

Sexual Behaviors

What are the problems?

The 2011 Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicates the following health risk behaviors among 2011 Iowa high school students:

Sexual activity

- 44% had sexual intercourse at some time in their life;
- 4% had sexual intercourse for the first time before age 13;
- 13% had sexual intercourse with four or more persons during their life;
- 33% had sexual intercourse with one or more persons during the three months before the survey;
- 18% drank alcohol or used drugs before their last sexual intercourse (among students who reported having sexual intercourse during the three months before the survey);

HIV/AIDS education

- 16% had *not* been taught about AIDS or HIV infection in their school.

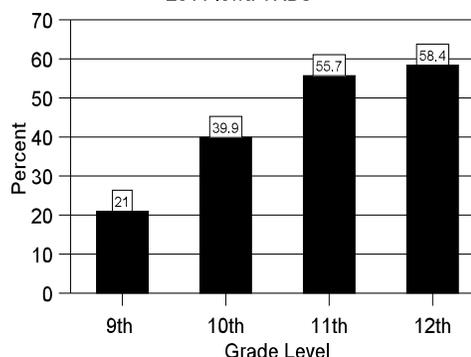
What are the solutions?

- Encourage parents to talk to their children about sex and to be open, honest, and non-judgmental when asking or answering questions.
- Incorporate an research-based, medically accurate, and age-appropriate sex education curriculum in secondary schools.
- Encourage the postponement of sex, as the most effective protection against HIV/AIDS or other STDs, as well as avoidance of unwanted pregnancies.
- Support education opportunities for high school students, parents, and community members in the areas of sexuality, prevention of HIV/AIDS and other STDs, and teen pregnancy.

Males ...

were significantly more likely than females to have had sex before 13 years of age.

Ever Had Sexual Intercourse, by Grade Level
2011 Iowa YRBS



Positive Trends ...

The percentage of 2011 Iowa high school students who indicated they had used a condom before their last intercourse *increased* significantly (to over 60%), while the percentage who reported they drank alcohol or used drugs before their last intercourse *decreased* significantly, over the years 1997-2011.

Fifty-six (56) percent indicated they had *not* had sexual intercourse in their lives. Thus, in terms of sexual activity, it is *not* true that “everybody’s doing it”—and among those who are so engaged, most indicated they are at least reducing their risk behaviors, and those percentages are increasing.

¹ The Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) was developed by the Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH), National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The data in this report are statistically weighted to represent all 2011 Iowa public high school students.

