

**WORDS
MATTER.**

CHOOSE CAREFULLY.

Words have power.

We need to talk about HIV--but **we need to do it in a way that protects and respects the humanity and dignity of those living with HIV.** Language that implies judgment or shame fuels stigma, which kills people--and keeps the epidemic alive.

Replace these



HIV-infected
[person, parent, etc.]

HIV or AIDS patient

infected; infect [with HIV]

died of AIDS

full-blown AIDS

risky or unprotected sex

...with these



[person, parent, etc.]
living with HIV

[person, parent, etc.]
living with HIV

diagnosed with HIV;
contracted HIV; acquired HIV;
transmit HIV

**died of AIDS-related
complications**

*This is not a medical condition.
Use AIDS or stage 3 HIV.*

*Be specific: e.g., **condomless**
sex. See back of card for more*



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EDUCATION REDUCES DISCRIMINATION.

We need to talk about HIV--but **we need to do it in a way that educates and encourages understanding.** When talking or writing about HIV-related issues or people living with HIV, consider sharing some of these facts.

Share these facts:

- A person living with HIV who takes their antiretroviral medications as prescribed can reduce the amount of virus in their blood to an undetectable level, allowing them to live a normal, healthy life.
- **Undetectable=untransmittable:** a person who maintains an undetectable viral load at least 6 months **cannot transmit** the virus to sexual partners, even without condoms. (For more, see uequalsu.org)
- Though 35 states criminalize people living with HIV for consensual sexual activities, **criminalization has never been shown to be effective at preventing transmission.** In fact, research shows it to be counterproductive to efforts to end the epidemic, fueling stigma and discouraging testing, treatment, and disclosure.
- Success at reducing new transmissions has been achieved by improving access to care and services needed to stay in care (like housing, mental health, transportation, etc.); by engaging people living with HIV in leadership roles in efforts to end the epidemic; and by addressing factors that make people vulnerable to HIV, like poverty, racism, transphobia, homophobia, and discrimination.

Learn more at pwn-usa.org



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