

Upendo Conservation Area

Basic Street Talk Script for Peer Trainers

Introduction

Street talks refer to when 1-4 (or more) people walk along the street or through a marketplace and talk with people 1 on 1 or in small groups about snake awareness and snakebite prevention. The street talk should (1) be informative, (2) determine how much the person or people know about snakes and snakebite, (3) offer some solutions for snakebite prevention, and (4) take much less time than a full training session.

Remember that the idea is to just introduce people to some of the ideas about snakebite prevention. This is not a full training session. Try to keep this to no more than 30 minutes.

More than likely others will come around and listen. Engage the group. You don't have to use everything we have listed here in one talk. Use whatever you are comfortable with. Keep it light, maintain eye contact, speak clearly, know what you want to say but adapt to changing conditions. You've got this.

Introducing Yourself

When you walk up to a person for the first time, what should you say? This is an important time to let people know who you represent and why you are here. You also give them the opportunity to tell you whether they are interested in hearing what you want to say.

Here is one example of how you can introduce yourself -
"Hello! My name is Samuel and I am from _____ [group or organization]. I am one of their peer trainers. **(If you have a partner with you, introduce them as well)**. We partner with an organization called the Upendo Conservation Area that trains us about snakes and snakebites so we can educate our community. We really care about people that are at risk of venomous snakebites. We are here in the area to find out what people know about snakes and to share some ideas about how snakebite can be prevented. We do this because there is so little antivenom available and treatment is so expensive. So, learning how to recognize dangerous snakes and prevent snakebite might save your life. Are you interested in learning more? Do you mind if we talk to you for just a few minutes?"

IF NO, THEN SAY: "Thank you for your time and I hope we get a chance to talk with you another time."

IF YES THEN SAY: "That is great, and thank you. I want to start out by asking you what you know about snakebite in Kenya. To begin with, do you know that over 15000 people are bitten by venomous snakes in Kenya each year? That's right.

[Hold up the poster below] Now fortunately, not all of those people die, so if you take a look at this poster, about how many people do you think die from snakebite in Kenya each year? Is it 10, 100, 1000 or 10000?"

What do you know about snakebite in Kenya?

How many people die from snakebite each year in Kenya?

10. 100. 1000. 10000.

How many people lose a limb or have a permanent disability from snakebite each year in Kenya?

40. 400. 4000. 40000.

What is the only way to neutralize the venom from a venomous snakebite?

Herbs - Black Stone - Antivenom.

If you don't know these answers, you need snake awareness training!

“The answer is 1000”.

[Point to next question on the same poster].

Now how many do you think have an arm or leg amputated or a permanent disability as a result of snakebite each year in Kenya? (Answer is 4000).

[SAME POSTER] - *“Finally, what is the only way that you can successfully treat a venomous snakebite?”*

*“The answer is **antivenom**. Some people might like to go to a traditional healer, but the truth is that nothing a healer can do can stop the effects of the snake venom once it gets inside your body. Only antivenom treatment can cause the venom to stop working. So you are putting yourself at risk if you waste time going to the traditional healer specifically for snakebite. If a healer helps you after a snakebite, it was probably a bite from a harmless or mildly venomous snake.”*

"Now **this question is not on the poster**, but let me ask you before I show you another poster: how many kinds of snakes are found in Kenya and how many of those are venomous?" [ALLOW THEM TO GUESS]

"The correct answer is that there are 140 types of snakes in Kenya, and of those only 29 species are venomous and only 10 species are known to be dangerous to humans, including the rock python (non-venomous). So many people think that every snake can cause harm to human beings, but that is simply not true. Many snakes are killed unnecessarily because people never learn how to recognize the ones that are dangerous. They just assume that the only good snake is a dead snake."

"Next, I just want to show you pictures of four snakes and I want you to tell me which one of the snakes is dangerous to you. You might be surprised to know that only one of these snakes is actually dangerous and not all of them. Which one do you think it is?"

Which of these snakes is dangerous to you?



Photos used with permission from the owner Stephen Spawls

If you don't know the answer, you need snake awareness training!

Point out the puff adder (#4) and tell them a little bit about it- they cause more snakebites than any other snake in Africa, they are highly venomous, they are found in drier areas and are very good with camouflage, and they lie in wait until their food comes by [ambush predator]. Tell them the names of the other three and that they are harmless to humans [**1 - Battersby's green snake, 2 - brown house snake, 3 - rhombic egg eater**]. **Make sure they understand that the green snake is NOT a green mamba.**

"Ok, now I want to ask you about where you might come across a snake around the outside of your home. Here are four places: in the woodpile, in tall grasses, working in the garden or fields, or near a water source. Tell me which ones of these are places you might encounter a snake."

Where might you find a snake in your compound?



In your wood pile



In tall grasses



In your garden or fields



Near water sources

If you don't know the answer, you need snake awareness training!

The answer is **“ALL OF THEM”**.

“Now, which of these things should you NOT do when you are walking around outside?”

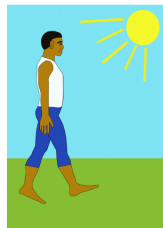
Which of these should you do to avoid snakes outside?



Watch where you put hands



Watch where you sit



Walk around in bare feet



Use a torch outside at night

If you don't know the answer, you need snake awareness training!

The answer is **“WALK AROUND IN BARE FEET”**.
Talk a bit about each one.

Hands - don't put them anywhere where you can't see inside

Sit - snakes hide themselves well; look carefully before sitting

Bare feet - offers no protection for snakebite

Light - always use a torch or you could step on a harmful snake

"Now let me ask you a similar question about finding snakes inside your house. Which of these four places might you find a snake?" (all of them)

Where might you find a snake in your house?



Under the bed or furniture



On the floor when sleeping



In a pile of clothes on the floor



In your shoes

If you don't know the answer, you need snake awareness training!

The answer is ALL OF THEM. **Talk a bit about each one.**

Bed/furniture - look under bed/furniture, under cushions or pillows before sitting or standing

Sleeping on floor - always check out what is around you (with a light at night) before moving hands or feet

Pile of clothes - snakes will hide in any place that is dark and seems safe, so why not a pile of clothes?

Shoes - hang your shoes up on a nail on the wall to prevent snakes and scorpions from getting inside

“Now why would a snake want to enter your house? What possible reason would it want to be there? The first is that they come to our houses to search for food (rodents) and water. The other reason is to cool off or warm up their bodies.”

“So now let’s think about what you should do IF you find a snake in your house. Which of these four things do you think is a good thing to do? There might be more than one answer.”

Which of these should you do if you find a snake in your house?



If you don't know the answer, you need snake awareness training!

“So the correct answers are to back slowly away, and to get family to safety. NEVER try to touch or poke a snake, and always stay calm. What are some other things you should do?”

1. Have someone keep an eye on the snake and try to keep it inside one room until help comes
2. If you do so safely, take a photo of the snake and try to identify it
3. ***If you know the snake is harmless***, you can sweep behind it towards a bucket or box and take it outside away from your house; you can also cover it with a bucket or blanket until help arrives.

Finishing It Up

"I hope you feel like you have learned something from our talk here today. Suppose we offered a more detailed training on these topics at a location in this area. Is this something you might be interested in attending? If so, how can we get in touch with you?"

Finish with, "Thank you for your time today. I hope you get a chance to learn more about snakes and other ways to keep you safe. I also hope you will take some of the practical steps we talked about today to keep you and your family safe at home and when outside. Have a great day!"

ADD-ONS

If you have a group that really wants to talk about the snakes, use your snake ID cards to help them learn about other dangerous snakes in their area, such as the cobras and mambas, burrowing asps, boomslangs, and night adders. Also make sure they know that there are some snakes that cannot hurt humans that should be left alone or moved to a safe area.