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**Holes in the Family: Exploring Black African Parents'
HIV Education to Young People in the Absence of
Extended Family in New Zealand**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Philosophy

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ABSTRACT

HIV and AIDS is a serious public health issue in New Zealand. As with other communities Black Africans may be exposed to HIV. There is a need to explore ways of reducing HIV exposure to this community. This study sought to generate information that could help in addressing the associated risk. Currently, such information is sparse in New Zealand scholarly work.

Black African parents who settled in New Zealand face challenges when communicating HIV and sexual health messages to young family members. This is because, in many African communities, it is taboo for parents to discuss sexual matters with their teenage children. It is the responsibility of extended family members, aunties and uncles. However, advancements in other information sources have challenged the relevance and place for uncles and aunties in the mentoring of young people around sexual topics in the Black African Diaspora. The researcher used secondary data sources and explored how parents are bridging this gap in their families.

The main findings from the present study showed that the dynamics in many African family structures have changed as a result of migration and settlement in New Zealand. There have been changes in values which have seen more young people taking up the host culture while a majority of the parents have retained their culture. The perception among some African community members that New Zealand is a low-risk country in terms of HIV transmission has contributed to complacency as regards adopting safer sexual behaviour. Parents are reluctant to have, and avoid, direct communication about sex with their children. Culture and religion have a strong influence on the Black African community beliefs around sex education. Sexual topics are still considered sensitive. African migrants bring strengths and resilience to New Zealand.

The recommendations from this research include the need for HIV and AIDS Health Promoters to explore ways of increasing their relationship with religious leaders and further research into ways to develop the skills and confidence of parents around sex education.

ABBREVIATIONS

ABD African Black Diaspora

MSM Men who have sex with Men

ECDC Centre for European Disease Control

NZAF New Zealand Aids Foundation

MELAA Middle Eastern, Latin American and African

HRC Health Research Council

HIV Human Immune Virus

AIDS Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

NZ New Zealand

KAP Knowledge Attitudes and Practices

UNAIDS United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS

UK United Kingdom

CDC Centre for Disease Control

ACB African Caribbean and Black

SSA Sub-Saharan Africa

US United States

USA United States of America

IRCA Immigration Reform Control ACT

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