

Empowering young women to loveLife and take charge

As part of reducing young women's increased vulnerability to HIV infection, loveLife - South Africa's largest HIV prevention programme for young people -further entrenched its Comprehensive Prevention Package for Young Women on World Aids Day, 1 December.

With the taglines, "I found my groove," "I take control" and "Save the moment" the comprehensive prevention package for young women features various initiatives, including increasing female condom use among youth between the ages of 12 and 24.

Young women are at highest risk of HIV infection for various reasons including being more biologically susceptible to infection. Other factors compounding their vulnerability are societal expectations, social and economic marginalisation, harmful gender norms and men controlling use of male condoms.

In South Africa, uptake for female condoms has been slow due to myths associated with the product and limited access to it. loveLife is promoting its comprehensive prevention package in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund to empower young women to better protect themselves from unplanned pregnancy, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

Promoting comprehensive protection

The package includes strengthening distribution and communication of female condoms. loveLife's objectives are to increase knowledge, positive attitudes and perceptions of female condoms and will work to diffuse the range of myths around them in working to achieve these aims.

The campaign put particular focus on the use of female condoms, specifically FC2, the latest version of the female condom, which is one aspect of the prevention package. Look out for our tongue-in-cheek online FC2 'mash up' on our YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/lovelifemedia) which highlights how female condoms put young women in charge of their sexuality. Watch this space and get your foxy on!

In speaking about the prevention package for young women, Nomxolisi Malope, loveLife's Senior Manager: Strategic Projects, says: "The campaign is for all the young, beautiful and talented women that South Africa boasts. It supports young people with fun, empowering and practical tools that we believe will lead to a reduction in unintended pregnancies, HIV and other sexually transmitted infections.

"One of these tools is the female condom, which is to date the only barrier method for women. Female condoms help a woman protect herself and her partner. They empower her to take charge of every sexual moment, enabling her to better

protect her life, health and future."

As part of the Comprehensive Prevention Package for Young Women, loveLife is promoting female condoms on a range of media platforms, including its social media sites, Facebook: www.facebook.org.za/loveLifeNGO and Twitter: [@loveLifeNGO](https://twitter.com/loveLifeNGO).

Continued efforts

In 2013 and beyond, the groundBREAKERS and Mpintshis will continue empowering youth through Body Vibes, loveLife's healthy sexuality programme. Implemented in schools, youth friendly clinics, community-based organisations and loveLife Y-Centres (youth centres) in 900 communities across South Africa, Body Vibes is facilitated together with loveLife's lifeskills programmes.

The Comprehensive Prevention Package also includes Foxy Chix - an innovative one-minute radio drama series that showcases the daily lives of young women and all the challenges and experiences that go with it. Currently being broadcast on Joburg youth station, Y-FM, the series will extend to community stations across South Africa early next year.

The campaign will also live through Foxy Chix Clubs - open to male and female youth between 12 to 24 years old - at loveLife Y-Centres across South Africa.

Throughout 2013, members of these clubs will express their views and relate their experiences on female condoms in four open and hard-hitting discussions.

Another feature of the prevention package is the soon-to-be launched mobi site that will address structural drivers of HIV - such as poverty and unemployment - which place young women at particular risk of HIV. The site will offer rewards to youth engaging in healthy, positive behaviour that protects them from HIV.

In promoting the use of female condoms, loveLife is mobilising key stakeholders in communities to advance support of them. loveLife has also partnered with the Department of Health to distribute five hundred thousand FC2 condoms in youth friendly clinics nationwide. loveLife will also provide limited edition, specially designed female condom containers which will be distributed at loveLife events.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>