



**THE BEST
CLUB
PROGRAM:
2025 SAACHS
CONFERENCE**

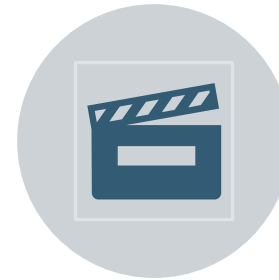
INTRODUCTION (SR. THERESA DE VRIES)



THE BEST CLUB WAS
FOUNDED IN 2017 BY SR.
THERESA DE VRIES WITH ONE
STUDENT. OVER THE YEARS,
IT HAS GROWN INTO A
NETWORK SERVING OVER
400 + MEMBERS.



NOW AN OFFICIAL UFS
ASSOCIATION, IT PROVIDES A
STRUCTURED APPROACH TO
MEETING THE DIVERSE NEEDS OF
STUDENTS, FOSTERING A SENSE
OF BELONGING AND OFFERING
COMPREHENSIVE CARE.



THE PROGRAM EXEMPLIFIES
RESILIENCE, COMPASSION, AND
COMMUNITY IN ACTION.

MISSION AND VISION

The Best Club is dedicated to fostering a supportive environment where students affected by HIV find assistance and belonging within the UFS community.

Mission: Holistic care addressing emotional, social, and physical well-being while promoting inclusivity.

Vision: Empowering students to overcome stigma and embrace healing and growth.

VALUES

The Best Club
operates on these
core values:

Empathy and
Compassion

Integrity and
Accountability

Inclusivity and
Diversity

Resilience and
Growth

THEMES AND FOCUS (XOLISWA LATYEBA)



Annual themes guide the club's activities and goals.



In 2024, the theme 'Let's Begin to Heal' emphasized addressing all aspects of life holistically. Through events, discussions, and support programs, the theme inspired members to embrace personal and collective healing.

CORE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

The Best Club offers a range of support programs:

WhatsApp Group: A communication hub for peer-to-peer support and updates.

Treatment Buddy System: Students pair up for emotional support and adherence to treatments.

Chatroom: A stigma-reduction platform for open discussions.

Quarterly Gatherings: Celebratory and bonding events like picnics and wellness days.

COUNSELING AND SUPPORT

The program addresses stigma, discrimination, and mental health challenges:

Psychological and emotional support provided by lay counselor Xoliswa Latyeba.

Individual and group counseling sessions foster a safe space for members to share and grow.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Key milestones of The Best Club include:

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graph TD; A[Key milestones of The Best Club include:] --> B[Membership expanded to over 400 students.]; B --> C[Successful launch of innovative programs like the Chatroom.]; C --> D[Secured food parcel packages from Kovsie Health, addressing basic needs for members.];
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Membership expanded to over 400 students.

Successful launch of innovative programs like the Chatroom.

Secured food parcel packages from Kovsie Health, addressing basic needs for members.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Challenges:

Insufficient SCD services and lack of essential supplies like food and toiletries.

Communication gaps with varying levels of engagement.

High rates of suicide attempts among students.

Opportunities:

Expand reach to South Campus and strengthen partnerships.

Enhance mental health support to address suicide risks.

Promote greater awareness and participation in initiatives.

THE CHATROOM (KATLEGO MASIKE)

Focus areas:

The Chatroom serves as a Stigma and Discrimination Prevention program, promoting mental health and providing a safe space for students to discuss their everyday challenges.

It also facilitates financial literacy programs and HIV/AIDS awareness

Personal Empowerment (Self-Leadership)

Social Empowerment (Relationships)

Health Empowerment (Sexuality and Reproductive Health)

Psychological Empowerment (Mental Health)

Educational Empowerment (Career and Human Rights)



Vision:



To provide education on HIV/AIDS and mental health, breaking stigma and improving students' well-being.



Impact:



Chatroom sessions take place every Friday for two hours, with the highest attendance reaching 59/60 students.



These sessions create a healthy university environment, teaching students the importance of physical and mental health care.



2025 Theme : Teach One to Heal One.

STUDENT REVIEWS

“Being part of the Best Club has been a game-changer for me. Connecting with others who understand my experiences and challenges has provided me with a sense of community and belonging. The group has offered me emotional support, guidance, and resources to manage my HIV status. Sharing our stories and experiences has helped me feel less isolated and more empowered to take control of my health. Overall, being part of this group has helped me build resilience, confidence, and a renewed sense of purpose. I’m grateful for the support—it’s been instrumental in my journey living with HIV.”

“I was diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in 2020. The next few years were very difficult for me. Through Sr. Theresa, I was introduced to The Best Club group on the 9th of June in 2022. I was shy and awkward at first, but after opening, my healing journey began. I was able to take off my mask and allow myself to be vulnerable with people who knew what I was going through. Because of that, I have gained many brothers and sisters who never judged me but welcomed me with open arms. The events and activities I have attended and partaken in as a member of The Best Club were memorable. They made me realize that, after all, life still goes on, and one should not dwell in their sorrows but open to the possibilities and opportunities that life offers.”

“The Best Club has been instrumental in building my confidence and helping me stand firm in making decisions. It significantly boosted my self-esteem, particularly through the Chatroom sessions, which helped me cope with stress and depression during challenging times when I had no funding. The program also made me realize that being open about my HIV status creates awareness and inspires millions of people. It changes lives, reduces stigma, and eliminates discrimination against individuals living with HIV. Additionally, it promotes protecting loved ones. The Best Club has also helped me grow socially, allowing me to overcome shyness and move away from being an introvert. It has truly been a transformative experience.”



CONCLUSION

The Best Club Program exemplifies resilience, compassion, and community.

Through its initiatives, the program empowers students and fosters an environment where healing, support, and belonging are accessible to all. Together, we are making a transformative impact.

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Q&A SESSION

We welcome your questions, thoughts, and insights as we discuss this transformative program.