Prevention: Teens Take Risks, Still Don’t Test

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High schoolers in the Bronx, New York, who have risky sex and maintain a detailed knowledge of HIV are not more inclined to get tested for the virus. Instead, those in this demographic group who are most likely to get tested are the teenagers who are in committed relationships in which they have a strong level of communication about the virus. Researchers found that 44 percent of the nearly 1,000 teenage participants in a recent study reported that they had undergone HIV testing, while 54 percent of those in serious, committed relationships had done so. Those who had high marks in their capacity to engage in dialogues with their partners about HIV were 3.7-times more likely to have received an HIV test than those who scored poorly in this realm. The study’s investigators anticipate a possible role for encouraging partner communication in future interventions for teens.

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