

# Children's Health



## Helping Children Live And Learn

(NAPSA)—In surprising ways, American youngsters and their parents are helping children half a world away stay in school.

### What Can Be Done

Countless impoverished girls in Africa don't have the means to purchase sanitary pads, causing them to miss up to five days of school each month. The absence creates insurmountable gaps in their education and risks to their health. Enter Huru International, founded in 2008 by Lorna Macleod, which manufactures reusable sanitary pads. For \$25, American children and, in fact, anyone can send an African child a "Huru Kit" with the reusable pads and HIV/AIDS prevention information.

The kits are given out through schools, with the assistance of a network of local partner organizations through support from Johnson & Johnson, the Elton John AIDS Foundation, and Micato Safaris, among others. When the Huru Kits are distributed, the students participate in an educational seminar that delivers engaging and interactive health and empowerment messaging to at-risk girls.

The kits from Huru (which means "freedom" in Swahili) have helped more than 100,000 girls stay in school, and the organization is working to ensure that girls everywhere have the means to complete their education and safeguard their health.

Huru has employed hundreds of adults and sponsored many community events that provide thousands of people with HIV testing, cancer screening and family-planning services.

### Why To Do It

UNICEF and the World Bank cite keeping girls in school as the



**Helping girls in Africa get an education is one way to stop disease and save lives.**

best way to protect them from chronic poverty and getting infected with the HIV virus. It has long been recognized that "education is likely to determine a person's vulnerability to HIV infection," according to UNICEF, and that most of the gains made through prevention initiatives have occurred among the educated.

This makes keeping girls in school especially important, as it is one of the most direct and effective means of reducing their vulnerability to HIV infection and ensuring that they develop the life skills they need to lead healthy, prosperous lives.

### What The Experts Say

Explains Macleod, "Education is the most cost-effective means of preventing new HIV infections. Just one additional year of schooling can prevent 60 infant deaths, three maternal deaths and 500 unwanted pregnancies." The Global Campaign for Education states that "Ensuring that all children complete primary school will prevent 700,000 HIV infections each year."

### Where To Learn More

You can find out more about Huru International at (212) 340-7115, [www.HuruInternational.org](http://www.HuruInternational.org) and [info@HuruInternational.org](mailto:info@HuruInternational.org).