Australian Adolescent’s HIV Knowledge, Perceptions and Behaviour: Trends Across Five Waves of the Australian Survey of Secondary Students and Sexual Health

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Background

• HIV notification rates remain highest among young adults (The Kirby Institute, 2016)
• Knowledge increase and behaviour change remain key STI prevention strategies (Department of Health, 2014)
• Longitudinal data related to knowledge and behaviour lacking
Methods

• National survey of Australian secondary students and sexual health

• 5 waves
  – 1992 N=4594
  – 1997 N=3550
  – 2002 N=2388
  – 2007 N=2926
  – 2013 N=2136

Methods

• In-school data collection
  – 2-stage random cluster sampling
  – *2013 internet sub-sample

• Year 10 & 12 students
Methods

• Trends examined by descriptive comparisons
  – Knowledge
  – Behaviour
  – Parent Communication
  – Partner Communication
  – Information Sources

Results - Knowledge

Could a person get HIV (the AIDS virus) by sharing a needle and syringe with someone when injecting drugs?

- Yr 10 Male
- Yr 10 Female
- Yr 12 Male
- Yr 12 Female
Results - Knowledge

If condoms are used during sex does this help to protect people from getting HIV?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Yr 10 Male</th>
<th>Yr 10 Female</th>
<th>Yr 12 Male</th>
<th>Yr 12 Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>65%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results - Knowledge

Could a person get HIV from mosquitoes?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Yr 10 Male</th>
<th>Yr 10 Female</th>
<th>Yr 12 Male</th>
<th>Yr 12 Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results - Knowledge

Someone can have a sexually transmissible infection without any obvious signs

Chlamydia is a sexually transmissible infection that affects only women.
Results - Behaviour

Have you ever had sex/sexual intercourse?

- Yr 10 Male
- Yr 10 Female
- Yr 12 Male
- Yr 12 Female

Results - Behaviour

Was a condom used the last time you had sex?

- Yr 10 Male
- Yr 10 Female
- Yr 12 Male
- Yr 12 Female

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Results – Parent Communication

How confident are you that you could talk to one of your parents, or an adult that looks after you, about sex? (Very confident to confident)

Results – Parent Communication

How confident are you that you could talk to one of your parents, or an adult that looks after you about HIV and other STDs? (Very confident to confident)
Results – Partner Communication

Talked to partner about avoiding HIV infection the last time they had sex.


Yr 10 Male    Yr 10 Female    Yr 12 Male    Yr 12 Female

Results – Partner Communication

Talked to partner about avoiding STD infection the last time they had sex.


Yr 10 Male    Yr 10 Female    Yr 12 Male    Yr 12 Female
Results – Partner Communication

Talked to partner about getting sexual pleasure without intercourse the last time they had sex.

Talked to partner about using a condom the last time they had sex.
Results – Information Sources

- School Program (~58%)
- Internet (35% in 2008, 43.6% in 2013)
- Mum (~36%)
- Female Friend (~34%)
- Teacher (~30%)
- Dad (~27%)
- Male Friend (~22%)
- GP (~17%)

Discussion

- Relatively FLAT trends over the last 25 years
  - Big changes
    - HIV Mosquito question
    - Chlamydia question
Discussion

• Relatively FLAT trends over the last 25 years
  – Big non-changes
    • Overall HIV/STI knowledge trends
    • Every had sex
    • Condom use/discussions
    • Pleasure discussions
    • Information sources

Discussion

• Limitations to plotting descriptive data
• More robust analyses needed
Conclusions

• Despite efforts over 25 years  
  – No major shifts
  • Some good (condom use, pleasure)
  • Some not-so-good (overall communication low)
• Need to expand our efforts beyond traditional settings (e.g., schools)  
  – Systems thinking?
  – Systems approaches?
  – Systems modeling?

Thank You!

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