



for every child

Children, HIV and AIDS

Every day, 320 children and adolescents die from AIDS-related causes, or 13 every hour.

Worldwide, only 59 percent of infants born to women living with HIV received an HIV test within two months of birth. Left untreated, 30 percent of children born with HIV will die by their first birthday and 50 percent by their second. For adolescents, the stakes are even higher. In 2019 alone, 460,000 young people (ages 10-24) were newly infected with HIV, of whom 170,000 were adolescents (ages 10-19).

UNICEF works with global partners in a concerted effort to fight HIV/AIDS. Since 2000, there has been a 70 percent reduction in AIDS-related deaths among children under 5, and 1.6 million pediatric HIV infections have been prevented. One major success is increased access to antiretroviral treatment for HIV+ pregnant women to prevent mother-to-child transmission.

However, children living with HIV have not benefited from the same increased access to treatment as adults. Only 56 percent of children under 15 living with HIV are receiving the lifesaving treatment they require, while 85 percent of pregnant women with HIV are. An estimated 110,000 children aged 0-19 died of AIDS-related causes in 2019. While deaths due to AIDS have decreased overall since 2010, there were an estimated 320,000 new HIV infections among children in 2019.

An AIDS-Free Generation Is Within Reach

UNICEF is working to achieve an AIDS-free generation by 2030. This goal relies on all children being born and remaining HIV-free for the first two decades of life. UNICEF's strategy focuses on eliminating mother-to-child



Felix, 18 months old, plays with a ball. He tested negative for HIV, thanks to a UNICEF-supported PMTCT program.

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About UNICEF

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) works in more than 190 countries and territories to put children first. UNICEF has helped save more children's lives than any other humanitarian organization by providing health care and immunizations, clean water and sanitation, nutrition, education, emergency relief and more. UNICEF USA supports UNICEF's work through fundraising, advocacy and education in the United States. Together, we are working toward the day when no children die from preventable causes and every child has a safe and healthy childhood.

For more information, visit [unicefusa.org](https://www.unicefusa.org).

transmission, preventing infection among adolescents, and increasing access to treatment for children and adolescents with HIV.

In 2019, based on the experience in East Asia and the Pacific, UNICEF developed a strategy for digital programming to reach at-risk adolescents with self-testing and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), currently being piloted in Côte d'Ivoire.

UNICEF is working to close the treatment gap, and reduce new infections in children and infant deaths. UNICEF is supporting innovative point-of-care (POC) diagnostic technologies to increase access to early infant testing and

diagnosis and to improve HIV treatment. The POC Toolkit, launched in 2018, contains practical tools and guidance for implementing countries. To help expand access to POC machines in Francophone countries, the toolkit was translated into French in 2019. UNICEF engagement in expanding the use of POC technologies is helping advance dialogue on the value of using the platforms for multiple uses critical to improving care in primary clinics.

Adolescent HIV prevention is a special focus for UNICEF. Currently, there are an estimated 1.6 million adolescents (ages 10–19) living with HIV, of which 59 percent are female. UNICEF's work among adolescents has sought to improve the quality of HIV testing, treatment and prevention services; boost community demand for services; and reach those who have been left behind.

UNICEF is working alongside families and young people to raise awareness of HIV prevention and reduce discrimination against those living with HIV/AIDS. In Pakistan, UNICEF has been involved in preparing a comprehensive training package as part of its support for the government's efforts to reduce discrimination in health care settings. Stigma reduction is incorporated into guidelines on HIV treatment, pediatric care, and health worker training in reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health settings.

Cash transfer programs are helping to stem the underlying drivers of risky behavior, reduce infection rates for vulnerable groups, and provide greater access to treatment. And UNICEF is empowering youth with innovative, free technologies, such as U-Report, which allows teens to anonymously

text questions about HIV and AIDS and provide feedback to health care providers.

UNICEF's HIV/AIDS programs are closely planned and implemented in tandem with its other programs, including health; social protection; nutrition; water; sanitation and hygiene (WASH); and emergency assistance in conflict and natural disaster settings.

HIV/AIDS Snapshot

In 2019, UNICEF:

- Some 13.5 million adolescent girls and 9 million adolescent boys were tested for HIV through UNICEF support and received their report.
- UNICEF supported testing of over 600,000 infants born to pregnant women living with HIV within their first two months of life, providing caregivers the information they needed to initiate lifesaving ART for the infant. UNICEF-supported programs provided antiretroviral treatment (ART) to almost 1 million pregnant women living with HIV to prevent its transmission to their child.
- Sri Lanka joined the list of 13 countries that have been certified by WHO for elimination of mother-to-child transmission (EMTCT) of HIV. UNICEF played a significant role in this achievement, participating in in-country assessment activities that confirmed 97 percent coverage of HIV and syphilis testing of pregnant women, and zero reported cases in newborns. ●

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A health worker in Malawi laughs and cuddles with an 8-month-old baby. His mother is HIV-positive, so he was tested for HIV six weeks after his birth — he was HIV-free. He'll continue to be tested as long as he is breastfeeding.