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# About the Egal Shidad Program on Sexually Transmitted Diseases

The Egal Shidad Project creates media and resources that address health concerns of the Somali community in Minnesota and elsewhere. In the second of three videos produced by and for the Somali community, producer Mukhtar Gaaddasaar takes the audience on a journey to learn about sexually transmitted diseases. He explores social attitudes and risk factors that Somalis may face. The video includes frank conversations with Somali university students and with radio/TV host Zuhur Ahmed. Mukhtar also interviews renowned Somali medical doctor Abdirahman Mohamed. The program explores the roles of peer pressure, communication between parents and teens, culture, and Islamic practice related to preventing sexually transmitted infections.

Because students in adult English class are very diverse (including men and women, young and old, religious and non-religious, et cetera) and because discussing issues of sexuality in such heterogeneous groups is uncommon, the Egal Shidad Project Team understands the challenge that using this video presents for English teachers. For this reason we opted, in year two, to create this Discussion Guide, instead of a more scripted lesson packet like the one related to mental health produced in year one. (The mental health lesson packet is available at [http://newroutes.org/egal\\_ell\\_2](http://newroutes.org/egal_ell_2))

**Before beginning your discussion, you and your students can view the Egal Shidad STD video online at:**

<http://newroutes.org/node/30510>

**Order free DVDs to give or lend to your students :**

[http://newroutes.org/dvd\\_egal](http://newroutes.org/dvd_egal).

## Goal

The goal of the English Language Learning (ELL) component of the Egal Shidad Project is to develop adult Somalis' English language abilities through activities where learners listen, speak, read and/or write in English about the health information in the Project's videos.

## Sensitive Topics in English Class?

Discussing health topics in adult English classes can be challenging because instructors can find themselves viewed as both an English teacher and as an expert on the health topic being covered. Instructors can use the Egal Shidad Project videos and other media as the "content experts" in their classrooms, thereby allowing them to defer to the information in the video if a content-related question arises.

## Discussing This Video

Initiate the discussion by focusing on the information in the video. In many classes, asking students to share their own opinions about the subject of STDs can make them and other students very uncomfortable. Keeping the discussion about the people in the video can help to alleviate some of this unease. It may also be useful to watch the video in same-sex groups. That could lead to a conversation about what topics in Somali culture are usually taboo, or not discussed in mixed company.

## Closing

Finally, ensure that students who participate in this discussion know where they can go *in their community* to get information, testing, and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases. Share the resources listed on page 7 of this guide or research resources outside of the Minneapolis-St. Paul area.

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# Discussion Activities

## 1. Compare and contrast opinions expressed by the people interviewed in the video.

Discuss the similarities in individual characters' opinions on topics such as...

- customs and norms related to disciplining children,
- expectations of adolescents, or
- how and when puberty should be discussed.

Use the photos on the following pages to prompt students about specific interviewees' comments.

### Example

Several of the students and experts in the video talk about how parents traditionally might talk to and discipline their children in Somalia versus how Somali parents talk to (or should talk to) their children in the U.S.

How do the people in the video describe the differences in the way parents:

- Talk to their children about growing up (puberty)?
- Discipline or punish their children?

### Resources

<http://www.admc.hct.ac.ae/hd1/english/compare/comparevocab.htm> - a list of vocabulary used in comparisons

<http://www.admc.hct.ac.ae/hd1/english/compare/structures1.htm> examples of how comparisons are structured in English

### Extend

Depending on the current ability of your adult ESL students, you can select some of the sentences from their discussion for use in a group cloze exercise, where student complete their sentences using comparison words.

**Example:** In Somalia, families are \_\_\_\_\_ (*more/less/as*) involved in picking out someone for their child to date than in the U.S.

To further extend this activity, you can ask as second student to restate the sentiment using the opposite of the answer.

**Example:** In the U.S., families are \_\_\_\_\_ (*more/less/as*) involved in picking out someone for their child to date than in Somalia

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## Interviewees—students



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## Interviewees—experts



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## Discussion Activities

### 2. Code-switching

Use the example of the students in the video code-switching to engage your students in a conversation about when and in what circumstances they code switch themselves. Linguists define code-switching as an alternation between two or more languages within a single conversation between people who have one or more language in common. Linguists also note that code-switching tends to be patterned, not random. So speakers code-switch if they are more accustomed to talking about a topic in a particular language or if a particular term doesn't have a precise translation.

#### Example

Ask your students: “Most of the students who were interviewed in the video code-switched while they were talking. According to the Egal Shidad Project, a few people who watched the video were bothered by this and thought that the students should only speak Somali or only speak English. What do you think? Do you code-switch? When and why do you do it if you do? Do you think it is good or bad? What do you think when you hear other people code-switch. Are there topics you are more likely to talk about only in Somali or only in English?”

### 3. Talking About Health

The doctor who was interviewed in the video said, “...[The Somali] community does share health information even though sometimes there might be some incorrect information that goes around.” The same can be said about almost any group, immigrant or native-born. Use this small snippet of the doctor's comments to engage students in a discussion about where they go for general health information.

#### Extend

Help your students build some of the vocabulary and strategies necessary when talking to a health care provider using:

- ❑ The Symptoms of Depression Lesson from the Egal Shidad Mental Health Program's ELL activities. Go to <http://newroutes.org/node/20455>.
- ❑ Staying Healthy Curriculum of the Florida Literacy Coalition, Chapter 2 ([http://www.floridaliteracy.org/literacy\\_resources\\_teacher\\_tutor\\_health\\_literacy.html](http://www.floridaliteracy.org/literacy_resources_teacher_tutor_health_literacy.html))

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## Closing Activity

### Objective

Ensure that students who participate in this discussion know where they can go *in their community* to get information, testing, and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases.

### Instructions

If you are using these materials in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, print the [Health Care Resources in Twin Cities—STDs](#) page that follows and distribute it to all students.

Outside of Minneapolis-St. Paul, research local healthcare providers who test for and treat sexually transmitted diseases and who employ Somali and/or Somali-speaking staff. Share your findings with your students.



### Extend

Using maps of your area, work with students to locate the listed providers.

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## More Information About STDs

Fact Sheet on STDs provided by the American Social Health Association  
[http://www.pimahealth.org/Disease/STDOverview\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.pimahealth.org/Disease/STDOverview_factsheet.pdf)

Center for Disease Control, STD Homepage  
<http://www.cdc.gov/std/>

Toronto Public Health Sexual Health Information Department's list of fact sheets  
[http://www.toronto.ca/health/sexualhealth/sh\\_print\\_resources.htm](http://www.toronto.ca/health/sexualhealth/sh_print_resources.htm)

HIV, AIDS & Islam: A Workshop Manual

This 80 page manual reads quickly, and provides a thought-provoking look at HIV/AIDS and Islam. There is an index early on that may be helpful for selecting a specific topic to read.  
[http://www.coreinitiative.org/Resources/Publications/CORE\\_PM.pdf](http://www.coreinitiative.org/Resources/Publications/CORE_PM.pdf)

MIHV has a Child Spacing Project that produced a double sided 8.5 x 11 laminated card that diagrams the female reproductive system in English and Somali on one side and the male on the other.

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## Health Care Resources in Twin Cities—STDs

### **Community University Health Care Center CUHCC**

2001 Bloomington Ave South,  
Minneapolis, MN 55404-3074  
(612) 638-0700

<http://www.ahc.umn.edu/CUHCC/>

### **Cedar Riverside Peoples Center**

425 20th Ave South, Minneapolis, MN 55454  
(612) 332-6641

<http://www.peoples-center.org/>

### **Open Cities Health Center**

409 North Dunlap St., St Paul, MN 55104  
(651) 290-9200

<http://www.ohealthcenter.com/>

### **Westside Community Health Services – McDonough Homes Clinic**

Has Somali nurses

1544 Timberlake Rd., Saint Paul, MN 55111  
(651) 558-2191

<http://www.westsidechs.org/programs.php?clinic=8>

### **MAWA – MN African Womens’ Assoc.**

African Outreach Health Center provides  
clinical services including STD testing and  
treatment. Open Wednesdays 2-6pm.

7710 Brooklyn Blvd

(651) 216-4389

<http://www.mawanet.org/html/africanoutreachhealthctr.html>

### **Family Tree Clinic**

Comprehensive sexual health care & education.

1619 Dayton Ave, Suite 205,\

Saint Paul, MN 55104-7642

(651) 645-0478

<http://www.familytreeclinic.org/>

### **Smiley’s Family Medicine Clinic**

This clinic has a large Somali client base that  
followed the clinic even when it moved farther  
away. It is linked to the University.

2020 East 28th St., Minneapolis, MN 55407

(612) 333-0770

[http://www.umphysicians.umn.edu/Clinics/clinic\\_372.asp](http://www.umphysicians.umn.edu/Clinics/clinic_372.asp)

## **Organizations**

SAYFSM – Sub-Saharan Youth and Family  
Services in Minnesota

Offers free, rapid and confidential HIV testing.

1885 University Avenue, Suite #297

St. Paul, MN 55104

(651) 644-3983

[www.sayfsm.org](http://www.sayfsm.org)

Minnesota AIDS Project

Has an AIDS Line - 612-373-AIDS or 800-

248-AIDS – answers questions about

HIV/AIDS, connects people with services,

directs people to testing sites, provides info on

community events, etc. MAP also provides case

management and has a resource section (see

Learn More on the left side of the page).

1400 Park Ave South Minneapolis, MN 55404

(612) 341-2060

<http://www.mnaidsproject.org/>

Minneapolis Urban League

Has an HIV education and outreach program  
with Somali staff.

2100 Plymouth Ave North

Minneapolis, MN 55411

(612) 302-3100

<http://www.mul.org>