



Thabo's story

Thabo, aged nine, found out he was HIV-positive a couple of years ago. Following a referral from the clinic to Sentebale's clubs, he has now been to three of the Saturday clubs and recently attended the five-day winter camp for children living with HIV.

His mother said: "Before participating in club and going to camp, Thabo was very reserved and would not play with other children in the village or at school, and he was even reserved at home. When he went for check-ups at the clinic, he refused to talk to the staff and was a sad, lonely boy.

"Following camp, however, I noticed a big change in Thabo. He began to play and laugh with children in the village, share stories at home, and he has started to open up and be happier. I'm so relieved to see this difference in my son."

Staff at club said: "There has been a big change in Thabo. He now participates cheerfully in activities and asks questions."

“ I have realised that I have people around me who can help me with worries that I have. Thank you.” THABO

Support for children living with HIV to live healthy and confident lives

NETWORK CLUBS & CAMPS FOR CHILDREN & ADOLESCENTS LIVING WITH HIV

Sentebale runs week-long camps and monthly network clubs at local healthcare clinics across Lesotho, to give children living with HIV the knowledge and the tools that they need to live physically and emotionally healthy lives. Sentebale seeks to reduce the spread of HIV and AIDS through education and fostering child-to-child communication.

Key statistics

- HIV is the number one cause of death in 10-19-year-olds in Africa.^{1*}
- The number of adolescents dying is increasing, while the numbers of HIV-related deaths are decreasing for all other age groups.²
- Lesotho has the second-highest prevalence rate of HIV in the world.³
- Only 30% of the 21,000 10-19-year-olds believed to be living with HIV are accessing medication.⁴
- Stigma and discrimination remain the biggest barriers to children and young people accessing care.⁵

Programme activities

- Eight weeks of camp were held, delivering psychosocial support to nearly 500 children and adolescents.
- During the year, 27 new network clubs were established, bringing the total to 45 clubs. Average monthly attendance at clubs doubled from 713 children to 1,450 children each month.
- An outreach specialist was recruited to increase the number of children and young people being tested for HIV and ensure they accessed treatment.
- By the year end, 5,194 nine to 18-year-olds were tested for HIV/AIDS in three districts: Thaba Tseka, Qacha's Nek and Leribe. Of those tested, 62% were girls. Of the young people who tested HIV-positive, all were referred to Sentebale network clubs.

Achievements

- Network clubs and camps delivered more than 60,000 hours of psychosocial support by 31st August 2015. This was a 30% increase on the previous year and was a result of the number of network clubs more than doubling during the year.
- Girls account for 58% of all adolescents attending the network clubs.
- Of the children who had attended network clubs for a significant length of time, 78% were able to describe HIV accurately, in comparison with the 6% of children who were new to clubs.

Challenges to be addressed

- Working with the clinics to ensure they capture the clinical data of an individual child to deliver effective monitoring and evaluation.
- Following the scale-up of children attending clubs and volunteers required to run the clubs, more regional volunteer training on psychosocial support will be delivered to improve volunteers' principles and approaches to psychosocial support in clubs.

* all footnotes can be found on page 53.