

Helping Students Fight HIV Stigma: A Collaboration

Sophie Atherton (Centre for Biomedicine, Self and Society)

Jaime Garcia-Iglesias (CBSS), Dom Cairns-Gibson (UoE), Denise Di Nella (Castlebrae High School)



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Background:

- HIV is a public health problem: as of December 2023, it was estimated that 6761 people were living with HIV in Scotland.
- Stigma a key concern for HIV prevention, treatment and quality of life.

Our Project:

- This work is part of the project 'Viral Memories: From HIV to COVID-19 and Beyond' funded by ESRC.
- We collaborated with two sixth form schools in Edinburgh: Castlebrae Community High School (in an area of high deprivation) and George Watson's College (a private school).
- We involved 14 sixth-form psychology students.

The Workshops:

- Three workshops took place in Usher Building on 3rd, 10th and 31st October 2024.
- Students learned about public health, HIV and stigma.
- Students worked individually and in groups to create posters to fight HIV stigma.
- Posters were exhibited in Craigmillar Library between 8th and 28th November 2024.
- A showcase event was held on 9th November to discuss the posters and HIV stigma with members of the public.

Evaluation:

14

Students
involved

9

Posters
produced

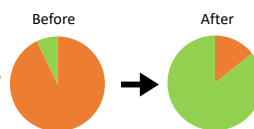
800

Estimated
visitors to the
exhibition



Impact on Students:

Students'
knowledge
of HIV:



	Before	After
I know very little	0	0
I know basic facts	13	2
I feel knowledgeable	1	12

Talking about
HIV:

After the workshops:

- 64% felt **more comfortable** talking about HIV and stigma.
- 79% felt **more prepared** to talk about HIV and stigma.



Teacher Feedback:

"This has been an **extremely motivating** opportunity. My pupils' attendance improved, showing how keen they were. They were also able to collaborate with another school, which they loved"



"I feel all children should learn the stigma of HIV; it **should be mandatory in the curriculum**"



Long-Term Impact:

- Students' knowledge of HIV and stigma improved, and students felt more prepared to engage in conversations about HIV.
- Teachers felt that this was a useful activity which aligned with the psychology curriculum

Some Poster Examples:



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Contact information:
satherto@ed.ac.uk
jgarcia6@ed.ac.uk



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