

Redefine Positive: “HIV and Me: Marissa’s Story”

5th Grade Video Discussion Guide

About Redefine Positive

Redefine Positive is a 100% community-funded project founded by the mother of an HIV positive 8-year old student attending a public elementary school. After viewing outdated HIV/AIDS video resources in public school classrooms, Jodie Howerton launched a campaign to create new, relevant instructional videos for elementary, middle, and high school students. All videos in the Redefine Positive series contain accurate medical and scientific information about transmission and prevention, address the emotional and social aspects of HIV and AIDS, and attempt to decrease the devastating stigma and discrimination still associated with the disease.

- ✓ Redefine Positive resources are downloadable FREE of charge at www.redefinepositive.com
- ✓ “HIV and Me: Marissa’s Story,” is designed to educate 5th grade elementary school students about HIV and AIDS. The video tells the story of a 9-year old girl whose mother is HIV positive.

Compliance with State Law and State HIV/AIDS Model Curriculum

- ✓ Redefine Positive video resources meet Washington State’s HIV and Sexual Health requirements as outlined in the AIDS Omnibus Act, which mandates that HIV/AIDS prevention education take place every year beginning in 5th grade, and the requirements of the Healthy Youth Act.
- ✓ Redefine resources also align with Washington State’s KNOW HIV/STD Prevention Curriculum (<https://www.k12.wa.us/HIVSexualHealth/KNOW.aspx>)
- ✓ All our materials have been certified by Washington’s Department of Health (DOH) as medically accurate.
- ✓ For information about Washington state’s HIV/AIDS Prevention Education Requirements from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, please visit <https://www.k12.wa.us/HIVSexualHealth/PreventionEdRequirements.aspx>.
- ✓ For more information about Redefine Positive or to download more video resources, please visit www.redefinepositive.com.

Teacher's Guide

Teacher Letter

Dear Teacher,

You are a Super Hero. Thank you for what you do.

Redefine Positive recognizes and applauds the influence you are having on your students and their families.

Redefine Positive video resources are designed to support you in your efforts to educate the next generation about HIV/AIDS. We understand that YOU are the ultimate educator, you are the one your students trust and will talk to about their fears, questions, or concerns. Consider us your partner. Together, we can help prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS and can combat the devastating stigma still associated with the disease.

Redefine Positive provides video resources designed to pave the way for a rich discussion in your classroom. Redefine is here to support you. We are committed to providing you with the most up to date, relevant information about HIV/AIDS education, so please check our website regularly for updates.

We have provided a detailed discussion guide (available free of charge on our website) which includes a lesson plan that you can use in conjunction with our 5th grade video, "HIV and Me: Marissa's Story." **Please note that Redefine Positive video resources are designed to be used in conjunction with a comprehensive HIV and Sexual Health curriculum; specifically, they are designed to be utilized with Washington state's KNOW curriculum.**

We want your feedback about this 5th grade video resource. Because you are on the front lines of education, we invite your collaboration to make Redefine Positive resources more effective and relevant. Please email info@redefinepositive.com with your feedback.

Sincerely,

Jodie Howerton
Founder, Redefine Positive

Teacher Background Information

- ✓ **Teacher Action Item:** Review this background information before presenting your lesson(s) about HIV/AIDS. Thorough review of the facts below will prepare you for any student questions that may arise. Teachers are also encouraged to utilize resources provide by Washington state’s Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction at

HIV and AIDS at a Glance

1. Understanding the Difference between HIV and AIDS

It is important to note that HIV and AIDS are two very distinct health conditions. When a person is infected with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), it means that the virus has been detected in their body through a blood test. A person who has contracted HIV may not immediately feel sick. Untreated, HIV can eventually lead to an Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) diagnosis. AIDS is a life threatening condition that impacts the immune system’s ability to fight off illness. There are numerous medications to treat HIV, but currently there is no cure. There are many side effects related to HIV/AIDS medications, but with treatment, many HIV infected individuals can live a long, healthy life.

2. Sexual Health Education Philosophy and Alignment with Washington State KNOW Curriculum

Redefine Positive video resources and discussion guides are designed to be used in conjunction with Washington state’s KNOW Curriculum, a model resources created by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. The KNOW curriculum, and Redefine Positive, use the following information as a foundation for developing all instructional materials.

- ✓ **Teaching about Abstinence and Condom Use**

“Research shows that high quality sexual health education that includes information on abstinence and condoms prevents the spread of HIV and other STDs by delaying the onset of sexual activity, reducing the frequency of sexual activity, reducing the number of sexual partners, and increasing the use of condoms. The evidence shows that youth who receive education about both abstinence and condoms are NOT more likely to become sexually active, increase sexual activity, or experience negative sexual health outcomes.”¹

HIV Prevention Research

- ✓ “HIV prevention research instructs us to focus our efforts on beliefs, attitudes and skills. This approach is especially useful when working with elementary and middle school aged children as they are still in the process of forming their beliefs, attitudes and skills related to sexual health relationships. The vast majority of elementary and middle school students are not currently at risk for HIV, as they are not engaging in the most common behaviors for acquiring HIV, particularly vaginal, anal and oral sex, and injecting drugs. HIV education at this level develops beliefs, attitudes and skills that will help young people prevent HIV when they are older by not having sex, not injecting drugs, and using condoms when they do have sex.”

¹ KNOW Curriculum, Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

3. Basic Facts about HIV Transmission

Certain body fluids from an HIV-infected person can transmit HIV.

These body fluids are:

- ✓ Blood
- ✓ Semen
- ✓ Pre-seminal fluid
- ✓ Rectal fluids
- ✓ Vaginal fluids
- ✓ Breast milk

These body fluids must come into contact with a mucous membrane or damaged tissue or be directly injected into your bloodstream (by a needle or syringe) for transmission to possibly occur. Mucous membranes are the soft, moist areas just inside the openings to your body. They can be found inside the rectum, the vagina or the opening of the penis, and the mouth.

HIV is spread by having sex with someone who has HIV or through sharing needles or syringes with someone who has HIV. Sometimes, infant can contract HIV from their infected mother during childbirth.² A person cannot contract HIV through casual contact (hugging, kissing, holding hands, sharing a bathroom) or through coming in contact with urine or saliva.

4. HIV Incidence in the United States (2011)

According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the estimated incidence of HIV in the United States has remained stable in recent years, with approximately 50,000 new HIV infections per year. The CDC reports that in 2011, more than 1.1 million people in the United States were living with HIV infection and approximately 16% of those infected were unaware of their infection.³

5. AIDS Incidence in the United States

In 2011, the CDC reported that an estimated **32,052 people** in the United States were diagnosed with AIDS.⁴

6. HIV/AIDS Incidence Internationally

According to estimates by WHO and UNAIDS, **35 million people** were living with HIV globally at the end of 2013. That same year, some **2.1 million people** became newly infected, and **1.5 million** died of AIDS-related causes.⁵

7. Reducing Stigma

In the beginning of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, no one knew how HIV was spread or how contagious it might be. Fear and ignorance were powerful drivers for stigma and discrimination. People living

² AIDS.gov

³ Center for Disease Control

⁴ Center for Disease Control

⁵ World Health Organization

with HIV/AIDS lost their jobs, their homes, and even their friends and families. Despite our progress in understanding and treating HIV, stigma and discrimination continue to be serious issues for people living with HIV/AIDS across the globe.⁶

Redefine Positive video resources seek to provide non-fear based prevention education, create empathy and compassion for those living with HIV, and reduce the devastating stigma still associated with the disease.

⁶ WhiteHouse.gov

Learning Objectives

After watching “HIV and Me: Marissa’s Story,” and engaging in a teacher led discussion, 5th graders will understand the following concepts:

1. HIV is a life-threatening illness that can make a person very sick.
2. HIV stands for “Human Immunodeficiency Virus.”
3. HIV is hard to catch. You cannot catch HIV from shaking someone’s hand, hugging, kissing, sharing a bathroom, or from someone’s spit. HIV is not in tears, sweat, spit, or pee. You cannot catch HIV from a toilet seat or from an insect bite.
4. You do not have to be afraid of people who have HIV. You can hug them or play with them just like you would with anyone else.
5. Without proper treatment, HIV can cause AIDS. AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.”
6. All of us have an immune system that protects us from germs and sicknesses. Inside our bodies, we have white blood cells that attack germs so we can feel healthy. When a person has AIDS, it means that HIV has attacked their immune system and they have a hard time fighting off germs and illness.
7. If a person has HIV, the HIV virus is in their blood, semen, vaginal fluids, and breast milk.
8. People usually catch HIV from having sex or sharing needles for illegal drugs with a person who has HIV. Sometimes, if a pregnant woman has HIV, the baby can be born with HIV.
9. The good news is that HIV is really hard to get, and there are ways to keep yourself safe. Kids your age almost never catch HIV, but it’s important to know how to keep yourself healthy as you get older.
10. People can find out if they have HIV by taking a simple blood test.
11. There are medications that can help a person who has HIV live a long, healthy life. But, there is no cure for HIV. A person with HIV will need to take medicine for their entire life.
12. It is important to treat people with HIV kindly, just like you would treat anyone else.

Suggested Lesson Plan

1. KWL Learning Activity

A KWL Chart is a graphic organizer designed to help frame a class discussion. The chart has three columns – a “what I know column (K),” a “what I want to know column (W),” and a “what I learned column (L).” Before showing the video to the class, you will lead a class brainstorm about what students think they already know about HIV and AIDS and what they want to know. Do not correct any initial misinformation. After the first two columns are complete, show “HIV and Me: Marissa’s Story.”

When the class has finished watching the video, you will go back through the K and L columns and correct any initial misinformation. Lastly, you will complete the L column with the class and reflect on what the class learned. To prompt responses about concepts learned, use the following discussion questions:

- ✓ How did Marissa’s story make you feel?
- ✓ Do you have any other questions about HIV? Was there anything you didn’t understand?
- ✓ Before Marissa learned about HIV, she felt afraid. Why do you think she felt that way?
- ✓ How did Marissa feel at the end of the video? How did you feel at the end of the video?
- ✓ Let’s talk about bodily fluids. What did we learn about how a person contracts HIV?
- ✓ Based on the video, what are some ways we can protect ourselves from HIV?
- ✓ Let’s talk about Marissa’s mom. If you were to meet her, how do you think we should treat her?
- ✓ How does a person know if they have HIV? How can they find out?

Quick Reference Lesson Outline

1. Introduce topic of HIV/AIDS and establish respectful ground rules
2. Pass out the Redefine Positive KWL worksheet.
3. Draw KWL chart on the board or project it using a document camera.
4. Introduce the topic of HIV/AIDS.
5. Complete K and W sections on board or camera while students copy information onto their own worksheet.
6. Show video.
7. Correct initial misinformation in K column by crossing out statements.
8. Check to see if student questions in the W column were answered by the video. Write answers in the L column.
9. Using discussion questions as a guide, complete L section of chart to document additional concepts students learned.

2. Homework Assignment

Have students take home the parent/guardian letter that describes both the video and the KWL learning activity.

Students should discuss the information in the L column of their KWL chart with a parent, guardian, or trusted adult and have them sign on the signature line to demonstrate that they have both read the parent letter and engaged in a discussion with the student.

Parent Letter

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Trusted Adults,

Today in class, your student learned about HIV and AIDS. S/he watched a video entitled, “HIV and Me: Marissa’s Story,” in class and participated in a discussion led by the classroom teacher. The video teaches facts about prevention and transmission, and helps reduce the devastating stigma still associated with the disease. Your student learned the following today:

1. HIV is a life-threatening illness that can make a person very sick.
2. HIV stands for “Human Immunodeficiency Virus.”
3. HIV is hard to catch. You cannot catch HIV from shaking someone’s hand, hugging, kissing, sharing a bathroom, or from someone’s spit. HIV is not in tears, sweat, spit, or pee. You cannot catch HIV from a toilet seat or from an insect bite.
4. You do not have to be afraid of people who have HIV. You can hug them or play with them just like you would with anyone else.
5. Without proper treatment, HIV can cause AIDS. AIDS stands for Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.”
6. All of us have an immune system that protects us from germs and sicknesses. Inside our bodies, we have white blood cells that attack germs so we can feel healthy. When a person has AIDS, it means that HIV has attacked their immune system and they have a hard time fighting off germs and illness.
7. If a person has HIV, the HIV virus is in their blood, semen, vaginal fluids, and breast milk.
8. People usually catch HIV from having sex or sharing needles for illegal drugs with a person who has HIV. Sometimes, if a pregnant woman has HIV, the baby can be born with HIV.
9. The good news is that HIV is really hard to get, and there are ways to keep yourself safe. Kids your age almost never catch HIV, but it’s important to know how to keep yourself healthy as you get older.
10. People can find out if they have HIV by taking a simple blood test.
11. There are medications that can help a person who has HIV live a long, healthy life. But, there is no cure for HIV. A person with HIV will need to take medicine for their entire life.
12. It is important to treat people with HIV kindly, just like you would treat anyone else.

Your student also wrote down critical points of the class discussion today. Please discuss these notes with your student and sign your name on the signature line. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your child’s classroom teacher. You can also find additional resources at www.redefinepositive.com and www.k12.wa.us/HIVSexualhealth.

Sincerely,

The Redefine Positive Team