

The Fight Against HIV/AIDS: Public Education Standards Across the Globe



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HONORS CAPSTONE PROJECT

Overview



- HIV/AIDS: The disease and the epidemic
- Why is HIV/AIDS and sex education important?
- What types of sex education are common in public schools?
- Analysis of sex and HIV/AIDS education offered in:
 - United States and Great Britain
 - Sweden
 - Senegal
 - Latin America
 - ✦ Mexico

HIV/AIDS – The Disease



- The HIV virus has been present in humans since at least the 1950's
- Discovery that HIV causes AIDS – 1984
- Currently no cure is available, only lifelong, expensive antiretroviral treatment
- 34 million people currently infected with HIV
- 50,000 new HIV infections in the U.S. each year
- If left untreated, 95% of people infected with HIV will die of AIDS



Robert Gallo

Why is HIV/AIDS and sex education so important?

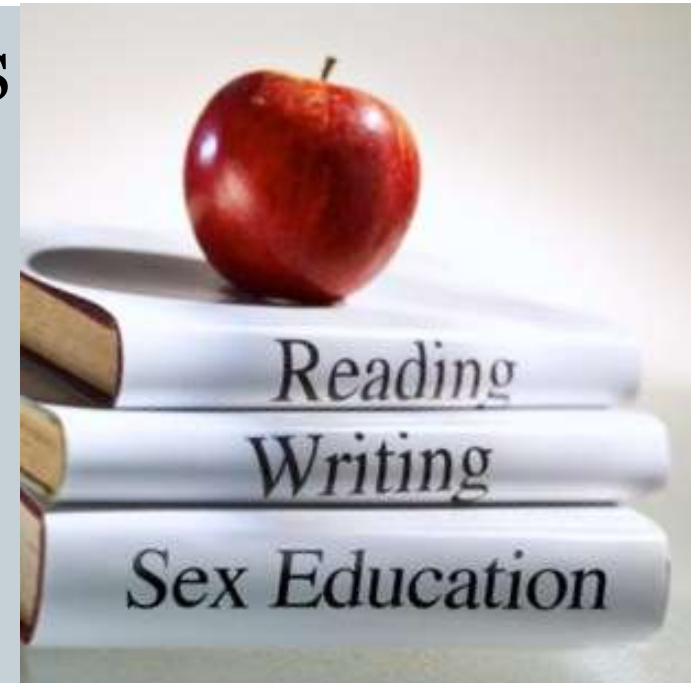


- No cure available, must fight with prevention
- Some prevention drugs available (PreP), but expensive
- Education could reach more people, with longer lasting consequences
- Education about potentially life-threatening topics is vital
- Could reduce stigma, fear, discrimination

Common Types of Sex and HIV/AIDS Education



- **Abstinence-Only sex and HIV/AIDS education:**
 - Strict abstinence-only
 - Abstinence-only with contraceptives
 - General biology/health with abstinence-only
- **Comprehensive sex and HIV/AIDS education:**
 - Includes information about:
 - ✦ Contraceptives
 - ✦ HIV/AIDS and other STI's
 - ✦ Resources (family planning)
 - ✦ Sexuality, abortion, sexual abuse, etc.



United States and Great Britain



- **The current situation in both the U.S. and Great Britain:**
 - Abstinence-only education is dominant
 - Sex education in the U.S. is optional, in Great Britain is compulsory
 - Sex and HIV/AIDS education often reserved for higher grade levels
 - In the U.S., actions of politicians vs. wishes of parents
 - In Great Britain, parental influence very important

United States and Great Britain



- Results of the Alan Guttmacher study on sex education and teen pregnancies/births
 - Highest rates of abstinence-only in the South, also highest teen birth rate
 - Highest rates of comprehensive in the Northeast, also lowest teen birth rate

HIV Prevalence in the U.S. in 2010:

Region	Northeast	West	Midwest	South
% of new AIDS diagnoses (in 2010)	24%	19%	13%	45%
% of U.S. residents living with AIDS (in 2010)	29%	20%	11%	40%
% of U.S. AIDS deaths (in 2010)	24%	17%	11%	48%

Sweden



- Sex education compulsory in schools since 1955
- HIV/AIDS prevalence has always been extremely low
- An extremely open, informative, and nationwide program
- Acceptance of teen sexuality
- Criminalization of infection due to negligence and compulsory testing/treatment
- Problems
 - Education of teachers
 - Criminalization led to discrimination/stigma



Comparison of Sweden to U.S. and Great Britain



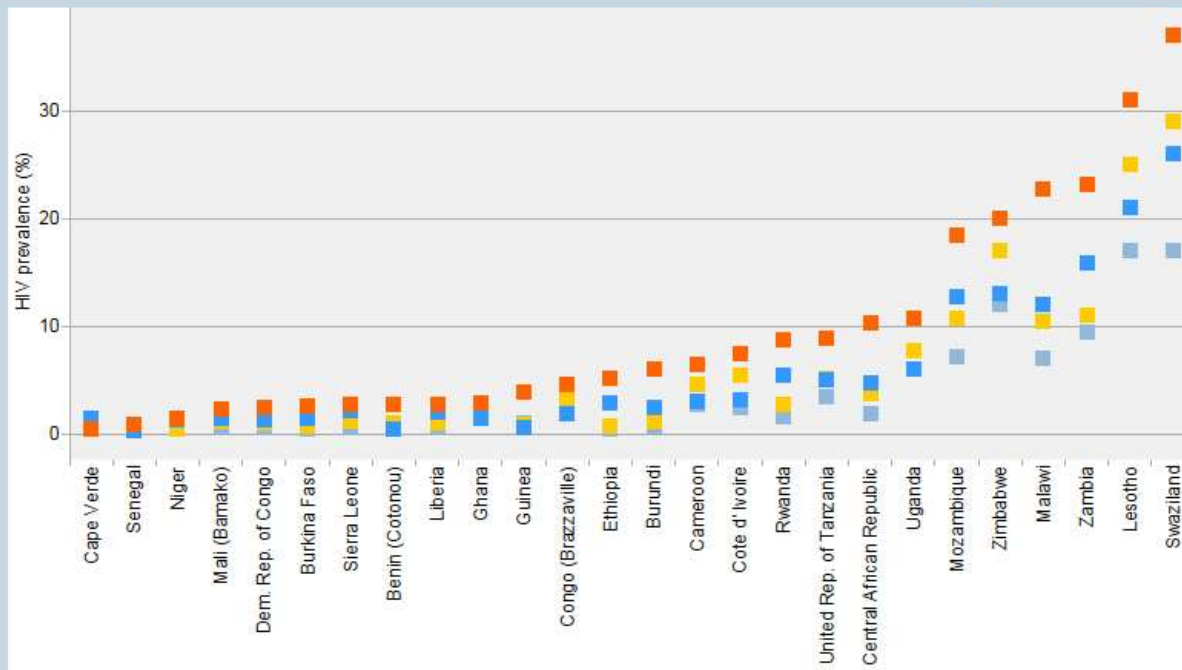
Table 2. Birth, abortion and pregnancy rates and abortion ratio, by country, according to age-group, mid-1990s

Country	Ages 15–19				Ages 15–17				Ages 18–19			
	Births per 1,000	Abortions per 1,000	Pregnancies per 1,000	Abortion ratio	Births per 1,000	Abortions per 1,000	Pregnancies per 1,000	Abortion ratio	Births per 1,000	Abortions per 1,000	Pregnancies per 1,000	Abortion ratio
Sweden (1996)	7.8	17.2	25.0	68.8	2.7	13.7	16.4	83.5	15.5	22.6	38.1	59.3
France* (1995)	10.0	10.2	20.2	50.5	3.5	6.8	10.3	66.0	20.0	15.2	35.2	43.2
Canada (1995)	24.5	21.2	45.7	46.4	13.6	13.8	27.4	50.4	40.0	32.2	72.2	44.6
Great Britain† (1995)	28.3	18.4	46.7	39.4	14.8	13.8	28.6	48.3	49.8	25.6	75.4	34.0
United States (1996)	54.4	29.2	83.6	34.9	33.8	19.0	52.8	36.0	86.0	44.9	130.9	34.3

Senegal



HIV prevalence by gender and area of residence in sub-Saharan Africa 2007-2011



Source: Country HIV Fact Sheets from Demographic and Health Surveys updated July 2012

■ Urban female
 ■ Urban male
 ■ Rural female
 ■ Rural male

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Senegal



- **Advantages of sex education programs in Senegal:**
 - Extremely low HIV prevalence (for the region)
 - Cooperation between government, medical, and religious officials
 - Nationwide sex education program and “ABC” campaign
 - Training of teachers and principals and “community sensitization” program
- **Disadvantages of sex education programs in Senegal:**
 - Protests from religious groups
 - Poverty
 - Teachers uncomfortable/unwilling to teach sex and HIV/AIDS education

Latin America - Overview



- Very little research/information about AIDS in this area
- Resistance to sex and HIV/AIDS education
- The epidemic does not seem to be growing as quickly in this area
 - 1.6 million people infected with HIV/AIDS
 - 94,000 new infections each year
- Signing of the Ministerial Declaration *Preventing through Education* in 2008



Latin America - Mexico



- Sex education in Mexico is very controversial
- “I Want To, I Can...Prevent HIV/AIDS” study
 - Fourth grade students in low income areas
 - Communication skills
- Nationwide sex education program as part of 7th grade biology
 - Implemented nationally in 2006
 - Comprehensive sex education
 - Intended to prevent teen pregnancy, spread of STI’s, and AIDS

Country	Teen pregnancies (per 1000 pregnancies) in 2006
Mexico	200
United States	40

Implications and Conclusions



- Comprehensive, medically accurate sex education is needed to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and to protect our youth.
- In countries with comprehensive education in place, it must be universally available and taught by competent, willing teachers.
- In countries lacking a comprehensive sex education program, one must be established.
 - Cooperation between lawmakers, medical professionals, and religious officials
 - Cultural difficulties, worldwide program



Questions??

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