

Equipping educators to address HIV and AIDS: A review of selected teacher education initiatives

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Description:

Teacher educators, school principals and teachers are potentially well positioned to play a pivotal role in changing the course of the HIV and AIDS epidemic. The purpose of this article is to focus on a spectrum of educational initiatives in sub-Saharan Africa and South Africa which are designed to equip educators to be informed about, and to manage, HIV and AIDS in their personal and professional lives. Criteria for inclusion in the review are that the HIV and AIDS education endeavours must be operational (already functioning) and experience-based (have been experienced first-hand by the author). The review begins with a reflective account of two major undertakings: (a) an e-learning course for teacher educators in sub-Saharan Africa and (b) South Africa's Higher Education HIV/AIDS Programme. Thereafter, the review considers a range of academic pursuits currently involving in-service school teachers and principals studying at a South African university. These include (a) two Advanced Certificates in Education; (b) doctoral studies; and (c) a new short learning programme. In reflecting on these various innovative but 'do-able' offerings, the article concludes that experiential and context-specific action-based learning and research into the social and educational aspects of HIV and AIDS can contribute to breaking the silence and reducing stigma while, at the same time, equipping educators to provide care and support for infected and affected learners and colleagues.

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