

2011 DAY CAMP TRAINS YOUTH IN NUTRITION AND HEALTH

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One hundred and ten more Arusha Region students are now equipped with health and nutrition knowledge that can be passed on to peers, friends, and family.

During the 2011 HIV/AIDS, Health, and Life Skills Day Camp that takes place annually in Arusha Region secondary schools, students were equipped with knowledge about HIV/AIDS, reproductive health, nutrition, human rights, and life skills. This year, camp was held at Namanga Secondary School in Longido District.

Every June Global Service Corps-Tanzania (GSC-TZ) brings together college-bound Tanzanians and international volunteers to conduct a two-week long workshop that gives students knowledge about not only nutrition, HIV, and reproductive health, but also life skills. Unfortunately not all the students at the host school can attend the day camp; however, to ensure that the lessons learned during the camp are carried on to all students, 31 students also attended a week-long peer educator training workshop after the two-week day camp. This training will help them to start a health club at their school. The health clubs are charged with spreading the knowledge that peer educators learn on to other students and the community.

During camp, Tanzanian and volunteer instructors used interactive games and activities that are appealing to secondary students to teach the lessons. One of the main focuses of the camp is teaching good nutrition and hygiene. Other key focuses include life skills such as good communication, goal setting, values, and avoiding peer pressure. One volunteer class came up with the idea of using “Passports to a Good Life.” To provide students with a continuous memory of the lessons and what they learned, each student received a passport booklet and then a sticker for each life skill lesson they attended and participated in. In the end, those with completed passports received a reward.

At the end of the camp program volunteer instructor Brian O. encouraged his students to continue working hard in school and in life and to always believe in their abilities. “I also told them that they were all very special and would one day go on to do great things for their community and the world. I’m not sure how often they hear those words, but I hope they never forget them.”

In addition to learning about HIV/AIDS and life skills, students also learned about combating stigma and discrimination. A guest speaker, an HIV positive man from Arusha, visited the students and talked about what it is like to live with HIV in Tanzania. He provided encouragement that people infected with HIV can continue to live happy and productive lives.

This year marked the camp’s 11th anniversary and brought the total number of graduates to over 2,500 and number of schools participating to 32.



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