

**Learning about
living with HIV**



This leaflet will help you learn more about living with HIV and how you might feel inside.

What you need to know

You need to know that you can be healthy and happy. Medicine can help you keep the HIV virus asleep in your body and keep your immune system active.

Feelings

Finding out you have HIV can make you feel lots of different things. Whatever you feel it is normal and it is OK.

Feelings are how we deal with things that happen to us. It is important to share those feelings. Talking to people can help you get answers to your questions and support and love.

Some days you might wake up and feel great and some days you might feel very sad. Having friends around or talking to your family can make you feel better.



If your feelings get really bad and you are feeling upset or scared a lot of the time you need to tell someone who knows about your HIV status. This might be a family member, caregiver or your doctor or nurse.

LEARNING ABOUT LIVING WITH HIV IS LIKE A JOURNEY, WITH DIFFERENT STEPS ALONG THE WAY.

THERE ARE LOTS OF PEOPLE TO HELP YOU. YOU ARE NOT ALONE.





It is important for you to know your HIV status so you can get the support you need and the treatment that will keep you well.

The people who care for you might start to ask if you have any questions and how you would like to be cared for. This is to help you begin to make your own choices and it will help you learn how you can best look after yourself.

Asking questions

Your questions are important. There are no silly questions. There are lots of people who can answer your questions – your family, doctors or nurses, CATS and other peer supporters, who can tell you things about HIV and share their own experiences of living with HIV.

WE CAN SHARE OUR
EXPERIENCES OF
LIVING WITH HIV
WITH YOU.



Feeling happy and confident

When you find out that you are living with HIV you might not always feel good. Give yourself time, and make sure you have good people around you to talk to.

There are lots of people to support you and to talk to you about how you feel. They can check your health and help you to go to a support group or meet other children living with HIV.

Remember, you are not alone, there are other children your age living with HIV. You might find it helpful to talk to someone else who may have experienced similar feelings and who may have helpful things to share with you. Ask your CATS or peer supporter or doctor about this.


MEETING OTHER
CHILDREN LIKE ME
HAS MADE ME FEEL
SO MUCH BETTER.



Telling others

As you learn more about living with HIV there might be people you would like to share your HIV status with. Talk to your family about who to share with and when might be the right time.

When we tell someone it can make us feel supported but sometimes telling other people can lead them to saying unkind things. It is important that you get support from the people that you tell, so discuss with your family, caregivers or doctor first. They can help you understand who should know about your HIV and who you can talk to. They can also help you to think about what information is important to keep private.



REMEMBER, YOUR
HIV STATUS IS PRIVATE,
AND YOU DO NOT HAVE
TO SHARE IT WITH
ANYONE.

I WON'T TELL
ANYONE!