

Grandmothers' Clubs

Caring for the caregivers



Journey of Hope Series #5 of 6



By giving support to the Grandmothers, AAIM is helping to keep the orphans at home...!!!

(So that they can grow-up in a better environment)

1. Why have a club for Grandmothers?

In many communities, Grandmothers are the foundation around which the family revolves. They are a source of wisdom and experience. With the dramatic increase of HIV and AIDS which has its biggest impact on people between the ages of about 20 to 40, many young parents have become ill, and as a result, grandmothers have had to assume the role of a parent to their grandchildren and of care-givers for their sick sons and daughters.

At the time of their lives in which these grandmothers would traditionally have expected to enjoy the care and support of their children, they have instead become the family's primary caregiver and breadwinner.

Grandmothers need to share their feelings, concerns, heavy burdens, and needs with the members of a support group. It is very important that they can get physical, emotional, and spiritual support.

2. What is a Grandmothers' Club?

A Grandmothers' Club is a support group established to meet the needs of the Grandmothers or senior women and men of a community; the aim of the club is to:

- Be a place of care and love in which grandmothers can experience Christian love and support,
- Be a place where grandmothers can share common challenging experiences,
- Facilitate the companionship and support of peers
- Provide education on HIV and AIDS and general matters of interest to care givers
- Share wisdom and practical advice on how to deal with common challenges.



Grandmothers are Hard Workers



3. What do grandmothers need to know about HIV and AIDS, and about caring for a person living with that condition?

HIV and AIDS is a relatively new disease that was unknown during the youth of many grandmothers. As a result there are many aspects of the disease, and about how to care for an infected person, that Grandmothers need information about, and training on:

HIV TRANSMISSION:

- Grandmothers need to know how to take care of themselves.
- How the virus is transmitted and how to handle contaminated materials - Some grandmothers get infected because they handle blood or body fluids without gloves.

HOW TO HANDLE OPPORTUNISTIC INFECTIONS:

- How to recognize the most common health problems of people infected with HIV, including opportunistic infections,
- How to look out for certain changes in the condition of the patient. Be aware when to seek professional medical help.

HOME BASED CARE:

- General care principles that can be applied to alleviate and assist the suffering at home,
- How to prevent and treat symptoms at home with only the most basic and inexpensive, commonly available resources.

ADHERENCE TO THE ANTI-RETROVIRAL (ARV) TREATMENT:

- Grandmothers can play a very important role in helping their relatives to be faithful in taking their ARV treatment.

NUTRITION:

- The importance of, and what constitutes, good nutrition
- How to use the available resources to provide a balanced and nutritious diet.



Grandmothers are Full of Wisdom



Adventist AIDS International Ministry

This material was designed to give support and empower the grandmothers in order to fight the HIV epidemic. Remember that the more we talk about it, the more awareness is created and higher levels of prevention are achieved. Help fight silence and stigma on HIV and AIDS! Titles of Journey of Hope Series: #1) HIV/AIDS - General Information, #2) HIV Epidemic - How to organize my church, #3) HIV & AIDS - How can I help, #4) The Youth and HIV/AIDS, #5) HIV/AIDS Grandmothers Clubs, and #6) Counseling on HIV/AIDS.

A Service to the Community from the Seventh-day Adventist Church

www.aidsministry.com

Grandmothers' Clubs



4. What other needs do Grandmothers have?

Grandmothers need advice on:

PARENTING GRANDCHILDREN:

- We live in a rapidly changing world in which the techniques they used for raising their own children, may no longer work when parenting their grandchildren and orphans in the present times.

INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES:

- How to supplement the often meagre family income,
- How to develop Income Generating Activities (IGAs), like poultry raising, sewing, arts and crafts, baking, food gardens, etc.

FOOD GARDENS:

- How to develop and cultivate a food garden. Grandchildren can get involved in these projects.
- Which vegetables are more nutritious.
- How food gardens can become a source of income.

Most importantly, Grandmothers need the love and support of a caring Church Family



Grandmothers are Prayer Warriors

5. Why should my church start a Grandmothers' Club?

- By caring for the caregivers we are offering support to one of the most important resources a community has, their children...!!!
- By giving support to the Grandmothers, we are helping to keep the orphans at home...!!! In doing so, they can grow-up in a better environment.
- By assisting and supporting Grandmothers we are providing effective care for many of the HIV infected and affected.

Grandmothers are Loving and Caring People

6. How do I start a Grandmothers' Club?

- By identifying the grandmothers with orphans, and their needs,
- By sensitizing and motivating this group about the benefits of organizing a "club",
- By requesting help and support from the church Pastor or Elder,

7. Where should I set-up the Grandmothers' Club?

- Permission is needed to use the Church premises, or any other suitable building, at least once a week as a venue.
- Any available hall or meeting place is a suitable venue in which to start a Grandmothers' Club.



8. Who should be in charge of and run the Grandmothers' Club?

The club could be run by an HIV/AIDS coordinator, or current or former Women's Ministry director, or any person from the community who is willing to lead out.

9. Who can become a member of the Grandmothers' Club?

Elderly women from the church and surrounding community (not just church members) should be invited to become members of the club. Younger women who relate well to the older women should also be encouraged to support the club.

10. What resources are available to help us plan and launch a successful Grandmothers' Club?

Make an assessment of the human and material resources available in your church. Look for people that may be interested in helping the elderly. Involve the youth!!! AAIM has the following training materials that are available to assist in establishing a Grandmothers Club:

- Educational materials on HIV/AIDS (AAIM Journey of Hope Series # 1).
- Educational materials on How to organize a Support Group (AAIM Journey of Hope Series # 2).
- Educational materials on Healthy Lifestyle, particularly Nutrition for people living with HIV and AIDS (AAIM Journey of Hope Series # 7)
- Educational materials on Income Generating Activities and Food Gardens (AAIM DVDs and Posters)
- Seeds and tools or equipments (Provided by AAIM for selected programs)

What additional resources do you have?

Do not forget to present your plan to the congregation and get their ideas and participation. Request their support.



Grandmothers are Care-givers

I will be your God through all your lifetime, yes, even when your hair is white with age. I made you and I will care for you. I will carry you along and be your Savior. Isaiah 46: 4