

School_Nurse Daily Health Newsletter

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Devotional Highlight

“The Power of Forgiveness”

“Jesus taught us by word and by His own example that the power of forgiving love is stronger than the hate of violent force. Therefore, we extend forgiveness to you.”
- the words spoken by missionaries to their captors, after they escaped to freedom.

How forgiving have you been lately? What ‘unforgivable’ thing has someone done to you lately? While on the cross Jesus prayed, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34).

We may think that we are punishing others by not forgiving them for wronging us, but really we are punishing ourselves. Jesus made it clear just how powerful forgiveness is. He said, “If you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you” (Matthew 6:14).

Let's find it in our hearts to take a step towards forgiveness today.

(Extract from Our Daily Bread)

Topic of the Month “Abortion”

ABORTION





Abortion is defined as a procedure done to end a pregnancy, also called termination (NHS, 2020). This topic was inspired from a presentation a student made. She spoke on her views on abortion as well as how it has impacted her age-group. She also shared an experience of one of her friends that had previous abortions, and how it impacted her mentally. After learning about how abortion influence suicidal ideations, self-harm, and withdrawal, I decided it was time to take a deeper look on this topic.

How often does abortion occur in adolescents?

Each year, an estimated 3.2 million unsafe abortions (pregnancy terminated by a person lacking the necessary skills or in an environment lacking adequate medical standards) take place among adolescent girls ages 15–19. Interesting isn't it?

Why choose abortion?

Studies show that girls aged 10-14, have a higher abortion ratio (both safe and unsafe), and are more likely to have an abortion due to rape, incest, or transactional sex.

The primary reasons for abortion in adolescents is the desire to continue their studies, as well as their need to protect themselves from the burdens of early motherhood. However, they may also receive an abortion due to:

- 1.Shame
- 2.Stigma associated with teenage pregnancy
- 3.Poverty
- 4.Pressure from family and even their partner

When do they usually have an abortion?

Surprisingly, adolescents usually delay the abortion into the second trimester (months 4-6) of the pregnancy. This delay is usually due to the fear and shame they are experiencing, as well as limited knowledge of and access to safe abortion services. It may also be due to not knowing about the pregnancy and fear of health providers.

When some adolescents do attempt the abortion, they try to self-induce with ingested herbal / chemical concoctions (Espinoza C, Samandari G, Andersen K., 2020). The famous 'rusty nail and pepsi' is a well known one. NOTE: NOT SAFE AND NOT TRUE.

Though complications of safe abortions in adolescents are rare, the psychological impact it has on the individual can be extremely severe.

Psychological Effects of abortion on adolescents

Though the negative psychological impacts of abortion on adolescents are not a sure thing to happen, it is important to know that you are still at risk for developing them.

Having experienced an abortion, you are at risk for developing:

1. Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
2. Depression
3. Problems with interpersonal relationships

The leading factors that contribute to these psychological alterations include:

1. The reason for the abortion
2. The type of medical procedure, as well as if it was safe or unsafe
3. The term of the pregnancy
4. Person, social, economical, religious, and cultural factors

Many females, when terminating a pregnancy, are not aware of their possible need for psychological support later down the line. These symptoms usually do not appear until four months to a year after the procedure - due to having shoved the feeling down so deep, because they wanted to get the procedure done.

So, before doing an abortion, weigh the risks, know if it is truly worth it.





Nurse D's Tip

I reached out to someone who was willing to share an experience with you. [This is her story:](#)

"A pregnancy scare is one of the scariest, heart sinking feelings ever. At age 17 I was dating my boyfriend at the time and while I might have self educated myself on several things my mom and family members failed to educate me on, there were many more things I didn't know.

I used to think that anytime you had sex and your partner ejaculated in you, you could just take an emergency contraceptive and you'd be ok.

Errrkkk! Wrong! I didn't know that once you're ovulating that emergency contraceptive doesn't work.

I wasn't going to school for a few weeks and I gave my guardian all the excuses to say why I wasn't going to school and they bought it... One day I was home and I craved curry chicken and white rice with a lot of pepper and it was a feeling where, if I didn't get that pepper I'd be sick. I also found myself spitting alot.

I asked my guardian to get me some pregnancy tests, and I took them. Instantly my heart sunk in my belly and I was trembling and nervous! TWO LINES! I instantly got lightheaded. I started panicking. Everything I was trying not to happen, happened. Coming from my household, your warnings would sound something like "Breed and come yah and me kill yuh; If yuh breed no come yah."

When I took the second test, it came back positive. I texted my boyfriend at the time and he asked how I got pregnant. (I forgive him now. Though it took years but I forgave him). I didn't even argue. I reached out to an older friend and asked her if she knew anywhere that did abortions! Instantly that's the first thing that came to mind.

She told me of a place and I called in the morning and they asked if I knew how far along I was and I told them no and I asked the price range! This man said \$50,000 lol. Where me did ago get that?

Looking back now that I'm older: Jamaicans really need to be educated on a lot of stuff. I used to hear people saying hot Pepsi and nail "dash weh belly" or hot dragon or liquor would kill the foetus! Misses and Mawsa! Nothing, no go so! I drink Pepsi and belch till I weak! Not a pikini no gone no weh...

I somehow got the money (I stole it, that was the extent I'd go just to not look like a failure or bring shame to my family. Also! I was not ready to be a mother). I went the Monday and the doctor told me to bring a sanitary napkin, and I'll need to get some pain meds. I went and my time came. Through all of this I was mostly nervous and scared. Because I tackled this all by myself. Two people knew about it and I was planning to take it to my grave.

The doctor came in and told me to take my pants and undies off and lay on the bed, he'll be back. I did so and he asked the basic questions. When was my last period? Pushed down on my lower abdomen and it was hella tender and stiff and hard. He did an ultrasound and told me I was 2 weeks pregnant and I saw the little "pea" shaped fetus inside me.

He explained what he'd do. He then inserted a soft pill inside me. All the way up and told me to get dressed and within two hours it would start working...

When I got home I tried to make myself comfortable and ended up falling asleep. A striking pain woke me out of my sleep. It was the most unbearable pain I've ever felt and I ran to the bathroom. I had to hold onto everything that was in my sight and I cried. (Talking about it now kinda makes me emotional) I cried. And I was bleeding a lot. I then heard a loud plop inside the toilet and looked and saw a huge clump of something looking like a ball about the size of my palm.

I bled for 2 weeks and shed a bit of tissues here and there. I had shoved all that feeling to the side and called it done because I felt relieved.

3 years later all this feeling of guilt came rushing down on me out of nowhere and I cried and texted my ex and told him how much I hated him and he was the worst person in the world and how bad of a person I was. I called my sister and I cried to her and that's when she found out that I did it...

I still have thoughts of what life would be like if I didn't.

To shadow what I've done. I've always told people that if I got pregnant a time in my life when I wasn't ready for a child. I'd abort it...

My advice to any young woman or young couple going through this is:

- *Look at the pros and the cons
- * Put you first and not what others might think of you.
- * If you're going to do this. Do make sure you think this through. The guilt phase is the worst.
- *Read up about it

Abstain from sex, and if not stay protected if you're not ready for a child."



Dear Parents

Are we paying attention to our children? Both boys and girls? If yes, please guide them accordingly, and if the end result is an abortion, ensure that you cater to their mental wellbeing in the aftermath, and even before it happens.

Many times things are out of our control, and we are left to pick up the pieces with them. But while you're picking up the pieces, do so with love.



Den Cu Yah!

Based on data found in 2019, 55% of unintended pregnancies among adolescents aged 15-19 years end in unsafe abortions (WHO, 2022).

Thank You

Disclaimer: The content on this newsletter should not be used in place of medical/professional consultation or advice, but to be used for educational purposes only.



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