

Your 17th edition

RISE

YOUNG WOMEN'S CLUBS

Talking about identity



Celebrating women

Black is beautiful

Living positive



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Do you have a question?
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Welcome to your magazine!

In this issue we explore identity. As young women and girls we are shaped by our choices and goals.

Who we decide to be as young, black women is important, it influences our place in the community.

Our club feature on page 4, The Girls' Empire Rise Young Women's Club from Emalahleni, shows us that where we come from is important. Through Rise clubs they share their stories and become empowered.

We are all different but sometimes being different comes with a social stigma and is harmful to us. This results in shame, anger and withdrawal. On page 12, Rise members talk about their experiences of sexuality, migration and body image.

August is Women's Month and as women, we are constantly battling with economic and social injustices. What does it mean to be a woman in South Africa today?

Dineo Mashego takes us on a journey into the world of radio. She is an inspiration to us and lets us know that it's okay to dream.

Our Agony Aunt feature on page 28, is a popular section in the magazine. Please send us your questions and get help.

With love from

Dee
 xoxo

Club projects

We encourage Rise clubs to do monthly club projects. See the Activity Guide that came with the magazine. Fill in the Project Report and submit to your fieldworker by the beginning of September 2017. Let us hear from you!



As young women and girls we face many challenges. Often we do not have the skills to deal with them and to stand up for our rights so that we can change our lives.

To address this, Soul City Institute is launching a new training programme called "Change Makers". This training programme focusses on building human rights and advocacy skills. While everyone of us can be an advocate, the aim is to improve the skills which can help young women to influence government policies and demand change for all young women and girls in the country.

The Change Makers programme will train selected Rise club members.

In the next few editions of the *Rise magazine* we will keep you informed on the programme and guide you on activities you can do to challenge the problems in your communities.

Translated words:

Advocacy

Sesotho: Bobuelli
 isiZulu: Ukumelwa

Influence

Sesotho: Tsusumetso
 isiZulu: Umthelela

What is advocacy?

Advocacy means **persuading and influencing people** (by talk or actions) to come together (mobilise) so that they can put pressure on decision makers to bring about change.

Steps in doing advocacy:

1. Identify the challenge or problem, for example, women feel unsafe at taxi ranks.
2. Do your homework: find out facts and what others think.
3. Agree on the result (outcome) you want to achieve, for example, installing more street lights at the taxi ranks.
4. Recruit others, like community members, organisations, newspapers, etc.
5. Present your case to key stakeholders, for example, your local councillor.
6. Follow through by putting pressure and ensuring that this issue becomes a matter of public interest.



In partnership with:



FREE STATE

Bloemfontein RISE clubs celebrate international TB day

To celebrate World Tuberculosis (TB) Day, Rise clubs in the Free State organised a TB awareness campaign in Bloemfontein. More than 100 young women represented Rise at events at the Clive Solomon Stadium in Heidedal and in the CBD. Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa addressed guests at the launch of a new 9-month TB treatment course. Rise members handed out pamphlets. Later they went to Hoffman Square in the CBD and spoke to their sisters about HIV and TB. They also told them about Rise Young Women's Clubs and the She Conquers campaign, which will be running over the next 3 years.



Does your club have any news? Let us know! WhatsApp Dee on 081 017 8769



WESTERN CAPE

Fun day event

Johnson Crane Hire, HDB Security and Aurora hosted a Fun Day event for the less privileged kids in the Witteklip/Hopland community ahead of the Easter weekend. The Rise Representatives from the different clubs assisted in playing and dancing with the kids while waiting to enjoy a lunch of 'potjiekos' West Coast style.



WESTERN CAPE

Rise dialogue

Vredenburg Rise clubs hosted their first Rise dialogue in April. They discussed rape and gender-based violence. Speakers included Mrs Jolene Shaw from Aurora Wind Power and Ms Murial Albrecht from Mfesane, a Christian organisation working to stop poverty. Ms Linda Gcwabe from Nedbank and Ms Lebo Mokete from ArcelorMittal, joined the dialogue and gifted the girls with notebooks and pens. The day ended with campaign planning and sharing ideas to create safer spaces for young women and girls.



Rising Star



Hlengiwe Mazibuko (17) is the chairperson of Girls' Empire Rise Young Women's Club in Emalahleni. Since she was 8 years old, she has wanted to be an actress and a TV presenter.

Hlengiwe loves watching television and her big inspiration is Jessica Nkosi from *Isibaya*.

"I love who she is and I love what she has done. Acting is in her veins."

Hlengiwe's sister lives in Joburg and is a dentist. When Hlengiwe said she wanted to become an actress, her mother tried to persuade her to choose something more reliable. But now her mother supports her.

Every Wednesday, Hlengiwe goes to Witbank High to go to a drama school. In the holidays she attends auditions in Joburg. So far, she has acted in an advertisement.

Once she is finished with school, Hlengiwe wants to study drama at university.

"I like to express myself and be someone else. To be an actress you need to be passionate and good with languages."

The Girl's Empire

Rise Club

A life full of challenges



The Girl's Empire Rise club is based at Ilanga Secondary School in Emalahleni. It consists mainly of Grade 9 girls. They have been meeting every Wednesday afternoon since September 2016.



Gladys



Herba



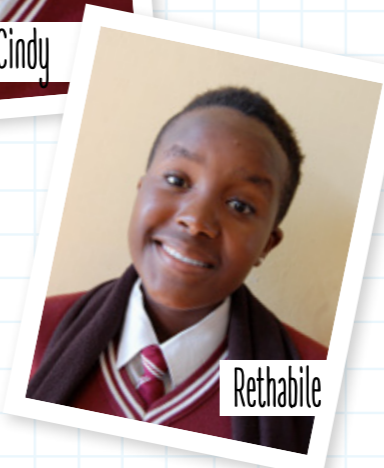
Hlengiwe



Nobuhle



Cindy



Rethabile

Emalahleni is well known for coal mining and most of the members' parents are employed in the community.

Many girls in the club are not originally from Emalahleni. They had to adapt to living in a new place. For some of them, this has been hard. But mostly they enjoy living in a place where there are people from different cultures to socialise with.

The girls feel that Girls' Empire is a place to pour your heart out and to discuss issues you cannot speak about at home. It is also a place where you get support and friendship.

"Often we smile, but underneath things are not okay. We hide a thousand fears and tears. This is why we need this club."

Members shared some of their thoughts and difficulties:

"Life is full of challenges. The club gives me courage and inspires me."

– Gladys Macia (17)

"My father was hijacked in 2012. His eyes were damaged and today he is unemployed. I am the youngest and I am here learning how to be a girl."

– Herba Sindane (15)

"I was born in Waterval Boven near Nelspruit. My mother moved here to find work. Sometimes we visit our grandmother and she tells me stories of long time ago. It makes me proud."

– Hlengiwe Mazibuko (17)

"I was born in Johannesburg. My mother was a single parent and she couldn't take care of me so I was taken to live with my aunt and uncle in Witbank. I only found out that they were not my real parents when I was 12. I was very upset and felt very alone. They took me to my father's home in Newcastle and gave me photographs. It was important to me to know what kind of person he was. Now I also visit my real mother. All this has made me into a stronger person."

– Nobuhle Mtshali (15)

"I was born in Denelton. My mother passed away when I was 2 years old. I live with my grandmother. Last year she told me that when my mother passed away my father did not want to take care of me. This is very painful."

– Cindy Skosana (17)

"I was born in Witbank. When I was in Grade 5 my parents got divorced. I moved to my grandmother's house. She has a very good heart. It is much easier to be raised by older people because they know how to care."

– Rethabile Zondo (17)

What is Women's Day?

In the past, Women's Day was a day where women got together and supported each other. Today we often forget what the day is about. We treat it as a public holiday where we can relax or have a party. Women's Day is an important day to remember the struggles that we still face today.

9 August 1956

20 000 women marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest against the pass laws. Under apartheid laws black men had to carry passes. If they did not have a valid pass, you could be arrested. The women marched because the government wanted to make black women carry passes too.



During apartheid

Women had many struggles. They could not open bank accounts without permission from their husbands. If a woman was pregnant, she could be fired from her job.



A woman is comforted after being hit by a baton as police charged a group of demonstrators near the parliament buildings in Cape Town, 1986. Photo: Graeme Williams

In the 1980s

Women took inspiration from those women who marched. They came together to share their struggles as workers, students and community activists.



ANC Women's League march in Soweto, 1989. Photo: Graeme Williams

In 1994

Women's Day became a public holiday.

A woman casts her ballot in the first democratic elections in Tembisa township east of Joburg, 1994. Photo: Graeme Williams

After 1994 until today

The unequal laws are changed. But, women still experience inequality:

- For every 100 men who own a business, there are only 25 women who own a business.
- Per year, a woman has to work 2 months extra to get paid the same as a man.
- In South Africa, 4 out of 10 women have experienced violence from their boyfriend or husband.



Care workers and Aids activists dance at a public meeting concerning AIDS, 2009. Photo: Graeme Williams



The Purple Hearts, South Africa's only all-black female rugby team, Free State, 2001. Photo: Graeme Williams



Women leaders at Fees Must Fall protest, 2015. Photo: Samantha Camara

Sisterhood

Discuss these issues in your club

- 1 Do you think things have changed for women since 1956?
- 2 Are women treated the same as men in your family? In your community? At school? How can we change things?
- 3 What are the struggles of women today?

Here are some thoughts from two women of different ages:

"I think young women today are free. If she wants to say no she will say 'no'. But even now there are those men you have to get permission from, who are oppressing us. Like with my husband, I don't have a say. When I was raised my mother didn't talk about sex, she would just say, 'Don't play with boys,' I think we must tell girls things that our parents didn't tell us."

– Khetiwe (50)

"My grandmother told me she didn't even know about divorce. She thought she just had to stay in her bad marriage. For us there are options. But I think women are judged more than men on their appearances. If you are dressed a certain way and look sexy, people think you're not intelligent, you're just a piece of meat. The boys in my house get better treatment. I was expected to always come home, switch on the lights and dish up for everybody. Which is not a big thing, but why can't the boys dish up for everyone?"

– Reaogile (25)

Celebrating Women

The struggle for the equality of women continues. So, let's celebrate ourselves!

Here are some ideas for celebrating women:

- Find out if there are any organisations hosting Women's Day events in your area. Find a way that your club can contribute to an event.
- Find poems and songs about women that you like and share them. Practise performing them.
- For Women's Day, write a letter to the women in your life. Tell them what they mean to you and why they are important.
- Write a letter or poem to yourself that celebrates your womanhood.
- If you know a woman who needs help with something as small as cleaning, cooking or looking after a child, offer to help her.
- Share stories about the women in your families or in your community.

Interview a woman

- Think of the women in your community who have inspired you or who have led interesting lives. They could be members of your family or activists and leaders. Maybe a teacher, a hawker, a mother?
- Divide into pairs. Each pair chooses one woman to interview.
- At the next meeting report back to the club about the stories you heard.
- Choose the most interesting stories, record them on the Rise app or write them down.
- Now send them to Rise magazine!

See the Activity Guide that came with the magazine for more projects you can do to celebrate Women's Month.

Celebrating Women



Interviewing techniques

- Find an older woman whose life you are curious about. Ask if you can sit down with her and ask her some questions.
- Before the interview, think of some questions you would like to ask. For example: What was it like for you growing up as a girl? And as a young woman? Do you think life is different for young women today? What were your biggest struggles? Tell me what a typical day was like for you when you were my age?
- Find a quiet place to do the interview. You could record the interview with your cell phone or just take some notes.
- When doing the interview, be flexible. Let yourself be curious. If you see she's interested in talking about something, encourage her to continue talking about that.
- Enjoy it. Even if the interview doesn't go as planned, the important part is having the chance to listen to someone else.



Celebrating women: do you know these women?

Write the letter of the picture that matches the description:

1. Miriam Makeba – singer and activist, known as Mama Africa. Famous for “The Click Song”.
2. Fatima Meer – one of the leaders of the women's march in 1956.
3. Pumla Gqola Dineo – Professor and author of the award winning book: *Rape, The South African Nightmare*.
4. Bessie Head – a writer who during apartheid moved to Botswana. Her first novel was: *When Rainclouds Gather*.
5. Caster Semenya – Olympic gold medalist.
6. Nontsikelelo Albertina Sisulu – political activist, nurse and one of the most important leaders of anti-Apartheid resistance in South Africa. Wife of Walter Sisulu.
7. Thandiswa Mzwai – singer whose latest album, *Belede* celebrates some classic South African songs.
8. Pumzile Mlambo-Nguca – Director of United Nations Women. She was deputy president of South Africa from 2005 to 2008.
9. Thuli Madonsela – advocate who served as our Public Protector from 2009 to 2016.
10. Shaleen Surtie-Richards – television actress, famous for her roles in *Egoli, 7de Laan* and *Generations*.
11. Charlize Theron – Oscar winning South African actress.
12. Rebecca Malope – multi-award winning South African gospel singer.
13. Ferial Haffajee – Ferial Haffajee is a South African journalist and newspaper editor.
14. Pregs Govender – feminist human rights activist.
15. Basetsana Kumalo – leading business woman.

1-F; 2-G; 3-I; 4-D; 5-E; 6-B; 7-O; 8-J; 9-A; 10-N; 11-L; 12-M; 13-H; 14-K; 15-C;

Being a woman

We asked some Rise club members from Emalaheni what it means to them to be a woman. Should we celebrate women?

Noluvuyo Ntchuntshe (17)

Being a woman is how you handle yourself. We talk, walk and do things differently to men. I like being a woman. I feel we get a lot of respect. Being a woman is beautiful – we have so much love, and I like that.

Nontokozi Gokoane (17)

I'm still a girl and I am a woman already. It is important to celebrate the beauty of women and our uniqueness. Women are more important than men. They bring joy to the home and give birth to men.

Poppy Phiri (19)

It is important to have Women's Month. In our past our mothers fought for our life and for our freedom. But we need to treat women well all year round.

Nokusola Mhlaliswa (17)

I feel comfortable being a woman. Women are strong and important – we all came from women. People don't really don't know the role that women played in fighting apartheid and we should never forget this.

Paris Mndawe (16)

Being a woman is not something one should be ashamed of. As a woman I can do anything. But society doesn't really value us. Boys treat us badly because of peer pressure. Their friends lie to them and say: "If you abuse your girl you can have power."

Pretty Nkambule (17)

I am happy to be a woman. Women have strength and power. Men don't have that heart. Some of them are bullies and don't care. But women take care of you. It is not always easy to be a woman – you have babies and then you have to look after them. I also don't like menstruation.

Lee-Anne Masombuka (16)

Being a woman is about loving and caring for others and showing the world that you can do something extraordinary. When I grow up I want to help others and explore things that men also do. I want to help animals and to experience how they are living.

Zanele Tsotetsi (18)

I like to be a woman. But you should like yourself whoever you are. You need to be strong as a woman. Some men take women for granted. They think they are stronger than women – so you have to really know and love yourself.

Nothando Makhubela (16)

I like being a woman a lot. We are respected and are able to do anything we want to. Women's Month is there because women change people's lives. Since the democracy we have started to concentrate more on women because in the past there was more attention on men.

Mandisa Skosana (16)

I feel good about being a woman. Women are more powerful because they keep the home running. When I grow up I want to keep my home running and be a model.

Stigma

What is stigma?

Stigma is looking at someone and judging or labeling them for being different. It is something that we all do. And it hurts other people. Here are some questions that can help us to see how we label people.

What is discrimination?

Abusing the rights of someone because they are different. For example, not giving someone a job because they are a lesbian or they are HIV positive.

Honesty test:

What is the first thing that comes to mind when someone says to you:

*Hello, I am a Nigerian.
By the way I am gay?
I am Shangani?
My husband left me, I am divorced?
I am a sex worker?
I am HIV positive?*

What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you see:

*A very fat person?
A white person interviewing you?
A young girl wearing a short dress, high heels and lots of make up?
A woman smoking?
A taxi driver?*

**ZEROSTIGMA
ZERODISCRIMINATION**

Sisterhood

What kinds of stigma have the members of your club experienced?

How can you make sure that everyone in your club feels comfortable and at home? Let those who have experienced stigma speak first. Ask them what they need from club members.

How can you protect and support those who experience stigma outside the club?

Internal stigma

Internal stigma is putting myself down because of who I am.



Club activity

- Why do you think there are all these voices saying bad things to this girl? Where do the voices come from?
- If this was your friend, what would you say to her? How can we help her out of the box?
- Once she is out of the box how can we help her to become strong again?
- Do you have voices in your head that say bad things about you? Share what they say.
- Now write a letter to yourself. Encourage yourself to be free of these voices.

I can bring new voices into my head:

I love myself and I am good to myself!

I am strong!

I am proud of who I am!

I am worthy!

I have goals for my future!

I may be poor but I have potential!

I am a survivor!

“It is not our differences that divide us, it is our inability to recognize, accept and celebrate those differences.”

– Audre Lourde, *Our Dead Behind Us: Poems*

Stigma in the club

Some Rise Club members speak out about being different:



Being a foreigner

Gladys Macia (17)
Girl's Empire RYWC

I was born in Middleburg, but my family is from Mozambique. I visit there during the holidays. Sometimes my friends call me a foreigner. But I am proud of who I am. I speak my home language which is Tsonga.



Herba Sindane (15)
Girl's Empire RYWC

I was born in Botswana. We moved to Rustenburg when I was small. In Grade 1 we moved to Witbank. I feel like a South African, because this is where I have lived most of my life. But when you move around your social life is difficult. At home I speak Tswana, but here people speak isiZulu. So it is sometimes difficult to express myself to my friends.



Having different skin

Samekelisiwe Msibi (17)
Crystal RYWC

I had a hard time as a child. I was born in Swaziland and when my father saw me he said I was not his child and we had to move away. Now, my aunt also has a child with albinism and my father wants to have contact with me. But I am still too angry with him.

Sometimes people tease me and call me names. If you are different you can expect that.

Sometimes I forget that I am different because I am just getting on with my life. I am just like you. I am a human. I feel. I think. I am happy.

I joined Rise so that I could tell my story and make other people understand me. If you want information about why I am this way, just come up to me and ask. Don't talk behind my back.



Being gay

Jeffrey Mathebula (18)
Phenomenal RYWC

I am gay and proud of it. When Soul City came to our school and spoke about Rise, I told my friend that I wanted to join. She asked and I was accepted. I thought the boys would laugh at me but they didn't. I joined Rise because I wanted to motivate people to come out. There are some lesbians and I feel I can help them.

I was bullied at school in Grade 7 by another boy. But I used to tell him to go to hell. I choose to be gay. Some boys still ask me why I am gay. They threaten to beat me up. I tell them: "Wow, really. Am I not allowed to live my life?"

But I have found inner peace. I have girl-friends who admire me for being what I am. They tell me that I am actually living my life.

My mother supports me. She always asks me after school how I am. She is glad that I am not a party-boy.

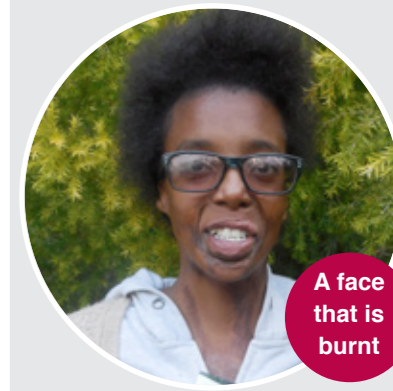
I carry make-up to school in case I want to put it on. I want to live a full life. I want people to know that we are proud of who we are. We accept others and we want them to accept and respect us.



Nokulunga Ngwenya (19)
Youthful Leader RYWC

I am proud to be a lesbian. I pick up my chest and I walk proud. Sometimes people point their fingers at me and it is very painful. I ignore them. I just try to walk straight past them.

I joined Rise because I wanted to find out about girls and boys. The club makes me feel at home.



A face that is burnt

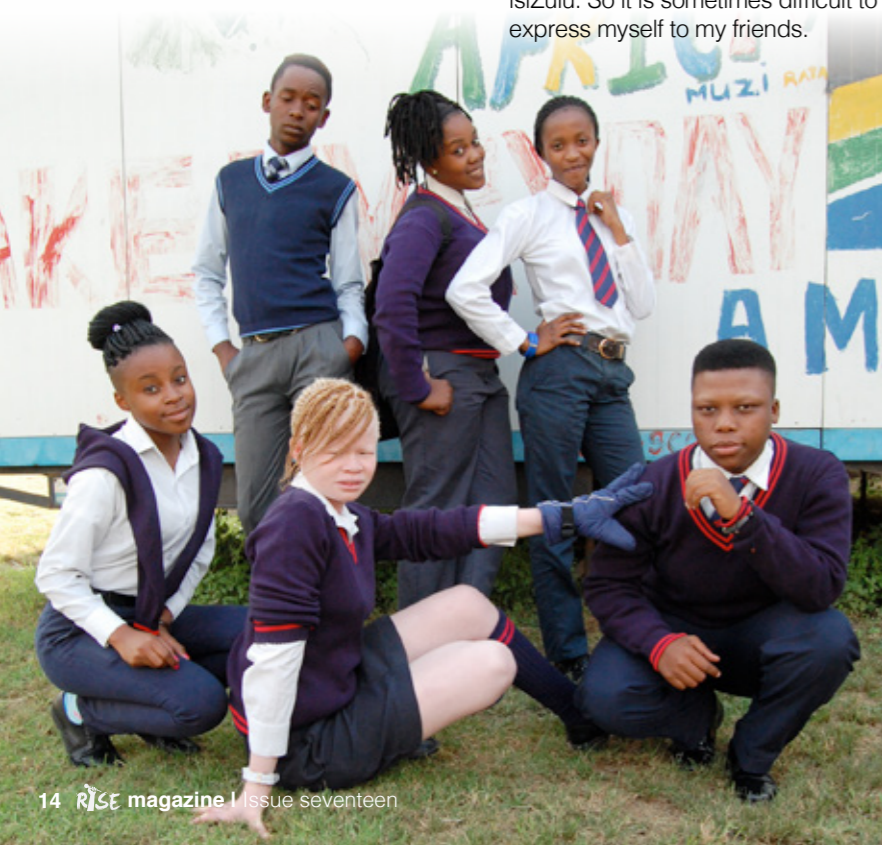
Karabo Tebedi (16)

I was burned when I was still a toddler. There was an accident with paraffin. Some people feel that there is a stigma attached to being burned. I don't agree. My face tells a more interesting story than other people's faces do. Theirs is a blank piece of paper - mine is a manuscript full of life's events.

I am proud to be a Burns Survivor because I have overcome the odds so many times. First I survived terrible painful injury. Then I survived bad attitude from uninformed people. And now I'm a bright teenager doing well at school in Yeoville, preparing for more surgery and preparing for university, I hope.

I got the courage to face the world from an organisation called Children of Fire.

This is a group of several hundred young people who've been put through surgery across the world. Many have had much more severe injury than me.



Living Positive



I lost my mother when I was 12 years old. She was sick and whenever I asked my family what was wrong with her, I got a different response. It was 4 years after my mother passed away that my grandmother told me the truth. She had died of AIDS.

I also found out that my father had died of complications caused by HIV.

My mother was the bread-winner at home, and after she fell sick and could no longer work, my family started treating me differently. Her death seemed to give them permission to abuse and ridicule me. I still cry when I remember some of the things they said and did to me. These insults made me believe I was HIV positive. With no-one to talk to, it was easy for me to assume that I had the virus.

Striving for success

Still, I wanted to be successful. I studied accountancy. Even though it took me long, it is an achievement I cherish. Afterwards I got a job at a small company and worked my way up.

When I joined a bigger company, I had to get life cover and for that I had to take an HIV test. It was time to face my fears. Believing that I had the virus from my parents, I was shocked when my results came back. I was HIV negative.

I tested at 3 different places to make sure, and every test said the same thing. I went back home to show my aunts and grandmother. They all apologised for treating me badly. It wasn't easy, but I forgave them.

Shock

My career was going really well. I had had a few romantic relationships. Then I met a man who I loved. I don't know where things went wrong, but one day I woke up and there was a lot of blood on the bed. A visit to the doctor revealed that I had had a miscarriage. I was crushed. But even worse was finding out that I was now HIV positive. I blamed everyone.

Break down

The man I loved left me. He was HIV negative. He was angry that I could not accept responsibility for my HIV status. I was lonely and sank into a depression.

I spent three months in a psychiatric hospital. Through counselling and a lot of difficult honesty I admitted to myself that I had been reckless in my relationships. Because I thought I was fine, I assumed that the men I was with were also okay. Sometimes I did not insist on using condoms. I had also not been careful about the type of men I was intimate with. Some of them had lied to me.

Peace

Telling my family about my new HIV status was difficult, but they accepted me. The information we now have available on the virus has made life much easier. I started ARVs two years ago, and feel as healthy as a horse.

Today I have dedicated my life to encouraging young people to be responsible for every thing that affects them. I don't want them to make the same mistakes I did. It's easy to say life is hard and give up. My passion is to light the fire of people. I tell them not to allow their difficult life to stand in the way of their success.

We can all be successful, but it doesn't come easy.

Myths and facts about HIV

Myths	Facts
All sex workers have the HIV virus	Sex workers like everyone else will be infected with HIV should they have unprotected sex.
You can easily tell by looking at someone that they have HIV	It's very hard for people to know if they or someone else has HIV without being properly tested, very often there are no visible signs
HIV infects poor people	Rich, poor, old, young, black or white; HIV will infect you should you have unsafe sex
HIV is transmitted through insect bites, toilet seats, kissing, hugging, touching and sharing utensils	HIV is transmitted through blood, semen and other bodily fluids including breast milk.
HIV + people cannot safely have children	PMTCT program helps people to have HIV negative children
HIV is a death sentence	With proper treatment, we now expect people with HIV to live a normal life span
HIV always leads to AIDS	Although HIV/AIDS has no cure, it can be treated. There has been progress in treatment over the years. A person living with HIV/AIDS can now live a strong and productive life for many years.
If you test negative for HIV, you can have unprotected sex	Having sex with no protection will expose you to HIV infection
If both partners have HIV, there's no reason for a condom	There are different strains of HIV. If a condom is not used during sexual contact, HIV-infected partners may exchange different types or strains of HIV. This can lead to re-infection, which will make the treatment of HIV infection more difficult. The new HIV strain may become more resistant to the current treatment taken, or cause the current treatment to be ineffective.
An HIV-positive person who receives antiretroviral treatment will not spread the virus.	Antiretroviral therapy can reduce the amount of HIV in the body. However, HIV remains in the body and can be transmitted to others.



Celebrating identity

Today many young women are trying to understand their place in the world. This is because we realise that it is important to love ourselves.



Discuss:

What does it mean to you to be black? Are there times when it is hard to be black? Does being black carry any stigma in your community?

What could you do when you see or hear someone:

- Laughing and teasing people who struggle to speak English.
- Teasing people who have dark skin.
- Criticising or teasing others if they do not wear weaves or relax their hair.

Brainstorm ideas on how to celebrate being black – an African, Indian or Coloured.

Here are some ideas to help you:

- Be proud of your mother tongue. Try to speak it the best way you can.
- Share and collect traditional stories and songs. Invite an elder to come and tell your club some traditional stories.
- Use your African names.
- Find poems that celebrate blackness. Learn them off by heart and perform them.
- Write your own poems about being black.

Did you know that in the time of apartheid:

- Black people were regarded as inferior and treated very badly. They got inferior services and the worst education. As a result they suffered economically, psychologically and spiritually.
- Having lighter skin could mean that you could “pass” as a “coloured” person. This could give you better opportunities and services. Although coloureds were also treated badly.
- A pencil test was performed on hair to check a person’s race. If the pencil stayed in the person’s hair when they shook their head, they were classified as black. This sometimes meant that the person was separated from their own family.

Black is beautiful



Masechaba:

Being black is about embracing my culture. My mother taught me a lot of things about self-love and respect. It’s also about the freedom to be who I am.



Nolwazi:

Being black means being proud of who I am and where I come from. It is not about conforming but believing in what I say and not being afraid.



Kgomotso:

Being black means being brave and chasing opportunities and being responsible for my own destiny. As a black person you are always under pressure.



Lerato:

You have to be confident and proud of your roots. I’m Tsonga and there is stigma from the community because of the dark skin tone. But I use my confidence and beautiful culture to overcome the negativity.



Attracia:

Being black means you have to be proud of who you are no matter what. I am in high school and I have dreams and I don’t allow anyone to discriminate and pull me down.



Rothondwa:

Being black means being proud of being me and being confident. You need this because you can be disrespected by your employer or offended by your lecturer and then give up on your dreams. I love the black culture because it’s diverse and you learn a lot from it.



I like my hair Natural!

In the past some people said that African hair was untidy and unattractive. Some schools did not allow afros, big hair and dreadlocks. Straight hair was seen to be “normal”, show wealth, beauty and success.

Here are some women who have chosen to keep their hair natural:



Relebone Myambo (26)

I had relaxed hair for as long as I can remember. But the chemicals were really harsh on my scalp. When I was in high school and able to make my own decisions, I decided to go bald for a while. Then I went natural. Now I love the texture of my hair. I love the look and the versatility.



Sihle Ntsaluba (22)

From the time I could choose for myself – when I was about sixteen – I chose natural. It’s beautiful and the only thing I can think of that defies the laws of gravity. It’s like wearing a crown everyday!

Tendai Chitima (26)

For me, this has been a long journey. I didn’t like my natural hair. Once I got to university I re-evaluated what it meant to be the authentic me. I realised that to be authentic meant embracing my natural hair. Many people are embracing natural hair. It is a problem to hide yourself, and besides, wearing natural hair protects your hairline.



Bandisiwe Sontoshe (20)

Wearing natural hair allows me to express my true self. It’s also easier to work with. I know my hair well. I used to relax it but my scalp got burnt so I stopped. I think more girls should see that their natural hair is beautiful.



Fun with a Doek!

Try these and send us your best selfies!



#mySkirtmyDoek

- Step 1:** Take your skirt and fold the waist. Put it around the back of your head.
- Step 2:** Tuck the sides in. Now twist and roll the skirt into a top knot.
- Step 3:** Fold the ends under the knot at your forehead.

African Renaissance

- Step 1:** Wrap the cloth from the back of your head. One side should be longer than the other.
- Step 2:** Twist the cloth and tie in front. Tuck the shorter side away against your head.
- Step 3:** Now take the longer side and puff it up. Tuck it over the top. Make small adjustments to make it look like a flower.



Ready to Roll

- Step 1:** Tie the cloth from the back of your head.
- Step 2:** Twist each end. Twist into together into one roll.
- Step 3:** Twist the roll around your head and tie the ends.



Modern feminism

- Step 1:** Start from the back and fold the cloth towards your face.
- Step 2:** Twist and tie.
- Step 3:** Take 1 side and tuck it back. Fold the other side over the middle.

The sound engineer

Early years

Dineo Mashego was born in Springs where her mother was a domestic worker. As a small baby, she went to live with her granny in the village of Rouxville, near Aliwal North. She grew up here with her cousins.

“I had a beautiful childhood. My grandmother was amazing. She taught us to always treat people with kindness and respect. She grew up in poverty and taught us to value everything that we have.”

When Dineo started Grade 4, her mother brought her back to Johannesburg.

Choosing a career

When she was growing up, Dineo thought that she wanted to go to university and become an economist. But in Grade 12 she went to a career day at her school. This is where she came across the Academy of Sound Engineering. She persuaded her mother to take her there to enrol for a 2-year diploma in sound engineering.

Most of the students were white males and the course was very technical. But Dineo loved the challenge. Many of the classes were offered at the SABC.

Working for radio

In her second year, Dineo chose to specialise in radio broadcasting. She got an internship at a community radio station and found out that she loves this job.

Later she joined Radio 702. Today she operates a big sound desk on the Eusebius Mckaiser show on 702. It involves sitting

in the studio with the presenter and making sure that all the technical aspects are running smoothly. She plays the commercials, or songs or sound effects and gets the callers on the line. Her job is both technical and creative. And it makes her feel alive!

Lessons

Over the years Dineo has noticed that you cannot be shy if you are working in radio. You have to communicate and stay open.

“Speaking up and taking responsibility helps a lot. Listen to criticism and see if it is useful. In this way people can see that you are open to growing. It does not help if you are closed off. If you are a good communicator you can grow.”

You are allowed to dream

“As a child, I never thought I would work with people I had seen on TV. I am working in an environment I never even knew existed. What feeds my soul every day is going back to who I am and where I come from. I am who I am because of the fighting spirit and values of the women who raised me. They showed me that you are allowed to dream.”

Meet Dineo Mashego (27), a sound engineer who works for a well-known talk radio station in Gauteng.

DINEO'S ADVICE

Dineo's advice on choosing a career

Dineo feels that before choosing a career, it is important to take time to do research. Look for an apprenticeship or ask someone who is working whether you can job-shadow them. This means that you follow them around for a whole day to see what their job is like.

“When it comes to choosing a career, put yourself first. Never mind what other people are saying. Look inside yourself and see what will make you happy. Have a serious and honest conversation with yourself. What do you want from life and from yourself?”

Sound engineering

There are four parts to sound engineering:

Audio post-production – You record the sound and put in the sound effects for movies and TV shows.

Music production – You compose, mix and master music.

Live sounds – You do the sound at live events such as concerts or corporate events.

Broadcasting – You control the sound during radio broadcasts, insert the adverts or music, or do outside broadcasts.

Parenting

My child is different! What do I do?

Have you noticed how many questions children ask? Sometimes they seem embarrassing.

Why doesn't my daddy live with us? Why doesn't Auntie Maria have any children? Why does Jo have funny hair like that? Why don't we go to the same church as Gogo? Why doesn't that lady greet us?

Asking questions is an important part of children finding out who they are. It helps them to build a strong and healthy identity.

Developing our identity

Knowing who you are and feeling good about yourself is an important part of leading a happy and fulfilled life. To help children build their identity, they need to feel that they belong and are accepted by their family, peers and the community.

Being different

Sometimes children are very different to others. They might look different. They may have a disability. They may look darker, lighter, taller or shorter than the other members of their family. They might be cleverer, quieter or louder than their siblings. They might be more feminine or masculine than their peers. Your son might enjoy putting on dresses or your daughter might enjoy playing with cars.

This can be difficult for the child's parents. They might be worried that their children will be rejected or made fun of. They might try to change them.

Suffering

Not feeling accepted is very difficult for a child. It can make the child withdraw from others and become isolated. Sometimes it can make the child emotional. It can also affect a child's confidence, or self-esteem.

How do I help my child?

Children who are different need a lot of support from their parents, carers and family. They need to know that they are loved – no matter what.

As their carers, there are some things we can do to show this love:

1. Don't be embarrassed

Don't be embarrassed by your child being different. Try not to see their difference as a problem. Talk to your child about it. Make them feel comfortable about it. If parents ignore the difference or pretend it is not there, the child will feel there is something wrong with them.

If your child looks different, make sure they understand that people often stare because they are surprised, not because they want to hurt the child.

2. Spend time with your child

Children who have a good relationship with their parents are able to resist peer pressure better. Have regular conversations with your child. Ask about their day and tell them about yours. Listen, and offer support or encouragement. Answer questions or help them solve any problems.

Stay involved in your child's life. Spend time with them, learn about their favourite activities, and their likes and dislikes. Help them to learn about yours too.

3. Help your child to protect themselves

Confident children who know that they are loved are assertive and not ashamed of themselves. Help your child to explain to others why they look different. A calm explanation can often stop teasing.

Also, help your child think of some good come-back lines for when they are being teased or bullied. Practise them with your child.

- "I will never feel bad because of you."
- "I may be different but you are nasty."
- "Say whatever you want."
- "I heard you and I don't care."
- "Why do you say things like that?"
- "That is not funny. Stop now."

4. Help your child establish healthy friendships

Friendships are important. Talk to your child about friendship. What do they want from a friend? How can they be a good friend? Give examples of being a good friend and a not-so-good friend. Discuss the importance of choosing friends carefully.

5. Recognise your child's strengths

Recognise and praise your child's abilities and strengths, and help your child to develop them. Encourage them to develop a skill or hobby or to take part in a sport. Doing something they feel good about will help their self-esteem and confidence. Joining a club or a sports team can help them develop strong, healthy friendships.



Read this article together. Talk about the ideas in the article and these questions:

- Do you know any children who are very different?
- Do you think the advice in this article can help the people who look after these children?
- How can the advice help us treat each other better in our clubs?

Ask the experts

Dear Rise,

I'm 26 years old and since 2013 I have been having flashbacks. When I was 5, I was raped by my cousin. He is 12 years older than me. He did it once and after that my other cousin did the very same thing. We were sleeping together as kids in rondavels and he did it over and over again. A stranger who visited at home also raped me several times.

This thing has really broken me. I tried to speak to my mom but she is so indifferent. I feel so alone and angry with everybody. I don't know how to love. I feel so helpless.

Broken

The experts answer your health and relationship questions. Send us your questions.



Soul City Institute
Rise Talk Show
Rise Young Women's Clubs



@soulcity_sa
@RiseTalkShow

- Being afraid to have sex, tense when having sex. Or becoming very promiscuous.
- Being depressed. Often feeling very sad and tearful.
- Suicidal thoughts and feelings.
- Self-harm: hurting yourself by cutting, hitting, banging, pulling hair.
- Alcohol and substance abuse.

Speaking out can be very difficult. There is always the fear that no one will believe you and that you will be rejected. What you need right now is to be around people who support you. You need a space to talk with a trustworthy person about your experiences.

I have listed a couple of organisations you can contact for help.

All the best,

♥ Rise

Organisations to contact:

Victims of Gender-Based Violence:
0800 428 428

South Africa Women Abuse Helpline:
0800 150 150

SADAG 24 hour Helpline: 0800 12 13 14

POWA: Telephone: 011 642 4345/6
Info@powa.co.za

Dear Sis' Lebo,

I have grown up being teased. I've been called ugly and other negative things by my peers and it has affected me. It might seem like a small problem, but to me it is a serious issue and I can't cope.

My main issue is my breasts. They are big, saggy and uneven. They are sore and I have back pain and sore nipples all the time. I'm tired all the time. Sometimes my nipples change colour and they stink. I can't afford a bra because it only lasts a week.

I've been teased about my breasts at school and I haven't been doing well at school. I tried to be strong but the inner me is damaged. I don't know how to be happy. I don't know how to love. I just hate everybody and I'm always sad. There's nothing positive in my life. Sometimes I just wish I could die. I have no friends because people make fun of me. I'm always locked up in the house crying and pretending to be happy around my mom because I don't want her to worry. I grew up in a poor home and we are still poor but I can't change my situation.

I feel that all I need is a breast reduction. That would make a big difference in my life and maybe everything else will be okay. I can't live like this. Please, I beg you, I can't afford a breast reduction and I need one. It's not for beauty, it is a medical issue that no one seem to understand.

I feel like I'm going crazy. I really need help. Please do reply even if you can't help me.

Thanks
God bless you

Body image

Dear Friend,

It sounds like things have been difficult for you for a long time. There seem to be a few things going on: the bullying, the size of your breasts, the cracked and stinking nipples and your feelings of sadness and isolation.

Let's start with your nipples. Having cracked and sore nipples is quite common. It is important that you go to the clinic. The cracks might be due to eczema or a fungal infection. This is easily treated with the right creams. The doctor could also assess whether you need a breast reduction.

I understand bras may be expensive but not wearing a bra can make matters worse for your nipples and for your back.

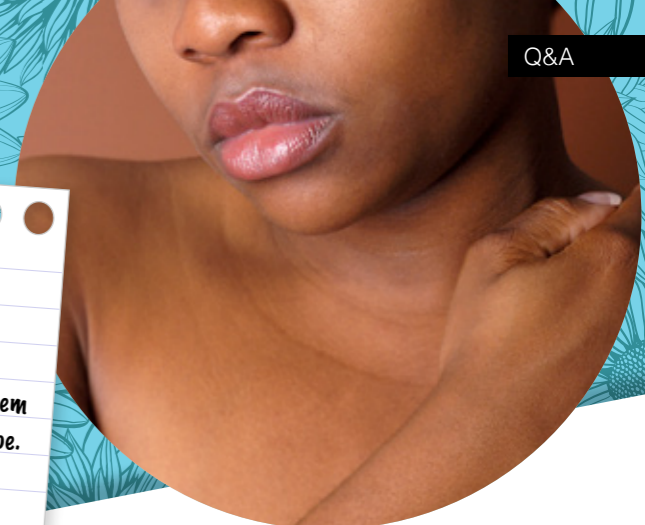
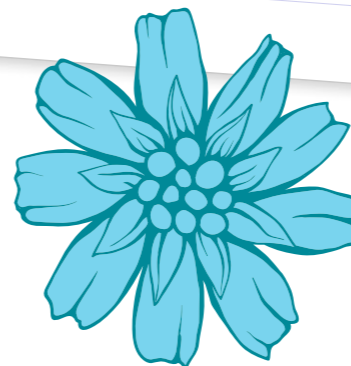
If you can't have a breast reduction maybe you can start to explore the positive side of having big breasts. The problem with magazines and advertising is that they make it look like all women have perfect breasts. Having uneven, large breasts is very normal.

The most important step is learning to love yourself. Make a list of the things you enjoy. Maybe this is something you could do with your mother? Or a friend? Try doing one small thing for yourself that makes you happy or feel cared for. Being at home alone all day will make you feel worse. Try to go for a walk at least once a day. Getting some physical activity is very good for you and being out can make a big difference to how you feel.

If things get really bad please contact Lifeline. Their phone number is 0800 150 150.

Take good care of yourself!

Sis' Lebo



The morning after!

Even if we are careful about contraception, things can go wrong. But if we act fast it is still possible to prevent pregnancy and HIV infection.



Here's how:

The morning after pill

You can prevent unwanted pregnancy with an emergency contraceptive known as the morning after pill. It is important to remember that if you wait more than 3 days (72 hours) neither of these will work.

The morning after pill should only be used for an emergency. It is not recommended for regular use. If you have decided to start having sex, you should have a regular contraception which will protect from pregnancy. And always use condoms to protect you from HIV and STIs.

Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP)

This is a short-term anti-retroviral (ARV) treatment that reduces the likelihood of HIV infection. PEP treatment is only effective if you take it within 72 hours of the possible exposure to HIV.

It is important to remember that if you wait too long, both treatments might not be effective.

IUD

You can also ask your clinic to insert an IUD (intrauterine device). It will prevent any future pregnancy and you can keep it for many years.

See the Activity Guide for a project on contraception and unplanned pregnancy.

Where do I find emergency contraception?

You should be able to get these treatments for free from your local clinic or hospital. You could also buy them from the pharmacy.



Dear Rise,

I am 18 years old and I think I love other girls. It started when I was in a relationship with someone and it was horrible. He did not understand me. Then I met a girl who also likes girls and we have been happy together. The problem is that there is a lot of gossip and anger from our parents, teachers and the community. What can I do to change their minds? I am thinking of packing and leaving with my new partner.

Confused

I love other girls

Dear Rise,

I'm a teenager and I stay with my mother. My mother does not talk to me a lot. Recently she got engaged to younger man. I am happy for her but the problem is that she wants to take me with to her new in-laws. This means relocating to another province. My own father is unemployed but he is a good father. I don't want to move. I failed a grade last year because of stress. What should I do? I feel like my mother is using her new engagement to spite my father, ruining our lives at the same time.

Angry

Don't want to move

Dear Angry,

I am sorry to hear about your problem. Your father sounds like he is a good parent. You do not say how old you are and if your father agrees that you stay with him. You need to find out if he has a plan of how he can support you. Will he ask a relative to help? Will you have to move schools?

It may be best to speak to someone in your family, an elder who everyone respects, and let them know how you feel. They will then have to speak to your parents to solve the problem.

If you do not find a solution in this way, please ask your school to help you speak to your parents or to recommend a social worker to help you with this situation.

Good luck,

♥ Rise

Dear Confused,

Unfortunately, our parents and community do not always understand that you have every right to love whoever you want to.

You are still young and it very important that you take care of yourself and find people who will support you.

In terms of your teachers, you have a right to study without any discrimination or harassment. They cannot treat you badly because of your sexual orientation. Is there a teacher who you trust who you could speak to about what is happening?

Otherwise get in touch with organisations that work with gay and lesbian people. Explain to them what you are experiencing at your school. You may also contact the Human Rights Commission if you feel that your rights have been violated.

In terms of your family it would be good to speak to a relative who is understanding. Explain to them how you feel. Even if you do not have the support of all of your relatives, speaking to one may help you remain connected to your family.

Once you have completed your schooling, it might be a good option to move away from your family. In time, when they see that you are happy, they may accept your lifestyle choices.

Good luck,

♥ Rise

The Girls' Empire Rise Young Women's Club

based in Emalahleni, Gauteng

#girlsempireriseclub

