WHAT MAKES ME DIFFERENT (20 minutes)

**Goals:** The goal of this particular activity is for students to realize what it is like to be seen as different, and furthermore, what it is like to be judged or stereotyped based on these differences.

**Instructions:** Explain to your students: (1) silence is absolutely necessary; (2) participation is voluntary; and (3) information revealed is confidential. Once the mood of the group seems serious, ask the students to stand up. Explain that a series of statements will be read one at a time, and students should sit down when something is read that applies to them.

**Statements:**
- If your parents are divorced, please sit down.
- If you are not 100% Caucasian......
- If you are female/male...... (depending on the minority gender in your IEG)
- If you had a housekeeper/maid when growing up...
- If you have an alcoholic in your family......
- If English is your second language......
- If you have ever received a “C,” “D,” or “F” on an exam......
- If you feel that you are too thin or too heavy...
- If you have ever seen a therapist......
- If you or anyone you know has had an abortion...
- If you are sexually active......
- If you have ever cheated on a boyfriend/girlfriend...
- If you have a criminal record...
- If you have ever had a sexually transmitted disease (STD)...
- If you have slept with more than 5 people...
- If you have ever used any illegal substances...
- If you have ever shoplifted...
- If you have ever had sex without protection...
- If you have ever taken part in a threesome...
- If you are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgendered......
- If you have a person in your family who has been in prison......
- If you have ever masturbated...
- If you have or know someone who has been sexually abused......
- If you have or know someone who has been raped......
- If you are or know someone who is HIV-positive......
- If you have lied at any point during this activity.....

**Discussion:** Process what the experience was like for the students. Talk about how it feels to be different from the majority of students. Did you (as facilitators) observe any body language that indicated discomfort among the students? Keep in mind that it may be the group who is left standing who feels “different.”

If the students are quiet, ask them how they think they can tell if someone is HIV-positive or living with AIDS and write each “sign” of HIV/AIDS on the board. After the students can’t come up with any more “signs”, you should ask the students what else each “sign” of HIV/AIDS could indicate. For example, ask them what else “skinny” could indicate and write down some of the possibilities next to it. Have some suggestions for alternate diagnoses (like “has cancer, undergoing chemotherapy” for “skinny”) before starting this activity.