

MY AGE ZIMBABWE

NEWSLETTER

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myage-zim.org    My Age Zimbabwe

"The Power of Options": more than just a theme

My Age Zimbabwe together with the Population Services, commemorated World Contraception Day with a game day that brought together young people from many groups, encouraging them to take charge of their sexual and reproductive health under the theme the power of options.

"The Power of Options" is a call to action more than just a theme, where healthier society, gender equality, and higher standards of living can be achieved by ensuring access to a variety of contraceptive options, promoting informed decision-making, and defending human rights principles.

Increased investment per child in health, nutrition, and education is possible with planned and well-managed family sizes. Family planning thus supports the National Constitution's and Vision 2030's precepts, which uphold the right to health and well-being for every Zimbabwean person, in addition to saving lives and improving quality of life.

Zimbabwe is renowned throughout Africa as having one of the highest rates of contraceptive use, Adolescents have the highest unmet need of all reproductive-age women, unmet needs affect 19% of married adolescents, compared to 15% of all married women aged 15-49.

Unmet need is roughly twice as high among married adolescents living in cities as it is in rural settings, some major obstacles to using contraceptives include ignorance, false beliefs, and overblown worries about their safety.

This year's World Contraception Day theme, "The Power of Options," emphasizes the critical role that contraceptive options play in empowering individuals to take control of their reproductive health.



This theme is about supporting autonomy, enabling informed choices, and advancing worldwide efforts towards Reproductive Health and Family Planning, where people can select the contraceptive technique that best suits them by having access to a range of options and taking into account their lifestyle, health needs, and future goals.

There are many different types of contraceptive techniques, including hormonal ones like birth control pills, patches, and injections, barrier ones like condoms and diaphragms, and long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs) like IUDs and implants, each technique has its own advantages and potential risks, so by providing choices, people can select the one that best meets their preferences and needs.

Every woman deserves access to safe and legal abortion services!



Key points to note! About ISAD

- It also emphasizes the need for governments to take action to ensure that women have access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care, including safe and legal abortion services.
- By promoting safe and legal access to abortion as a fundamental human right, International Safe Abortion Day helps to reduce the stigma surrounding abortion and empower women to make informed decisions about their own bodies.
- Ultimately, this day serves as a reminder that every woman deserves access to safe and legal abortion services, regardless of where she lives or her socioeconomic status.
- In addition to promoting safe and legal abortion, International Safe Abortion Day also advocates for the prevention of unintended pregnancies through comprehensive sex education and access to contraception.
- The day highlights the importance of ensuring that all women have the right to make informed decisions about their reproductive health without fear of judgment or discrimination.
- It also calls attention to the fact that restrictive laws and policies on abortion not only violate women's human rights but also contribute to unsafe abortions and maternal mortality rates.
- International Safe Abortion Day serves as a call to action for governments, healthcare providers, and communities worldwide to prioritize women's reproductive health and rights.
- The objective of the day is to advocate for the right of women to access safe and legal abortion services as a fundamental human right.

My Age Zimbabwe joined the rest of the world in observing the International Safe Abortion Day which is observed annually on September 28th, aiming to promote safe and legal access to abortion as a fundamental human right.

The ISAD also serves to raise awareness about the need to remove the stigma surrounding abortion, which often prevents women from seeking safe and accessible abortion services.

It is also a reminder that access to safe and legal abortion is vital to protecting women's health and ensuring their human rights.

My Age Zimbabwe recognizes ISAD for it highlights the importance of reproductive health and rights, the day brings attention to the fact that millions of women around the world still do not have access to safe and legal abortion services, which can result in serious health complications or even death.

IPPF Africa Regional Office hosts delegates from sub-Saharan Africa on IPPF's New Strategy

My Age Zimbabwe participated in the regional forum from 9 – 15 September in Nairobi, Kenya, that aimed at supporting and to better understand the reforms taking place at the IPPF Secretariat. These reforms include IPPF's new strategy (2023 - 2028), the IPPF results framework, Charter of values, anti-racism strategy, humanitarian program, safeguarding policies and IPPF's global rebrand.

The new Strategy and the reforms, according to the IPPF Africa Regional Director Mrs. Marie-Evelyne Petrus-Barry, will enable the Federation to stay aligned with the changing and challenging global landscapes, more so in the sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR) space.

My Age Zimbabwe's participation in the regional forum was crucial in ensuring that the organization is up-to-date with the latest IPPF reforms and strategies.

The forum, which took place from 9-15 September in Nairobi, Kenya, focused on various reforms such as IPPF's new strategy for 2023-2028, the IPPF results framework, Charter of values, anti-racism strategy, humanitarian program, safeguarding policies, and IPPF's global rebrand.

Mrs. Marie-Evelyne Petrus-Barry, the IPPF Africa Regional Director, emphasized that the new strategy and reforms will help the Federation to remain aligned with the ever-changing global landscapes, especially in the sexual reproductive health and rights (SRHR) space.

It is essential for organizations like My Age Zimbabwe to be aware of these reforms to ensure that they continue to provide effective and efficient services to their clients. My Age Zimbabwe's involvement in such forums is a testament to their commitment to improving the lives of youth in Zimbabwe.



By attending the regional forum, My Age Zimbabwe was able to network and collaborate with other IPPF member associations from across the African continent.

This provided an opportunity for My Age Zimbabwe to share their experiences and learn from others in the region. Additionally, the forum provided a platform for My Age Zimbabwe to showcase their work and achievements in promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights among youth in Zimbabwe.

The participation of My Age Zimbabwe in the forum also underscores the organization's commitment to staying abreast of the latest developments in the SRHR space. This will enable them to continue providing innovative and effective services to young people in Zimbabwe and beyond.

Ultimately, the regional forum was a valuable opportunity for My Age Zimbabwe to contribute to the ongoing efforts to advance SRHR in Africa and globally.

IPPF is a locally owned, globally connected civil society movement that works to ensure people are free to make choices about their sexuality and wellbeing, in a world free from discrimination.

Fostering Sexual and Reproductive Health Edutainment



Sexual and reproductive health education is often overlooked or avoided in many societies, but it plays a crucial role in the wellbeing of individuals and communities. My Age Zimbabwe continues to give Comprehensive education on sexual health and reproduction in different communities and recently reached out to first year students at Great Zimbabwe University through a Theatre for Development performance..

One of the most significant benefits of sexual and reproductive health education is the prevention of unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), which can lead to serious health problems if left untreated, SRH education can help individuals make informed decisions about their bodies, relationships, and futures.

The Theatre performance at Great Zimbabwe encompassed most of the key themes of Srhr such as Drug and substance abuse , STIs, unsafe abortions, unwanted pregnancies ,HIV and AIDs to help young people understand the risks involved in sexual activity and learn how to protect themselves from the dangers and infections. Additionally, it also portrayed the importance of contraception which helps reduce unintended pregnancies and promotes responsible sexual behavior.

Another important aspect of sexual and reproductive health that was covered in the is the theatre performance was gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, which aimed to educate individuals about healthy relationships, consent, and sexual violence prevention which can help decrease the prevalence of harmful gender norms and attitudes that perpetuate gender-based violence.

Theater performances on Sexual and reproductive health have proven to have significant social and economic benefits. In societies with high rates of unplanned pregnancies such as tertiary institutions , educational opportunities for young women may be limited, as they may be forced to drop out of school to care for children.

Furthermore, sexual and reproductive health education is an essential component of comprehensive healthcare. My Age Zimbabwe theater for development goes further to focus on educating young people on menstrual hygiene, fertility, anatomy, and childbirth can improve the physical and emotional health of young people and can lead to better health outcomes for both individuals and their families.

In conclusion, sexual and reproductive health edutainment plays a vital role in promoting the wellbeing of young people and communities. It has the potential to promote gender equality, prevent STIs and unintended pregnancies, and improve physical and emotional health. Therefore, My Age Zimbabwe makes it a mandate that sexual and reproductive health education be made accessible and compulsory in different communities.

Learning through edutainment increases motivation, engagement, and enhances concentration; giving people the best of both worlds.

Breaking the Stigma of Period Poverty!



Periods are a natural bodily function experienced by half of the world's population. Yet for many women and girls, accessing menstrual products can be a challenging and often unaffordable task.

Period poverty, the inability for someone to access or afford menstrual products, is a widespread issue that affects millions of people worldwide.

In some cases, women and girls are forced to resort to using rags, paper towels, or even plastic bags as makeshift sanitary products.

This can lead to infections, discomfort, and embarrassment. The financial burden of purchasing menstrual products can also put undue strain on already tight budgets and result in difficult choices between basic needs such as food, shelter, and hygiene.

Period poverty is a multifaceted issue that has severe implications for women's health, education, and dignity.

A lack of access to menstrual products can have a devastating impact on a woman's mental and physical well-being.

Women and girls may feel ashamed and embarrassed, which can lead to low self-esteem and a fear of social exclusion. Period poverty can even cause some women to miss work or school, which creates a ripple effect on their economic stability and social mobility.

Breaking the stigma around menstruation is essential to eradicate period poverty.

We need to start talking openly and honestly about periods as a natural process that requires basic hygiene and medical care.

This means challenging the negative attitudes and misconceptions that perpetuate period poverty and creating safe spaces for women and girls to share their experiences and seek support.

Governments and community organizations also play a crucial role in addressing period poverty. They can implement policies that prioritize menstrual hygiene management, provide financial assistance to low-income households, and distribute free or subsidized menstrual products to those in need.

Conclusively, period poverty is a significant barrier to gender equality and social justice. It is essential that we recognize the issue and take action to ensure that everyone has access to safe and affordable menstrual products.

By breaking the stigma and providing essential resources and support, we can empower women and girls and promote their health, dignity, and well-being.

Maintaining Good Sexual and Reproductive Health

Sexual and reproductive health is an essential aspect of overall well-being. It involves the physical, emotional, and social aspects of sexual and reproductive health, which are all important parts of a healthy lifestyle. Good sexual and reproductive health can lead to better quality of life and improved mental and physical health.

Maintaining good sexual and reproductive health is important for all individuals. Practicing safe sex, practicing good hygiene, and getting regular testing and vaccination can all help prevent the spread of STIs and promote overall health and well-being.

In addition to preventive measures, it is important to seek medical attention if any issues arise. This includes getting regular check-ups with a healthcare provider, discussing any concerns or symptoms, and seeking treatment when necessary. It is also important to have open and honest communication with sexual partners about sexual health and to practice consent in all sexual encounters.

Unfortunately, access to sexual and reproductive healthcare is not equal for everyone. Many individuals face barriers to receiving care, such as lack of insurance, stigma, and discrimination. It is crucial to advocate for policies and programs that promote access to comprehensive and affordable sexual and reproductive healthcare for all.

TIPS:

- Practice safe sex: Using condoms or other forms of protection during sex can help prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unintended pregnancies.
- Get tested: Regular STI testing is an important part of maintaining good sexual health. It can help detect STIs early on and prevent their spread.
- Practice good hygiene: Good hygiene is essential for maintaining good reproductive health. Make sure to wash your genital area regularly and thoroughly.
- Limit alcohol and drug use: Alcohol and drugs can impair judgment and increase the risk of engaging in risky sexual behavior.
- Get vaccinated: Vaccines such as the HPV vaccine can help prevent certain STIs and cervical cancer.

In addition to the tips above, it's important to have open and honest communication with your sexual partner(s). This can help ensure that both parties are on the same page and can help prevent misunderstandings or miscommunications. It's also important to prioritize your own comfort and boundaries, and to never feel pressured into engaging in sexual activity that you're not comfortable with. Remember, consent is key. Finally, if you ever have any concerns or questions about your sexual health, don't hesitate to reach out to a healthcare provider for guidance and support.

RETHINKING ARTS IN Pandemics

My Age Zimbabwe launched the Rethinking Arts in Pandemics Project to develop the dance music and poetry skills of young people.

The project aims to provide a platform for young artists to showcase their work and express their perspectives on the dangers of drug and substance misuse pandemic on the arts industry. Through this initiative, My Age Zimbabwe hopes to spark a much-needed conversation on the importance of supporting and promoting the arts. The Rethinking Arts in Pandemics Project is an opportunity for young artists to connect with each other, collaborate, and inspire each other to create meaningful and impactful art that resonates with audiences around the world. My Age Zimbabwe believes that the arts have the power to bring people together, heal wounds, and inspire change, and this project is just one of the many ways in which the organization is working to promote and support the arts in Zimbabwe and beyond.



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**FRIDAY
NIGHT
LIVE**

Hosted by: Black Pepper

Admission: Free
Time: 18:30-20:30hrs
Venue: Charles Austin Theatre



Our talkshow that addresses SRHR Issues

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