood. Excluding parents and adults in youth HIV/STI prevention ignores this influence and weakens intervention success.

**Next steps:**

- Review of literature on parenting interventions involving community and parents/caregivers.
- Design and piloting of parenting intervention.

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