



Championing healthy relationships
and sexual wellbeing

You are the salt of the earth You are the light of the world let your light shine before others and glorify your Father in heaven

Salt and Light

September 2018

Trustees wanted

We are looking for Trustees to join the acet UK board and share their knowledge, expertise and experience. The board is responsible for the overall governance of the charity; its financial health; and for ensuring that our activities comply with our governing document and any relevant legislation. We are particularly keen to hear from people with a background in:

- Accountancy
- Fundraising
- Governance
- Human Resources

Board meetings take place five times a year and we encourage trustees to help represent acet UK at public events and to take an active part in promotional activities.

To discuss this opportunity further, please email Sarah at sarah@acet-uk.com to arrange an informal chat.

In early 2018, we took part in a consultation inviting views on the content of statutory relationships education for primary schools, and relationships and sex education (RSE) for secondary schools.

The recently published draft statutory guidance was then written, which the government is currently consulting on. Responses will help finalise the guidance before it is put before Parliament and finally published for use in schools.

The consultation specifically asks whether the content is age appropriate, and whether it will help young people have positive relationships and lead a healthy lifestyle. There are also questions about SEND, working with parents, and parents' right to withdraw their child from sex education.

Read our summary to find out what is included in the guidance, and how to take part in the consultation, at www.acet-uk.com/RSE_draft_guidance_summary.

acet UK 2018 conference

Friday 5th October 2018

10.30am-5.00pm

London Institute for Contemporary Christianity

At the acet UK conference this year, we will also be looking to the future of RSE: exploring how Christians can help young people face current and emerging challenges.

Join us for a day of learning, networking and empowerment for youth workers, youth pastors and other Christians who want to help young people navigate the cultural and personal pressures around relationships and sex.

Speakers include Rachel Gardner, founder of Romance Academy, and Dr Patrick Dixon, ACET founder and futurist speaker and author. Visit www.acet-uk.com/training to book.

Happy 30th birthday!

ACET was founded in 1988 by Dr Patrick Dixon, as a compassionate response to the HIV pandemic.

Working as a doctor, Patrick started to meet people who were dying from AIDS-related illnesses but were being treated with fear, ignorance and discrimination: isolated in hospital; or refused care at home or hospices.

Patrick took action and ACET was born: providing home care for HIV and AIDS patients in Greater London, and delivering an HIV prevention programme in schools. Soon home care and schools teams developed in other parts of the UK, and independent ACET teams were established in other countries.

Much has changed in 30 years. Thankfully, HIV is no longer the misunderstood virus it was in the 1980s; and anti-retroviral medication has become more advanced meaning that HIV is now a chronic manageable condition.



The ACET team in the early days!

ACET in this country is now known as acet UK, and our work encompasses relationships and sexual health in a wider sense. HIV stays an integral part of our Esteem education programme and has remained a focus for many of our international partners, as lack of HIV education and stigma still persist.

As we mark our 30th birthday, we would love you to send us your ACET stories and photos so we can share them in celebration and gratitude. Maybe you were involved in the original ACET home care team? Or visited one of the ACET international projects? Please send your stories to Rachael at info@acet-uk.com.

Belarus: changing attitudes

Through their education in schools and colleges, as well as talk shows and club meetings, ACET Belarus teaches young people about relationships and sexual health, HIV prevention, STIs, drugs and alcohol abuse.

They inspire young people to consider their future and life goals when making decisions about relationships and sex, instead of following their peers or acting on impulse.

In the first half of this year, ACET Belarus reached 14,916 young people, parents and teachers.

These testimonies from students at a local engineering and automobile service college illustrate the difference being made by ACET Belarus' work:



ACET Belarus' Yuri leading an education session

"When you refuse to have alcohol and cigarettes, you get rejected and called 'weak' or 'a girl.' Now it doesn't bother me, I defend my choice, and sometimes people agree with me." Vlad

"ACET has had such an influence on me. I changed my views on my personal life and started seeing girls not as sex objects but as something else." Danik

DR Congo: reaching children marginalized by deafness

ACET DRC's aim is to improve the sexual and reproductive health of young people, through educational sessions delivered in school and youth clubs, strengthened by 'listening centres' where students can seek further support on personal concerns they cannot discuss in a group. Teachers and chaplains are trained to deliver the education programme and to offer psychosocial support to vulnerable young people.

In the first half of 2018, ACET DRC educational sessions were carried out in 10 schools in Goma, reaching 1357 students. This was twice as many schools as initially planned: when the additional schools heard about ACET DRC's work, they asked to be involved, as their young people were in great need of such a programme.

To get a better understanding of the need in the 10 schools, an assessment was conducted to provide a picture

of the major challenges faced by students. This revealed that challenges included: early pregnancy and parenthood; abortion; ignorance and misconceptions about physiological changes during puberty; easy access to pornographic media at home and on smartphones; alcohol and drug abuse; sexual violence; STIs; HIV; and poor critical thinking skills.

A remarkable finding was that out of the 15 reported cases of early pregnancy, 13 had occurred in the 3 schools for the deaf (EPHATA). ACET DRC therefore targeted these 3 schools as a priority for education activities.

Each school has 2 educators and education sessions are delivered weekly. Topics include: relationships; human and sexual development; sexual health; gender based violence; pregnancy; STIs; HIV and AIDS; and life skills (communication, decision making, critical thinking, and dealing with peer pressure).



Frederic, carpentry teacher at EPHATA schools for the deaf

"The young people at EPHATA are marginalized by their own parents, family and community because of their communication difficulties. Our culture marginalizes the deaf. To be born deaf is like being born deprived of one's rights.

This leads to inferiority complex behaviour and internal wounds. In relation to sexual health, the deaf are sexually abused because they are unable to defend themselves. Cases of abortions and early pregnancies are multiplying. We have cases of STIs and some students are HIV positive.

We mentor young boys who have a lot of problems with insufficient information and guidance on sexual health and reproduction. They are often poorly regarded in society. They have psychological disorders and sometimes they are violent. Some are perpetrators of abuse but deny responsibility. We are confronted every day with many issues related to sexual and

reproductive health of young people, but often we do not have enough information and skills to deal with these challenges.

My presence at the ACET DRC training has been very beneficial because very often the deaf are ignored in these kinds of educational initiatives. I am pleased that other members of our community have also participated in the training.

I now have knowledge that will help me coach young people. We want to fight against these sexual health problems together; to value these young people born with communication problems; and also to promote healthy values by raising awareness about life skills."

Nigeria: Esteem kids clubs

Last November, we told you about CEO Sarah Smith's visit to Nigeria where she delivered our 4 day Esteem relationships and sex education training to our colleagues at ACET Nigeria. ACET Nigeria have since trained and resourced 52 volunteers, enabling them to deliver sessions to young people on self-esteem, puberty, healthy relationships, drug and alcohol awareness, prevention of STIs and HIV, teenage pregnancy, and internet safety.

Some of the trainees were already running ACET Nigeria kids' clubs so the training has added a new dimension to their interaction with and approach to the young peoples' education. The rest have been motivated to form and run kids' clubs.

Already, 12 new Esteem clubs have been formed with 311 young people meeting regularly for sexual health and relationships education. Additionally, the Anyigba team have delivered sessions to 508 young people in 5 churches and a Bible college and, in Jos, a pilot Esteem club programme has been started in Diye Starlet High School where 92 students meet every Tuesday across 4 clubs.

"In this Esteem training, I am encouraged because God made me wonderfully and beautifully. I also learnt about the teenage brain, reproduction, self-confidence, healthy self-esteem, and different learning styles. I thank God for this programme."

Typakaa, Esteem club facilitator



ACET Nigeria volunteers at an Esteem training course in Wannune



Michael 18

"I am encouraged to know that sex is worth waiting for. The Esteem club has persuaded me that sex is good but not a thing to be rushed into, especially at my age. It has helped me to aspire to impart this knowledge to younger ones in the future."

"ACET Nigeria is so unique, caring and loving. They discuss things that happen to us daily: how we feel as we grow up, the changes in our body, the way we relate with our friends, parents and other adults. This makes me know things that will help me build strong relationships, that will give me a good life, and to avoid regrets tomorrow in my health and relationships."

Melody, 13

Ukraine: healthy lifestyles

ACET Ukraine is working in a challenging context, with continued conflict in the east of the country and a strong cultural taboo in regards to talking about sex. This taboo is a legacy of the old Soviet rule when, as one teacher put it, "sex didn't exist."

In the first half of the year, 246 trained ACET Ukraine volunteers reached 13,015 young people across 79 cities, with their Healthy Youth University relationships and sex education programme. These lessons included the prevention of substance abuse and HIV, both of which continue to be hot topics in Ukraine. The number of people living with HIV has increased to 316,000; 50 people die of AIDS-related illnesses and 9 people are newly infected every day. Drug addiction in Ukraine is the highest in Europe, increasing annually by 7-11%.

Teachers and parents also benefitted from ACET Ukraine's work with 6,335 teachers and 2,866 parents receiving training during the 6 month period.



The Head of Pastoral Care at one school said, "I believe it is because of this co-operation between our school and ACET that none of the students are involved in crime and we don't see students smoking or addicted to alcohol. Through working with ACET, we have also seen a change in our teachers. We have learnt to have a personal approach to each child to meet their individual needs. We can't use a formula. This has been a revelation to me. We have seen the teachers apply this."

UK: parents' workshops

Our work with parents is an area that is growing. We have been asked to run a number of workshops over the past academic year, in partnership with churches, schools and a pregnancy crisis centre.

Alongside exploring topics such as child development and the teenage brain, the workshops also discuss the prevalence of social media use amongst young people, highlighting some of the messages about relationships and sex they may encounter online.

We help parents explore different approaches to having ongoing honest conversations with their children rather than focusing on delivering 'the talk'.

If you would like us to deliver a parent workshop at your church or school, please contact us at info@acet-uk.com.



One of our workshops for parents

"I will now be confident in having conversations with my daughter."

"This workshop has definitely widened my horizon and I got good resources to look at later on."

UK: educating Southwark

Another academic year has drawn to an end, and we look back on all the relationships and sex education sessions we ran with the young people of Southwark. It's been another amazing year spent with amazing young people!

1462 students from Year 7 right through to Year 12 attended at least one of our sessions. Sessions were run on a range of topics including friendships, self-esteem and body image, puberty, relationships and sex, HIV, STIs, and consent.

We continued to develop our Girls' Project over the year, including a new lesson entitled 'Consent and Intimacy', and we delivered sessions from our Boys' Project to positive response from students and teachers. Teachers expressed that the students engaged very well in the sessions and were encouraged to reflect on the ways they respond to different situations.



We also piloted a lesson called 'Worth it?' which explores intimacy and healthy personal boundaries, and aims to give students an understanding of the viewpoint of the other person in a relationship.

The feedback has been excellent: one PSHE coordinator felt we addressed an issue that has been a concern for many years and would hope to see the lesson transformed into a fully-fledged project. We shall be exploring further development of the project in the future.

"BEST LESSON EVER! I liked the demonstrations, inspiring speeches and that my confidence was boosted."
Year 8 student

"The session has made me see that every part of me is beautiful just the way it is."
Year 8 student

"These sessions allow young people to think about how their actions impact others."
Teaching Assistant

"All schools in Southwark will benefit from these sessions. The entire borough historically has problems in this area."
Head of House



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