Only 1 in 5 Sexually Active High Schoolers Have Had an HIV Test

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Just 22 percent of U.S. high school students who reported intercourse last year have ever received an HIV antibody test, despite the fact that this group is disproportionately affected by new cases of HIV. Investigators from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will present these findings from the agency's biannual National Youth Risk Behavior Survey at the 20th International AIDS Conference (AIDS 2014) in Melbourne, Australia.

The surveys, which began in 1991, analyze the sexual behaviors of U.S. high school students. The first survey found that 54 percent of high school students reported having had sexual intercourse. This figure dropped to 46 percent in 2001 and has remained stable since then, with 47 percent reporting intercourse in 2013. Of those students who reported intercourse last year, 22 percent had been tested for HIV, a figure that has remained constant since 2005. In 2013, out of those students who had had intercourse, 27 percent of girls and 18 percent of boys had received an HIV test. Twenty-eight percent of black students, 20 percent of whites and 21 percent of Hispanics reporting intercourse had been tested.

"This analysis offers a mixed progress report on sexual risk among U.S. high school students—we've seen substantial progress in some areas, but risk persists in others," Jonathan Mermin, MD, director of CDC's National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and Tuberculosis Prevention, said in a release. "It is clear that HIV testing is not reaching everyone who needs it."

Reported condom use during the last intercourse increased from 46 percent in 1991 to 63 percent in 2003 and then declined to 59 percent in 2013.

To read the CDC release, click here.

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