

## **Knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and practices (KABP) about AIDS among adolescents.**

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January 30, 1997

Int Conf AIDS. 1996 Jul 7-12;11(1):172 (abstract no. Mo.D.1686). Unique  
Objectives: To assess the levels of information, attitudes, beliefs and practices, in order to provide support to an intervention program on AIDS prevention among adolescents. Methods: A survey was conducted among students of the night shift of a public school in Ribeirao Preto, State of Sao Paulo, Brazil. A total of 499 adolescents, between 13 and 20 years old, completed a standardized questionnaire anonymously. 53% of them were boys and 47% girls, most of them of low socio-economic level. Results: 278 (55.7%) of the youths had a sexually active life. Out of them, 50.2% had steady partners. 69.3% of these believed their partners only had sexual intercourse with them; 7.9% knew their partners had sexual intercourse with others and 22.8% said they did not know about it. The majority of them had a good level of knowledge on AIDS transmission (an average of 90% of correct answers), and presented a positive attitude about condom use (an average of 62%), but actually only 32.2% reported the use of condoms in all times they had sexual intercourses. 21.3% reported the use of condoms less than half of the times, and 24% reported they never used condoms. The most frequent reasons for non use of condoms were: that with a steady partner there is no risk of AIDS (60.9%) and that when two people love each other the risk is low (35%). Conclusions: Knowledge is not enough to produce behavior changes. During the intervention program developed at the school it became clear the need to work on gender relationships and some beliefs that lead to misjudgment about AIDS vulnerability, such as that in stable relationships of 3 or 4 months) people are no more strange and therefore they do not need to use condoms.

\*Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome/PREVENTION & CONTROL \*Knowledge, Attitudes, Practice

\*Sexually Transmitted Diseases/PREVENTION & CONTROL

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