

DANCE4LIFE RUSSIA



Key facts about Russia



One of the problems the Russian youth is facing, are growing epidemics of HIV, STIs and unintended pregnancies. Russia has the largest HIV epidemic in the Eastern European and Central Asian Region, with a total of 933.419 officially registered HIV positive people on May 1st, 2015. The daily infection rate is on the rise: in 2012 there was an average of 190 registered cases per day, in 2014 this number increased to 244 cases per day.

The main reason for the devastating state of the HIV epidemic in Russia is the highly ineffective governmental HIV/AIDS policy. Some facts:

- The Russian government doesn't invest in the prevention of HIV: it spends only 2 Eurocents (!) per person per year on prevention activities.
- There is no support nor trust for the NGO's who work in Russia to fill the gap in HIV education, prevention and for NGO's who work with vulnerable groups.
- There is no comprehensive sexuality school education and no systematic life-skills programs for children and adolescents.

There are no standards for prevention programs or sexual health services, activities of governmental structures and NGO's are uncoordinated. Parents, teachers and political leaders tend to have very conservative views on sexual education. This almost completely limits young peoples' access to reliable information on reproductive health, HIV and STIs. The State has adopted controversial and highly counter-productive laws.

For example:

The Law on Protecting Children from harmful Information. This law regulates appropriateness and delivery of information which contains mentions of sex or sexual relations to people under the age of 18. The law actually bans a lot of useful materials for those younger than 18. Furthermore, the 'Foreign Agents Law' keeps track of every NGO that receives funds from abroad and who are active in so-called 'political' activities. These NGO's are registered as an 'Agent of Foreign Influence'. This puts the different NGO's in a vulnerable position: they are closely watched for undertaking illegal activities. NGO's are often visited unannounced by police officers, searching their administration, asking questions about their activities. Both laws mentioned above limit the access of NGOs to schools and educational institutions. This makes it harder to reach the target audience. Many schools terminated their collaboration with NGO's afraid of reprimands from authorities and/or complaints from parents.

As a result, young people aged 15-24 in Russia have inconsistent knowledge on HIV/AIDS and SRHR; the condom use is low (only 63% of young people questioned say they use condoms), and the stigma related to HIV/AIDS and discrimination is widely spread in the society. 60% of respondents agree that the state has to isolate people living with HIV.

**“We set a goal to increase activity among teachers-psychologists who work with young people on reproductive rights... 170 specialists took part in the seminars, all of them were supplied with methodical materials on reproductive rights protection and related topics. We received positive feedback from participants!
Maria (17), agent4change, Nizhniy Novgorod**





Our program

Launched in 2005, dance4life Russia reached 550,000 young people. 160,000 of them were reached directly by 'Educate'. The program works as a network of regional NGO's and governmental structures, coordinated by the country team hosted by the Public Health and Social Development Foundation. This team adjusts and constantly improves the dance4life concept, develops materials and tools, promotes the dance4life brand, organizes country-wide campaigns and events, and advocates on federal level for the access to the SRHR and HIV prevention for youth. The team also provides technical support to the regional partners by building their capacities. The program is active in 15 regions across Russia and works in schools, orphanages and juvenile correctional colonies. Due to recently adopted laws the project is challenged to get any access to schools. Therefore one of the focuses of the dance4life Russia is advocacy towards parents, teachers and government. dance4life Russia builds the capacity of the regional partners in advocacy and particularly strives to involve agents4change in advocacy events. They are empowered and supported to organize seminars on reproductive rights for teachers-psychologists who work with young people.

Online tools are another way to reach youth. An online-platform www.2live.ru - an online version of 'Educate' - got approved by the government and is allowed for the youth of 12+. It was developed to provide sexuality education to students who can't be reached in schools and also to reach out to their parents as a part of an informational campaign.



Our partner

dance4life partner in Russia is a Public Health and Social Development foundation, based in Moscow. FOCUS-MEDIA was established in 1996 as an NGO and focusing on HIV prevention programs since 1998.

In 2013, FOCUS-MEDIA Foundation has made a big step forward in solving the problem of limited access to the schools, having been granted a status of an "Experimental Forum" by the Federal Institute of the Education Development, for dance4life Russia. This means that the dance4life experience has been considered and approved as valuable source and tool for extra-curricular education for Russian adolescents. This has given dance4life the opportunity to apply the gained experience in more regions of the country.

Where we work





Our ambassadors

dance4life works with ambassadors to spread the message and truly involve young people. Youth icons on federal and regional level actively support the program. dance4life Russia also actively involves ambassadors in advocacy. Highly esteemed journalist Vladimir Pozner helps to reach decision makers and uses his shows on federal TV-channels to talk about HIV. Vladimir Pozner was involved in the dance4life mass media campaign for parents and has been active for dance4life Russia since 2008.



Case study: mass media campaign

In 2015 dance4life Russia conducted a first mass media campaign on adolescent reproductive health for parents. The campaign was informed by two researches "What do teenagers think about sexuality education?" and "What do adults think about sexuality education?". Both concluded that parents are ready to talk to a child about reproductive health, but only in a response to a child's question. At the same time young people say they would either ask their peers or search the Internet but not refer to a parent when they need information about sexual health. Unfortunately, in most cases, peers do not have complete and accurate information, and the Internet has too much information.

The message of the campaign is that it is not natural to expect from a teenager to be the initiator of a talk about reproductive health. A video commercial shows a teenage girl who starts talking to her mother about serious statistics, and suddenly her voice transforms into the voice of Vladimir Pozner. This highlights the nonsense of expecting the child's initiative. Instead, dance4life Russia offers parents to get prepared for the conversation by visiting the online platform (www.2live.ru) where they can obtain relevant and accurate information and inspiration to start a chat. The campaign reached around 2 million people, with 9,000 unique visitors on the online platform daily.



Growth vision

By 2018 dance4life Russia aims to reach 85,000 young people directly with the dance4life program of which 29,750 will become an agents4change. They make positive change in their environment and take a leadership role in reaching out to a minimum of five of their peers. This means we hope to indirectly reach another 148,750 young people, bringing the total amount of young people that we seek to engage in Russia to over 230,000.

	Direct reach	agents4change	Estimated budget
2016	15,000	5,250	€ 225,000
2017	25,000	8,750	€ 300,000
2018	45,000	15,750	€ 450,000
			+
Total	85,000	29,750	€975,500



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contact

info@dance4life.com or +31 (0) 20 521 66 55