

Poster presentation

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PI9-27. Willingness of adolescents in Soweto, South Africa to participate in future HIV prevention trials

N Makongoza*¹, J Dietrich², K Otwombek², G De Bruyn², K Sikkema² and G Gray²

Address: ¹Adolescent Study, Perinatal HIV Research Unit, Johannesburg, South Africa and ²Perinatal HIV Research Unit, Johannesburg, South Africa

* Corresponding author

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Background

The incidence and prevalence of HIV infection among adolescents and young adults in South Africa is high. National seroprevalence surveys estimate the prevalence of HIV among 15–24 year olds to be 15.5% amongst females and 4.8% amongst males. Despite current socio-behavioural efforts, HIV infection rates have not shown a significant decline. Should a biomedical intervention be efficacious with adults it will be critical to test this product in adolescents and young adults. We examined adolescent willingness to participate in future HIV prevention trials.

Methods

The willingness to participate questionnaire formed part of a larger adolescent survey conducted with 16–18 year old adolescents living in Soweto, an urban African setting. Participants were asked about their perceived risk of HIV and their willingness to participate in HIV prevention trials.

Results

In total 303 questionnaires were administered with a sample of 176 females and 127 males between 16 and 18 years (median age = 17). 93% (n = 282) reported ever having a partner. 50% (n = 88) of the females and 62% (n = 79) of the males reported sexual activity (vaginal, anal or oral sex). 31% (n = 96) reported that they were likely to become infected with HIV while 45% (n = 138) indicated that they were not at all likely to become infected with

HIV. There was an association between condom use and perceived risk of HIV ($p < 0.003$) as well as gender and willingness to participate in HIV prevention trials ($p < 0.009$). 90% (n = 273) indicated willingness to participate in vaccine trials. 70% of the participants thought that adolescents in their community would be willing to participate in a vaccine trial. 88% (n = 155) of females and 77% (n = 98) of the males indicated a willingness to participate in microbicide and circumcision trials respectively.

Conclusion

The findings show encouraging results of adolescent willingness to participate in future HIV prevention.