

The Brave Journey of Venance

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In Tanzania, children with HIV face challenges in understanding their condition and the significance of consistently following their antiretroviral therapy (ART). Many children, especially those younger than 16 years old have difficulty grasping the complex terminology related to HIV and the effects of their treatment. This lack of comprehension often results in poor adherence to ART, which is vital for controlling the virus and maintaining their health. Furthermore, the traditional methods used to teach children about HIV and ART have not been engaging enough to make the information both memorable and effective.

Tara Atabasamu Tena

is an HIV storybook that provides education using a combination of pictures and text. It offers guidance on the proper use of antiretroviral drugs for managing HIV, especially for children.

The book uses **appealing pictorial language** that helps in easily delivering education to children about the proper use of HIV.

It introduces new terms, such as using **"dawa ya ajabu"** instead of **"ARV medication,"** which helps reduce stigma and also it helps avoid stigma by enabling children to use discreet terms in front of others, thereby protecting family privacy.

The book **includes songs** that children enjoy and have become accustomed to singing, bringing enthusiasm to their clinic visits.



"The children have managed from having a high viral load they have suppressed and undetectable. Many children have expressed a desire to have their own copies of Tara Atabasamu Tena to read at home and share with their friends."

Thobias Gobre Fissoo, manager of Dareda Hospital

You don't need to worry, the medicine is here to help.

Take it every day, the medicine is here to help.

You can live a happy life because the medicine is here to help!

Venance is a 13-year-old child living with HIV. He is in the seventh grade and lives near Dareda Centre with his parents, who are also undergoing HIV treatment. Venance was born with HIV, but his parents did not discover it until he was 11 years old. He was diagnosed with HIV after a severe fever led him to the hospital that eventually led to his diagnosis. The news was a heavy blow for his family. They had always been hopeful and full of dreams for their son, but now they faced an additional challenge.



The diagnosis came with a whirlwind of emotions and adjustments. For Venance's parents, it was a test of resilience and strength, but their love for their son never wavered.



Once the diagnosis was made, Venance's parents began a rigorous treatment regimen. They knew that managing HIV was not just about medication but also about providing Venance with a supportive environment filled with love and understanding. They were determined to ensure that he lived a life full of joy and opportunities despite the challenges. Though he faced many challenges in his life, he did not let them define him. Venance's enthusiasm for life shines through in everything he does.



Venance is a bright light who enjoys spending time with his friends. Whether they are playing games, sharing jokes or simply hanging out, Venance's laughter is a constant.

Venance is open about his status and is joyfully supported by his friends. They celebrate his victories, no matter how small and stand by him during the tough times.

After reading **Tara Atabasamu Tena**, Venance really understood the importance of his ART. His confidence was boosted and the storybook has helped him follow his medication regimen and choose friends wisely who are supportive in his life.



ART nurse said
"Since Venance started HIV treatment he never misses his medication."

As Venance grows older, his story continues as one of hope and resilience. He is a shining example of how courage and positivity can overcome daunting challenges. His journey is a testament to the power of love, community and unwavering determination.



And so, the story of Venance a brave and cheerful soul continues, reminding everyone that with hope and perseverance, even the most challenging journeys can lead to extraordinary destinations.