

Making Youth Perspectives Count in STD Prevention

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STD Population Data:

Highlights of 2009 Alaska STD Population Data

- ü Individuals, age 15-29 comprise 82% of all the chlamydia reports and 62% of gonorrhea reports.**
 - ü Alaska Natives and African Americans are over represented in STD rates.**
 - ü Females, ages 15-29 are reported with STD more than males, at a rate of 2:1.**
 - ü Preliminary rankings put Alaska in second place for chlamydia rates and in the top ten, nationally.**
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What factors contribute to high STD rates among young people?

- ∅ *Population Factors*
 - ∅ *Biological/Physiological Factors*
 - ∅ *Behavioral Factors/Correlations*
 - ∅ *Program Factors*
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Population Factors

Alaska has a lower median age (30.9) than the U.S. as a whole (35.5)

- } Cellular – the immature cervix has yet to undergo epithelial changes from a preponderance of columnar to squamous epithelium. Cervical columnar epithelium increases a young woman's susceptibility to STD.***
- } pH - the vaginal flora also changes during puberty. The higher vaginal pH of early adolescence may be associated with a lower prevalence of hydrogen-peroxide-producing organisms.***
- } Asymptomatic nature of chlamydia = greater opportunity for transmission***
- } Current gonorrhea bug has milder symptoms***

Behavioral factors/correlations

Behavioral research has identified correlations between incidence of STD (including HIV) with:

- } Depression and other Mood and Anxiety Disorders**
- } Alcohol consumption and drug use**
- } History of childhood sexual abuse**

Alaska has among the highest rates of:

- } Clinical depression and suicide (the suicide rate among rural Alaska children is 9 times the national average)**
- } Alcohol consumption in the U.S.**
- } Childhood sexual abuse, domestic violence and sexual assault**

Local Behavioral factors/correlations

- } Percent of students who have been forced to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to rose from 8.1% to 9.2% to 10.1%**
- } Percent of students who actually attempted suicide one or more times during the past 12 months rose from 8.1% to 10.7% to 8.5%**
- } Percent of students who have had sexual intercourse rose from 39.6% to 45.1% to 43.4%**
- } Percent of students who had sexual intercourse with one or more people during the past 3 months rose from 27.6% to 30.9% to 30.4%**
- } Percent of students who had sexual intercourse with 4 or more people during their life rose from 12.1% to 13.4% to 11.4%**
- } Of those who had sexual intercourse during the past 3 months, percent of those who used a condom during last sexual experience decreased from 62.3% to 60.8% to 60.2%**

Source: Alaska YRBS, 2003, 2007 and 2009

Local Behavioral factors/correlations

- } Multiple partners**
- } Alcohol/drug abuse**
- } Time spent in correctional facilities**
- } Increased use of methamphetamines**
- } “Hook-up” culture among youth – *friends with benefits***
- } Use of internet networks to find partners – social networking**

Source: Alaska HIV/STD Program staff (and friends)

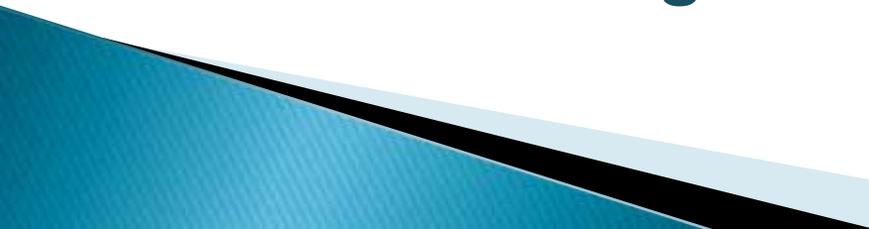
“Vows of abstinence break more easily than condoms.”
-Former Surgeon General Jocelyn Edwards

Program Factors

Increased detection through:

- } Newer, more sensitive laboratory technology**
- } Noninvasive specimen (urine) collection**
- } Increased screening for at-risk populations**
- } Partner Services identifies those at highest risk, individuals exposed to STD**

In other words, we're finding it because we're looking for it!



State Public Health Programs provide:

- } STD clinical services
 - } HIV Counseling & Testing
 - } Family Planning
 - } Community Education
 - } Partner Notification Services – cornerstone of public health intervention activities
 - } Epidemiological Investigations, recently on gonorrhea outbreak in Southwest Alaska and on Expedited Partner Therapy
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Expedited Partner Therapy:

Attitudes, Beliefs, Practices for Gonorrhea and Chlamydia Control

In May 2010, Section of Epidemiology asked CDC for assistance in identifying opportunities for enhanced partner services through EPT. EIS officers were sent to assist in an investigation.

The primary objectives of this investigation were to:

- § Determine knowledge, attitudes, and practices of expedited partner therapy for gonorrhea and chlamydia control among policy makers, healthcare providers, patients, and other key stakeholders.
- § Develop a plan for implementing and evaluating expedited partner therapy as a gonorrhea and chlamydia control effort.

Expedited Partner Therapy in Alaska?

What do the Patients Have to say?

- } Majority willing to use EPT for
 - All partners (63%)
 - At least one partner (93%)
 - PHN for other partners
- } Majority willing to take meds from their partner (87%)
 - Some would also get “checked”
- } Giving meds better than Rx
- } Some are concerned other infections not being treated
- } Also willing to tell partners to get tested
- } Partners have no time to get treated
- } Partners are embarrassed
 - “Why are you here”
 - CHA/P is auntie or auntie of partner
- } PHN is preferred for partners
- } Don't know partners name
- } Not willing to tell partner's names

Attitudes towards EPT

Perceived Barriers

Patients :STD Prevention Opportunities

- } Majority reported that going to the clinic is still the best way for partners to get treated.
- } Some patients acknowledge that having sex parties after drinking is a risk for STDs
 - One prevention approach suggested is only party with people you know
- } Majority of patients want these *available in schools*:
 - STD testing and treatment
 - Better sex education

Sexual Health Education

Alaska student leaders call for more sex education

RESOLUTION: Alaska organization pushes for 'comprehensive' plan.

JUNEAU -- News flash: Alaska high schoolers are interested in sex -- or at least learning more about it.

The Alaska Association of Student Governments overwhelmingly passed a resolution during its spring conference in Sitka this month asking for "a mandatory, comprehensive, medically accurate, age-appropriate nine-week sex education course" for all high school students statewide.

The resolution, on which some 225 student representatives from 20 Alaska high schools discussed at the meeting, ticks off 19 different reasons for mandating sex ed courses, including evidence of abstinence-only programs' ineffectiveness, the public cost of teens bearing children and Alaska's position as No. 1 in the country for per capita cases of the sexually transmitted disease chlamydia.

Copies of the resolution are on their way to state legislators, the State Board of Education & Early Development and Anchorage municipal and education officials.

By JEREMY HSIEH

Juneau Empire via The Associated Press

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Fundamentals of STD Intervention

A comprehensive CDC training for health care workers working in STD prevention and control. Course objectives: to enhance efficacy in interviewing techniques to identify and locate sexual partners of STD patients; to improve field safety and methods of confidential notification and referral of partners to medical evaluation; to facilitate a risk reduction plan; and to review techniques for case management.

This is a no cost training with nursing credits attached through the California Board of Nursing.

October 19-22 Frontier Building – Room 896
3601 C Street, Anchorage

October 26-29 Bethel Public Health Nursing Center

<http://stdhivtraining.org>