

## 5 - Actions

Think about creative ways to take action..... Here are some ideas to get you started!!!

Also think about how you can link events with HIV/AIDS issues

- Exhibits/Displays (photos, personal stories, art etc)
- Activities focussed around World AIDS day
- Film nights/Documentary screenings
- Speakers
- Conference/Debate
- Voluntary work with community groups
- Talks/other activities at local schools on HIV/AIDS awareness
- Demonstration/March/Die-in
- Fundraising events e.g. Africa Jam music nights, food & drink evening
- Poster campaign
- Awareness raising stall with leaflets, posters, and petitions.
- Motion to your student union
- Petition, e-petition and e-postcards (make full use of the power of e-mail and the internet)
- Quiz
- Sign-in (have lots of postcards and petitions to sign in one go)
- Street theatre or a production at a local venue
- Candlelit vigil
- Write to your MP, or go and see them when they have local question & answer sessions



### THINGS TO CONSIDER FIRST:

- 1) How much **time and resources** do you have available-if you are a very small group, it's impractical to plan huge events!!
- 2) What **issue** will the action focus on?
- 3) **Who** will you be targeting with the action?
- 4) What's the **best place and time** for the action? (Hint: for example, lunchtimes between lectures)
- 5) How can you attract the **media** to your action?

### NEXT, THINK ABOUT THE FOLLOWING, AS YOU PLAN YOUR ACTION:

- **The law** - do you need University/police permission?
- **Banners and other props**- what do you need, plan ahead for when you make them?
- **Media** – send news releases out well in advance. Try to have a good photo opportunity!
- **Publicity** – distribute leaflets and posters - use email and ask your contacts to pass on information to other email lists.
- **After the action** think about what aspects went well and what you could have improved!

### EXAMPLES OF PLANNING ACTIONS

#### ◆ Organising A Stall

- **Stalls are a very effective way of taking action!**
- **Get permission** for your stall from the Student's Union and book the time and place.

- **Choose a location** where lots of people will be passing– e.g. outside the Union café or shop.
- **Divide up the responsibility of manning the stall.** It might be more effective use of your time and resources to have the stall over a shorter time period e.g. lunchtime than to spread it out over a whole day.
- **Have things to draw people to your stall** e.g. free sweets or chocolate!
- **Publicise the stall** using posters and emails.

#### ◆ **Setting Up your Stall**

- **Make and hang up a large, clear banner.** Think about the wording carefully so it's clear what your message is.
- **Gather together everything you will need** - pens, blue tac, scissors, drawing pins, marker pens and a signup sheet so people can join your email list.
- **Involve people**– have an action for them to do e.g. sign a postcard and provide a 'post-box'.
- **Move around** in front of your stall and stand up so that it's easier to interact with people.
- **Be prepared for people to ignore you** – move onto the next person.
- **Stickers are useful advertising** for your stall, so it's worth handing them out!

#### ◆ **Organising a Speed-Dating Evening**

- **Organise a committee** and allocate roles – e.g. in charge of drink, decoration, music and booking room and tables.
- **Book a room** – try the Union, you may need to book a long time in advance.
- **Decorate the room** – try dying sheets red to decorate the room, set up tables, chairs and candles, borrow wine glasses etc from the union if possible.
- **Book a DJ and lighting**
- **Come up with a schedule** – try having dates around 2 ½ to 3 minutes long.
- **Advertise** (see the publicity section of this guide) – aim to attract as many people as the room can accommodate – around 70 to 150 people.
- **Incorporate a theme** e.g. safer sex literature on the tables, free condoms and set up a society stall in the room too. Make it clear where the proceeds will go.
- **Materials needed** – things to think about include a DJ and lights, a mike to tell everyone the plan, a whistle to mark the end of each session, score cards, tablecloths, candles in wine bottles, chairs and tables.
- **Think about the costs involved** – e.g. Sheets, candles, wine, hire of DJ equipment, printing for publicity, nibbles, tablecloths etc etc. Try to minimise costs by obtaining things from the Union and mates.
- **Print and sell tickets**
- Find an outgoing member of the society to **host** the evening

### Some Advice from Bristol Stop Aids Society, who ran a speed dating night in 2003:

Once we had set up the whole thing and new what to do, it was easy to run. We initially wanted two sessions, one at 7 and one at 9 but people were reluctant to come to 7 pm one, as seemed a bit early. We were limited to room size of 70 ish people, and about 10 extras did turn up on the door. So we only held a 9pm one. In retrospect it took everyone 45 mins to get their name in and turn up and get seated, so ended up being a bit of a rush. I reckon it would be better to have it in a much bigger venue, say 150 at least, and get everyone to turn up for 7.30. That way you'd actually start about 8.30ish. Once it was got going it was fine. A longer session means everyone could have a 20 min break to the bar. We all ended up in a club, which gave potential for everyone to meet up with their dates. We got people to go round halls promoting the event. We had ordered t-shirts for organisers to wear, with the stop aids logo on the front breast, then on the back the speedating logo and "fancy a quickie...?", but the company went bust so we never got them. More publicity and teaser campaigns would have been good, and if we made the venue much bigger, then profits would be greater.

#### ◆ Organise a Club Night with other Societies

- **Approach other societies** (e.g. MEDSIN, UNYSA, P&P) and form a club night committee. It is, of course, also possible to organise a club night on your own.
- **Find and book a venue** – try to get a special deal (free?) by stressing the importance of your campaign and also highlighting the profit the club will make from your night. Ideally you could take the money from the door and the club will get money from the bar, though usually you will be asked for a deposit to guarantee you bring in a certain number of people. Also see if it is possible to organise drinks promotions to entice the students in! Remember to run your ideas for the night passed the venue manager, so you don't end up organising something impossible.
- **Find and book DJs/Bands** for the night – ask around, as there are often students willing to perform for a good cause.
- **Negotiate lighting equipment** etc – will the club provide it? Or the DJ/band? Do you need to organise it?
- **Organise a rota for the door** – people to collect tickets or money. There should be enough members to have at least 2 people on the door at all times, and keep the slots short so that everyone can enjoy the night too. Clarify whether you will have to provide bouncers, or whether the club can.
- **Design and print tickets and posters/leaflets** - think about including include the name, venue, date and time of the event, the price and any drinks promotions as well as details of the societies organising the event and information on where profits will go.
- **Publicise the event heavily** – leaflets, posters, t-shirts, joint emailing lists etc. See the publicity section of this guide for more advice.
- **Sell tickets** – hit the Union and halls of residence, set up a stall at lunchtimes, sell them at society meetings and also sell them on the door if possible.
- **Set up stalls at the event to publicise the societies** – make sure you have the facility to collect more names and emails and perhaps produce small leaflets with your society details on for people to take away. Make the stall big and eye-catching, but it will probably have to be fireproof as well for the clubs safety regulations (easily done with fire-proofing spray).
- **Sell t-shirts and ribbons/Give out condoms/Have a donations box** to make the most of drunken students!

- Count and divide the money between the organising societies

Remember that events like these can serve a dual purpose: use them both to publicise and promote your society and the campaign as well as to raise money.

## Fundraising

- **Think about different ways to fundraise** – for example collecting money at a comedy night or linking up with other societies to organise a large event e.g. Africa Jams. See if you can hire a venue at your Student Union for a reduced rate.
- **Simple ideas can work well**, such as a pub quiz- if each team pays £10 and you pick a busy night in your Union bar.
- **Don't miss the chance to raise awareness at your events-** use the Student Stop Aids Societies logo on your posters and have information and posters at the venue with more details about the Campaign.
- **Remember to publicise your fundraising event really well.**