

Words of Wisdom

.....he must be able to manage his own family well and make his children obey him with all respect. For if a man does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of the church of God
I Timothy 3:4-5



Hello, cute baby!



Make every baby you have a planned and wanted baby. When you marry, delay your first pregnancy by one year. Then space each birth at least three years apart. Postpone getting pregnant until you are over 20. This is a message for boys as well as girls!

Family planning fights poverty

In Uganda, the population is growing so fast that the country cannot build enough schools or provide enough basic services.

For every classroom that is built, another one is needed. Classrooms are filled up as fast as they are built. Where are we heading with such fast population growth?

Poverty

Today large families are part of the poverty picture. Having many children almost always makes families poorer.

In Uganda poor families have on average 8.5 children. The most prosperous families have on average four children.

When children are many, poverty is passed down to the next generation. Poverty becomes a way of life and not a temporary problem.

Missing our targets

Just like a person has plans, Uganda as a country has plans. But population growth is disrupting them and making us miss our targets. Family planning is the personal



responsibility of all of us. In 2006 the Ministry of Health is re-launching family planning. The Ministry wants: Fewer girls to give birth while they are under the

age of 20. More adolescents to postpone sex until marriage. All sexually-active adolescents to increase use of contraception. Read this *Straight Talk* to learn more.

Do you blame other people for your life?

Listen how you talk. count how many times you use blaming phrases such as: "it's because mypeers make me do it..." or "It's the government's fault..."

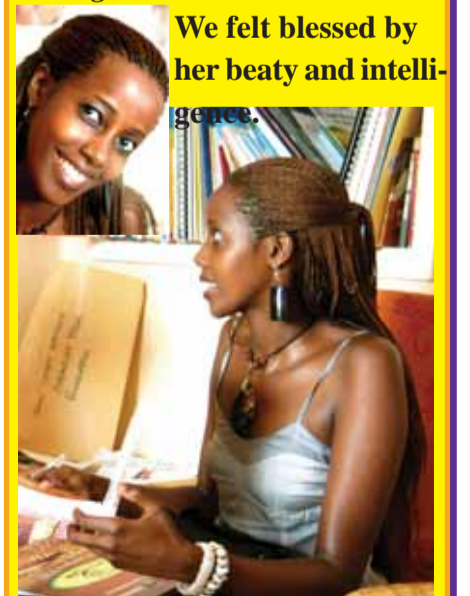
Stop worrying about and blaming things you have no control over or cannot change. These include your gender (sex), your tribe, home area, the weather, or the economic status of your parents.

concentrate on things you can control, such as your actions and attitude.

Focus your energy on things you can do something about.

Take personal responsibility for your life. You can turn setbacks into triumphs!

Be highly-effective young person. Miss Uganda visited *Straight Talk* in March.



We felt blessed by her beauty and intelligence.

Praise Akankwasa is studying mass communications at Makerere.

Write the story of your life



This newspaper was produced by two *Straight Talk* clubs in Sironko:

Muyembe Health Centre IV *Straight Talk* club and Nabbongo SS Youth *Straight Talk* Club. Their members were "journalists for a day".

They wrote their stories and did peer interviews. They also asked questions. Can you answer them? See page 4

Want to be a Journalist for a Day? This is a project of Newspapers in Education. Write to *Straight Talk*, PO Box 22366, Kampala.

Fred Simitit, chair of the Nabbongo SS Youth ST Club, collects letters for *Khukanika Lubwula*, *Straight Talk*'s radio show in Lumasaba, on Open Gate at 730 pm every Saturday.

Land and school fees: the big issues for boys

Five wives, 16 children
My father has five wives and 16 children. We children are not comfortable. We have little land and we have not progressed with studies.

I am an S4 leaver. I intend to have four children by use of pills though I use condoms with my girlfriend. **J Vaya, 17, Nabongo SS, Sironko**

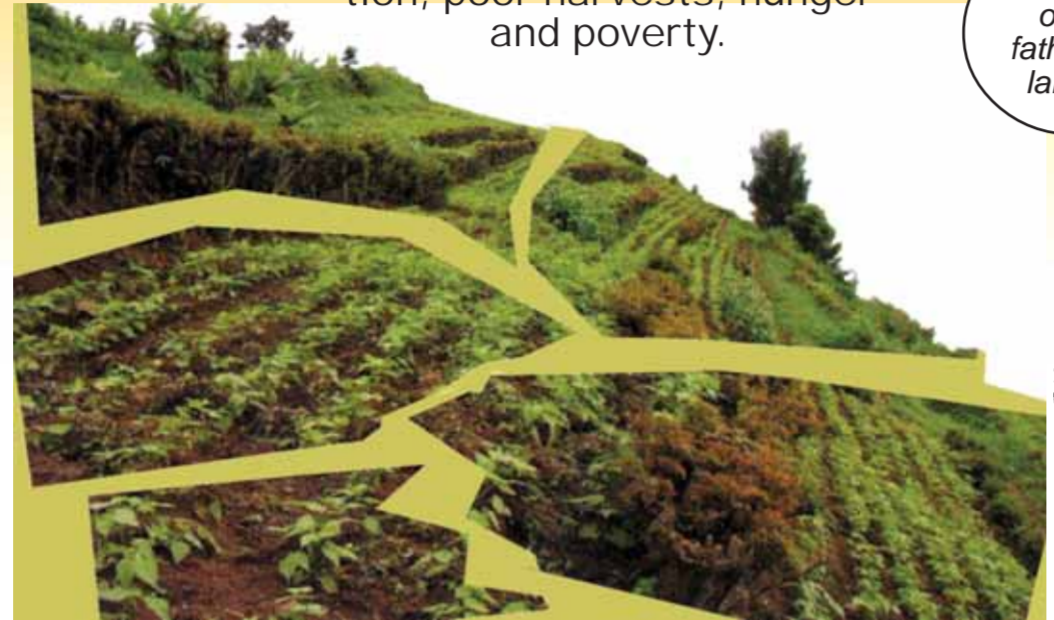
Eleven sons, no land
My father has 14 children. Because of this the 11 males do not have land for settlement. I like family planning. It teaches people how to space newborns. I want to have five children so that I can educate them.
B Watibini, Muyembe ST Club, Sironko

Four children, all schooling
My parents use family planning. We are four children. I am the eldest. My father has managed to pay for my school fees up to my O'level. My second brother is in S2 and my sisters are in primary. I want to have four children like my dad. I will space them every five years. My wife and I will use pills or condoms, or draw up a time table for sex. **L Kuranga, Nabongo SS.**

My parents had many children. The end

Sironko students talk about family planning

Land getting divided! Fragmentation of land causes soil depletion, poor harvests, hunger and poverty.



In Sironko, the girls did not talk about land. They worried about the danger of delivery, the health of babies and the atmosphere in the home.



JOURNALIST FOR A DAY Doreen was a journalist for the day. She is a member of the Muyembe Health Centre IV Straight Talk club.

Health, safety, love: the big issues for girls

Family planning keeps mothers young
Family planning helps mothers not to grow old at an early stage. It helps them to feed their children in a good way. **Justine Khatukha, 18, Muyembe HS**

Family planning increases love
Family planning helps parents to have more time to talk to their children. It can also reduce violence in the home by reducing stress. **Girl, 16, Muyembe HS**

Family planning is about producing healthy children.
Babies born close together usually do not grow so well because they do not get enough special care and attention.

Family planning will help us reduce the number of children dying before the age of five.
Boys and men need to support their partners to use family planning to stop girls and women dying.



Family planning prevents girls and women from dying in childbirth and unsafe abortion

Death in childbirth is very common in Uganda and is a big risk for females who have babies:
• too early (under the age of 20)
• too close together (less than three years apart)
• too many (the risks rise after you have had four)
• too late (after the age of 35).

Family planning will help us to reduce what doctors call *maternal mortality* -- mothers dying in pregnancy and childbirth. Uganda has one of the highest rates of mothers dying in the world -- a national tragedy.

Abortion is also very common in Uganda. One in every five pregnancies ends in abortion. Yet unsafe abortion is illegal and dangerous. Wouldn't it be better to prevent these unwanted pregnancies with family planning?



Family planning rests the womb



John Vaya is an S4 leaver from Nabongo SS. As a Straight Talk journalist for a day, he interviewed Midwife Gidudu.



Midwife Norah Gidudu is in charge of Muyembe Health Centre IV, Sironko, which provides a full range of family planning.

John: What is family planning?
Midwife: Family planning is the way one organizes him or herself to get the wanted number of children.

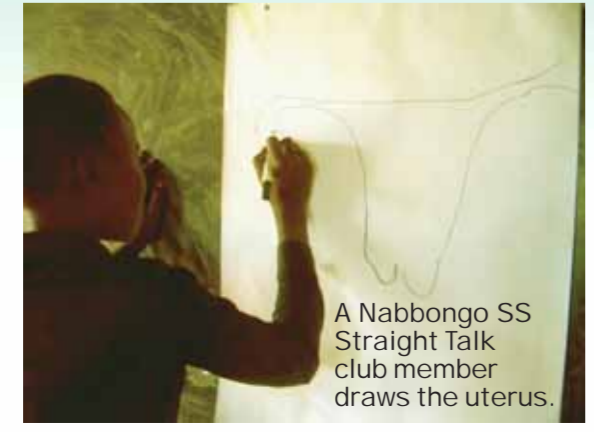
Why do we need it?
Family planning is essential for the mother as it rests the womb.

These days family planning is essential for parents. Expenditure becomes low. They are able to feed, educate and clothe their children. The children receive enough care and feel loved. They attend good schools. Many children make our economy poor. There is also poor family management due to the big number of children.

Which family planing should young couples use?
There are different methods of family planning available. The

couple needs to be counseled to make their own choice. However, a condom is a favourable choice because it prevents unwanted pregnancy and reduces HIV/STD transmission. Married people can also use condoms.

Any final comment?
Yes, family planning is safe. Having an unplanned pregnancy is risky.



A Nabongo SS Straight Talk club member draws the uterus.

Where to go for family planning



You can get quality family planning services everywhere. No *Straight Talker* can say that they did not know where to go for counselling on how to space their babies! Visit a government health centre, the Family Planning Association, Marie Stopes or the clinic of a private midwife.

Below is Irene Kituyi, *Straight Talk's* Lumasaba radio show presenter, with Tabitha, a private midwife in Kimaluli Butta, Manafa district. Friendly clinics often have a *Straight Talk* sign.



Give this baby a chance! Wait another three years before producing again. Get financially stable first and maintain your love!

Wrong myths: reject them!

Many people refuse to use family planning because they have been frightened by a rumour or myth. This is very sad.

FACT: Pills DO NOT burn the ovaries. Pills contain very little hormone and you become fertile within a day you stop taking them.

FACT: Family planning DOES NOT cause cancer or deformed babies. Family planning was invented in the 1950s. Cancer and deformed babies have existed since the beginning of mankind.

FACT: Family planning DOES NOT

make women barren. STDs are the main cause of inability to have a baby in women.

FACT: Family planning DOES NOT make women promiscuous. Sexual behaviour starts in the brain. Loose behaviour is a personal choice not a result of contraception.

FACT: Family planning DOES NOT cause women to lose interest in sex. Women on family planning are happier and calmer because they are not worried about over-producing. Married life, including sexual relations, usually improve because of less stress.

Basic facts on contraception

Barrier methods of family planning physically stop the sperm cell and the egg from meeting. The most used or known barrier method is condoms.

The male condom is a latex tube that fits over the erect penis and prevents the semen from entering the female. The female condom is made of strong flexible plastic and is inserted into the vagina to catch the semen.

Condoms are the only contraceptives that also protect against HIV/STDs. But they *only* prevent pregnancy and infection **when used correctly.**

Hormonal methods of contraception prevent the female from releasing an egg at ovulation. They include pills, injections and implants. They are highly effective at preventing pregnancy but do not prevent HIV/STDs.

Pills: the female must take one everyday at the same

time, such as in the evening. Fertility returns immediately that you miss a pill.

Injections contain more hormone so they prevent pregnancy for three months. They are the most popular family planning for women in Uganda! After you stop injections, fertility will return within a few months.

Implants prevent pregnancy for several years. The hormone is contained in small tubes that are placed under the skin of the woman's arm. She cannot feel the tubes and they cannot be seen. Implants are good for women who want a more long-acting method.

The IUD or coil is a small plastic loop and copper loop placed in the uterus by a doctor or midwife. It prevents pregnancy for up to 12 years.

Permanent methods such as tubal ligation or vasectomy are for older couples who have completed their families.

QUIZ: Violence in your life



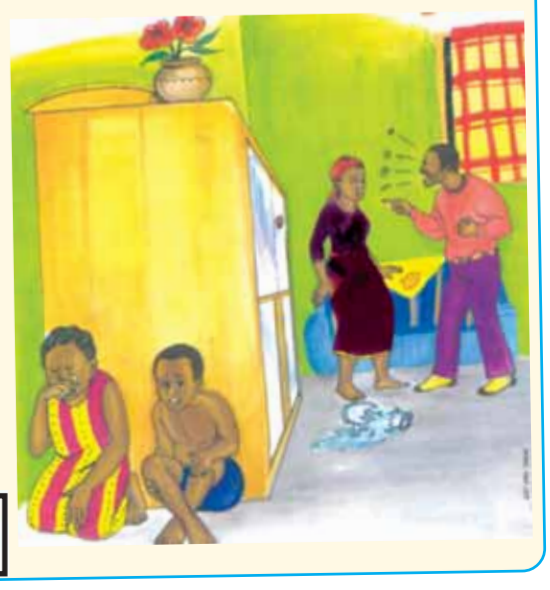
Has your boyfriend or girlfriend ever hit you? Does he or she ever call you bad names or insult you? Have you ever seen violence between your parents?

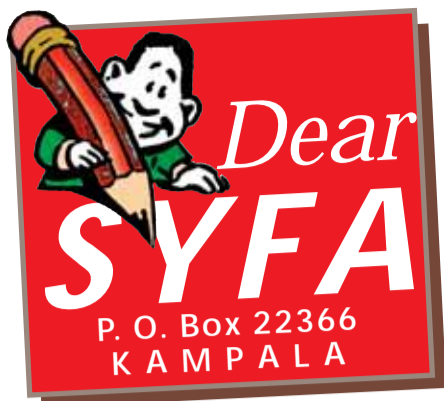
Have you ever experienced violence from other people like your parents, relatives, guardians or teachers? What happened? How did it make you feel? What can we do to stop it?

Write to *Straight Talk* about your experience of violence. Tell us about any of the questions above or just tell us about how you are feeling about any violence you may have experienced.

Straight Talk is running this QUIZ in conjunction with Raising Voices, an NGO working to prevent violence against children and in families.

Send your letters to ST Violence QUIZ, PO BOX 22366, Kampala, Uganda





I would like to be a veterinary doctor and I want to take science subjects, but I am not good at mathematics. What can I do?

Nsubuga A, 17, S4, Christ the King College Bulongo, Iganga

If you have interest in Mathematics, you can learn it. Practice and make friends who perform well in the subject can help you.

When I meet my former boyfriend, he tells me we should resume our relationship. It is three years since we parted. He is now working and I hear he is married. But he says he will marry me after my studies.

Asaba S, 19, S6, Central Sch, Hoima

He is not the right partner for you. He is married. Yet he appears to want to have multiple partners. This is not a good start. It will expose you to the risk of HIV/STDs. Also, if he can cheat on his wife with you, it is likely that he would not be faithful to you either. Get on with your life. Forget about him.

I have an uncle demanding for sex. I keep on telling him that I cannot do it, but he says my physical appearance attracts him. Whenever he gets me alone, he wants to rape me.

NN, 14, S2, Namutumba Central HS, Iganga

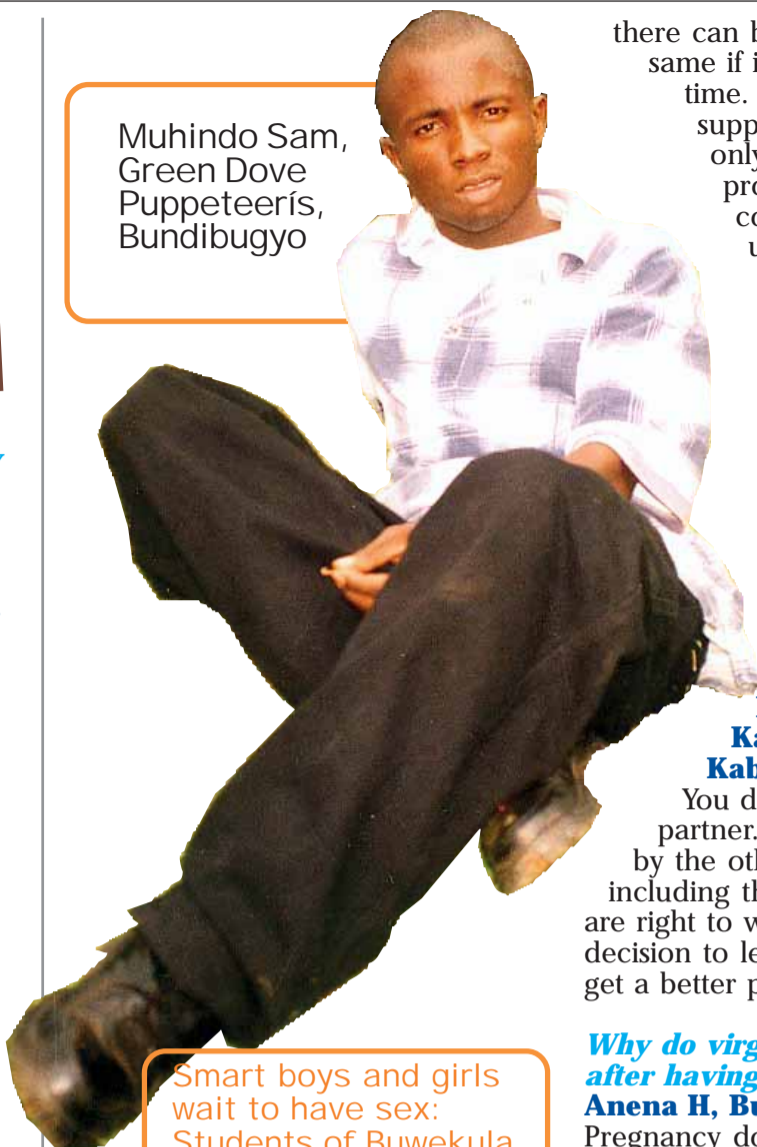
This is wrong, illegal and abusive. You must tell someone you trust -- an aunt, another uncle or a senior woman teacher/counselor at school. Absolutely avoid being alone with him. If this fails, report him to the family protection unit of the nearest police.

When I have sex, I feel a lot of pain. I also get pain in my periods.

AA, Bukedea SS, Kumi
You could have STDs. Visit the nearest qualified health centre for proper diagnosis and treatment. Are you using condoms? This situation is worrying. Talk it over with a counsellor.

What happens if someone uses a condom for more than one round?

Olobo J, 13, S1, Kalaki Township, Soroti
It stops protecting you against HIV/STDs/pregnancy. After one use, the condom has seminal and vaginal fluids on it, and



Muhindo Sam, Green Dove Puppeteerís, Bundibugyo

there can be exchange of the same if it is used a second time. A condom is supposed to be used only once. For proper protection, a new condom should be used for every round of sex.

I fell in love with a girl. We did not have sex, but my friend told me the girl has other lovers including an Arrow boy. I decided to leave her, but she still wants to continue with the relationship.

E Komakech, Kalaki SS, Kaberamaido

You do not trust your partner. You are worried by the other partners, including the Arrow boy. You are right to worry. Stand by your decision to leave her. You will get a better partner in future.

Why do virgins get pregnant after having sex just once?

Anena H, Bukoto HS
Pregnancy does not depend on the number of acts of sex. It

depends on whether sex happens when the sperm cell can meet the egg. Virgins can get pregnant the first time they have sex.

There is a boy aged 23, who wrote me a love letter and asked for sex. I refused. I am still young and want to continue with studies. But he is following me.

Busingye S, 17, S2, Nyakyera SS, Ntungamo
Continue saying 'NO'. Being assertive is a life skill. If he becomes violent, report him to your parents or teachers. He can go to prison if he has sex with you. You are under 18. And even if you were over 18, what is this young man offering you? Put your life and future first. Do you love him? Does he love you? Does he know you? Keep saying no.

Is it true that a girl who does not pull her labia will not produce?

Kauma M, S2, Bukooli College, Bugiri
No. Pulling the labia has nothing to do with childbearing. It is a tradition with no medical meaning. **Counsellor: Dr Alex Kakoraki**

Smart boys and girls wait to have sex: Students of Buwekula Islamic SS, Mubende



If a girl keeps her virginity until marriage, she earns herself respect and for her parents. **Nyanzi Irene, S4, Vice chairperson, ST Club, North College Sch**



Peer to peer

From page 1

Questions from Muyembe Health Centre IV and Nabbongo SS Youth Straight Talk clubs

- Discuss them in your club and invite a health worker to help.
- When you overuse condoms, do you become barren?
- Is it true that when you start sex when you are under ten you do not produce?
- How does sterility occur in people who have already started sperming?
- Is it true that when you are a virgin, you become watery?



Bird flu alert

Bird flu is not in Uganda! But it is important to know about it in case it comes.

Bird flu is a viral disease that kills domestic and wild birds. Restock your poultry houses, and keep enjoying chicken and eggs. They are very safe. But always do the following:

- Report any dead or sick birds to a veterinary officer.
- Change shoes and clothes and wash hands before and after working with poultry.
- Regularly clean where you keep your poultry: sweep away droppings daily.
- Avoid visiting other poultry farms.
- Cook poultry and eggs well before eating.

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