

Media code for *Abaqophi basOkhayeni Abaqinile* 'Growing up in a time of AIDS' Children's Radio project

Careful consent processes are critical for this project because

- a) it involves children;
- b) it frequently touches on sensitive issues for children and their families;
- c) it was agreed with participating children and their caregivers that a process of consultation and consent will take place when dealing with the media coverage of the project
- d) there is an increasing amount of cross-media sourcing of content which means that stories approved for certain outlets may be picked up in other contexts with unexpected consequences for children and/or their families;
- e) the best interests of the child are a priority;
- f) children's rights to confidentiality and freedom from discrimination should not be compromised.

The interest of the media in covering the project is welcomed. It is important for the public to hear what this group of children want to share about their lives and issues that are important to them. However, the project team, the children, and the caregivers of the children have agreed on the following basic principles for any media engagement in order to protect participating children and their families. The project team is committed to ensuring that children and families are not put at risk. Children and their caregivers have agreed to media coverage on the basis that the media observes the following guidelines:

Broadcast of programmes produced by the children:

1. All personal diary programmes will be cleared by the children and each of their caregivers prior to the programmes being made available for public broadcast.
2. All other programmes produced by the children will be cleared by the children involved, as well as by a project consent team which includes 2 caregiver representatives, prior to the programmes being made available for public broadcast.
3. Programmes should be broadcast in their packaged format. They may not be edited or shortened without consultation with the project leader and project consent team.

Publication/broadcast of media coverage

1. Children's surnames and children's exact place of residence may not be revealed.
2. All print articles should be submitted to the project leader for final consent prior to publication. Similarly, scripts for radio or TV reports should be submitted to the project leader prior to broadcast. If there are any concerns about sensitive information/representations regarding children or their families, the article will be forwarded by the project consent team to the relevant caregivers for clearance. If not, the project leader will clear the coverage. Any concerns will be discussed with the writer/producer.

Interviewing children:

1. Interviews with children may only be conducted in consultation with the project leaders. Journalists wishing to interview children directly will need to be explicit about the focus of their package, and where it will be used, in order for consent to be arranged.
2. Journalists should make their interests clear to children whom they interview, and explain where and how the interview material will be used.
3. As a participatory media project, the children themselves have identified which personal stories they wish to tell publicly. Interviews about other aspects of their personal lives should be avoided, or pursued with caution and sensitivity, and with the guidance of a project staff member.
4. Interviews with children must take place with a project staff member present.

Use of images:

1. The project team has a large collection of photographs which have been cleared for public use by the children and their caregivers. Should visual material be required, these are available for use by the media.
2. The permission of children and their caregivers must be obtained before any additional photographic or video material which reveals children's identities can be shot and publicised. This may take time.



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