



## HIV-Related Risk Behaviors Among African-American Youth

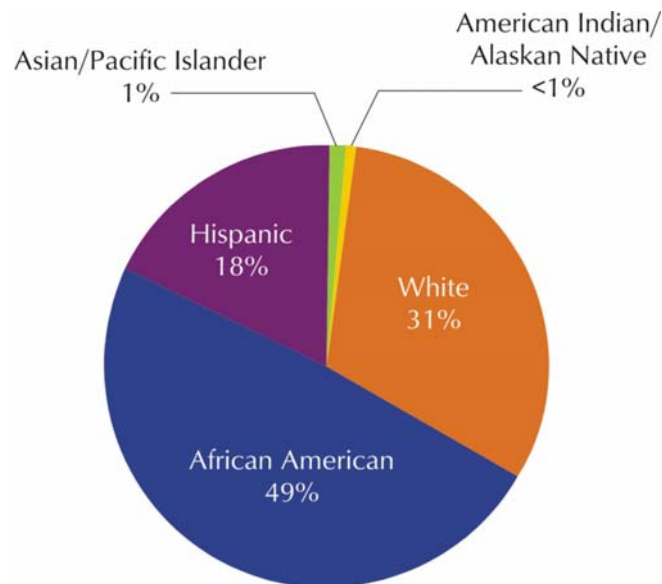
*“It is time for all of us to take action to protect ourselves and our young people against HIV/AIDS. . . [W]e must educate our children about HIV prevention. They need to know that it is OK to talk about AIDS, because illness, like injustice and inequality, cannot be eliminated by remaining silent.”*

**Coretta Scott King**

### HIV/AIDS Among African Americans

- At the end of 2003, an estimated 1,039,000 to 1,185,000 persons in the United States were living with HIV/AIDS.<sup>1</sup> In 2005, more than 38,000 cases of HIV/AIDS were diagnosed in the 33 states with confidential, name-based reporting of HIV and AIDS cases.<sup>2</sup>
- African Americans make up approximately 13% of the U.S. population, but in 2005 they accounted for 49% of the estimated number of HIV/AIDS cases diagnosed.<sup>2</sup> Among youth, while only 15% of teens (ages 13–19) are African American, they accounted for 73% of new AIDS cases reported in 2004.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2005, the rate of AIDS cases for African-American adults and adolescents was 10 times the rate for whites and almost 3 times the rate for Hispanics. The rate of AIDS diagnoses for African-American females was 24 times the rate for white females; for African-American men it was 8 times the rate for white males.<sup>2</sup>
- During 2001–2004, among women, 68% of the HIV/AIDS diagnoses were among African Americans and, among men, 44% of the HIV/AIDS diagnoses were among African Americans.<sup>4</sup>
- During 2001–2004, of the estimated 18,849 people aged 25 years or younger diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in the 33 states with confidential, name-based reporting of HIV and AIDS cases, 61% were African American.<sup>4</sup>

### Race/ethnicity of persons (including children) with HIV/AIDS diagnosed during 2005\*



\* Based on data from 33 states with confidential name-based HIV infection reporting.

- In 2002, HIV/AIDS was the number one cause of death for African-American women aged 25–34 years and the number two cause of death for all African Americans aged 35–44.<sup>5</sup> Of the more than half a million people with AIDS who have died in the United States, 38% were African American.<sup>2</sup>
- African Americans have the highest rates of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). In 2005, rates of gonorrhea were 18 times higher among African Americans compared to whites and rates of syphilis were five times higher among African Americans compared to whites.<sup>6</sup> The presence of certain STDs can increase one's chances of contracting HIV two to five-fold.<sup>7</sup>

Go to [www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/aa/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/aa/index.htm) for more information on HIV/AIDS among African Americans.

## HIV-Related Risk Behaviors

- HIV transmission occurs among adults and adolescents primarily through unprotected sexual contact and injected drug use. HIV-related risk behaviors are often established during adolescence and extend into adulthood.
- The primary modes of HIV transmission among African-American adult or adolescent males are male-to-male sexual contact (48%), followed by injection drug use (23%) and high-risk heterosexual contact (22%). The primary modes of HIV transmission among African-American adult or adolescent females are high-risk heterosexual contact (74%), followed by injection drug use (24%).<sup>2</sup>

## HIV-Related Risk Behaviors Among African-American Students, 2005

The following data are from the CDC's 2005 National Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), which has been conducted every other year since 1991 and provides data representative of 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students in public and private schools throughout the United States.<sup>8</sup> National YRBS data apply only to youth who attend school and so are not representative of

all youth. In 2004, approximately 4% of youth aged 16–17 years were not enrolled in high school and did not have a high school credential.<sup>9</sup>

### Black students have higher rates of some HIV-related risk behaviors than white students and Hispanic/Latino students.

- 67.6% of black students had ever had sexual intercourse, compared with 43.0% of white students and 51.0% of Hispanic/Latino students.
- 47.4% of black students were currently sexually active (i.e., had sexual intercourse with 1 or more persons during the 3 months preceding the survey), compared with 32.0% of white students and 35.0% of Hispanic/Latino students.
- 16.5% of black students had had sexual intercourse before age 13 years, compared with 4.0% of white students and 7.3% of Hispanic/Latino students.
- 28.2% of black students had had sexual intercourse with 4 or more persons during their life, compared with 11.4% of white students and 15.9% of Hispanic/Latino students.

### Black students have lower rates of some HIV-related risk behaviors than white students and Hispanic/Latino students and black students are more likely to have been tested for HIV.

- Among students who were currently sexually active, 31.1% of black students did not use a condom during last intercourse, compared with 37.4% of white students and 42.3% of Hispanic/Latino students.
- Among students who were currently sexually active, 14.1% of black students reported drinking alcohol or using drugs before last sexual intercourse, compared with 25.0% of white students and 25.6% of Hispanic/Latino students.
- 0.3% of black female students reported illegal injection drug use, compared with 1.3% of white female students and 1.4% of Hispanic/Latino female students.
- 21.0% of black students had been tested for HIV, compared with 10.2% of white students and 12.0% of Hispanic/Latino students.

**Black male students have higher rates of some HIV-related risk behaviors than black female students. Black female students are more likely to have been tested for HIV.**

- 74.6% of black male students had ever had sexual intercourse, compared with 61.2% of black female students.
- 51.3% of black male students were currently sexually active, compared with 43.8% of black female students.
- 26.8% of black male students had had sexual intercourse before age 13 years, compared with 7.1% of black female students.
- 38.7% of black male students had had sexual intercourse with 4 or more persons during their life, compared with 18.6% of black female students.
- 3.1% of black male students reported illegal injection drug use, compared with 0.3% of black female students.
- 24.1% of black female students had been tested for HIV, compared with 17.9% of black male students.

See Table 1 for more information on HIV-related risk behaviors by race/ethnicity and sex among high school students.

**12<sup>th</sup> grade black students have higher rates of some HIV-related risk behaviors than 9<sup>th</sup> grade black students.**

- 80.0% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade black students had ever had sexual intercourse, compared with 55.4% of 9<sup>th</sup> grade black students.
- 62.9% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade black students were currently sexually active, compared with 33.7% of 9<sup>th</sup> grade black students.
- 43.8% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade black students had had sexual intercourse with 4 or more persons during their life, compared with 18.4% of 9<sup>th</sup> grade black students.
- 46.7% of 12<sup>th</sup> grade black students who were currently sexually active did not use a condom during last intercourse, compared with 18.2% of 9<sup>th</sup> grade black students who were currently sexually active.

**Between 1991-2005, rates of some HIV-related risk behaviors among black students varied. Some behaviors declined while others declined and then leveled off. The percentage of black students reporting illegal injection drug use increased since 1991, but remains small.**

- The percentage of black students who were currently sexually active declined from 59.3% in 1991 to 47.4% in 2005; the percentage who had had sexual intercourse before age 13 years declined from 28.2% in 1991 to 16.5% in 2005; and the percentage who had had sexual intercourse with 4 or more persons during their life declined from 43.1% in 1991 to 28.2% in 2005.
- The percentage of black students who had ever had sexual intercourse declined from 81.5% in 1991 to 60.8% in 2001; since 2001, however, it has leveled off. In 2005, 67.6% of black students had ever had sexual intercourse.
- The percentage of black students who did not use a condom during last sexual intercourse (among those who were currently sexually active) declined from 52.0% in 1991 to 30.0% in 1999; since 1999, however, it has leveled off. In 2005, 31.1% of currently sexually active black students did not use a condom during last intercourse.
- The percentage of black students reporting illegal injection drug use increased from 1.1% in 1995 to 1.7% in 2005.

See Table 2 for more information on trends in HIV-related risk behaviors among high school students.

**Table 1. HIV-Related Risk Behaviors Among U.S. Students in Grades 9–12, by Race/Ethnicity\* and Sex, Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2005**

	Black Students			Hispanic Students			White Students		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Ever had sexual intercourse	67.6 ±3.1**	74.6 ±3.7	61.2 ±4.6	51.0 ±4.3	57.6 ±4.4	44.4 ±5.0	43.0 ±4.1	42.2 ±4.4	43.7 ±4.6
Were currently sexually active (Had sexual intercourse with ≥1 person during the 3 months preceding the survey.)	47.4 ±2.6	51.3 ±4.5	43.8 ±3.1	35.0 ±3.9	36.3 ±4.0	33.7 ±4.2	32.0 ±3.3	30.6 ±3.4	33.5 ±4.2
Had sexual intercourse before age 13 years	16.5 ±2.4	26.8 ±3.5	7.1 ±2.0	7.3 ±1.9	11.1 ±3.2	3.6 ±1.2	4.0 ±0.8	5.0 ±1.0	2.9 ±0.8
Had sexual intercourse with 4 or more persons during their life	28.2 ±2.6	38.7 ±4.2	18.6 ±3.3	15.9 ±2.4	21.7 ±3.5	10.4 ±2.1	11.4 ±1.8	11.6 ±2.1	11.1 ±2.2
Did <u>not</u> use a condom during last sexual intercourse (among currently sexually active students)	31.1 ±3.6	24.5 ±4.4	37.9 ±6.1	42.3 ±4.1	34.7 ±7.3	50.2 ±4.3	37.4 ±2.5	29.9 ±3.7	44.4 ±3.2
Had drunk alcohol or used drugs before last sexual intercourse (among currently sexually active students)	14.1 ±3.1	15.4 ±3.7	12.8 ±3.8	25.6 ±4.7	32.2 ±7.3	18.7 ±3.8	25.0 ±2.8	29.9 ±4.3	20.5 ±2.6
Lifetime illegal injection drug use	1.7 ±0.9	3.1 ±1.8	0.3 ±0.3	3.0 ±1.0	4.6 ±1.6	1.4 ±0.7	1.9 ±0.4	2.5 ±0.7	1.3 ±0.6
Had been tested for HIV	21.0 ±2.4	17.9 ±3.2	24.1 ±3.6	12.0 ±1.4	12.7 ±1.8	11.2 ±2.0	10.2 ±1.1	8.8 ±1.2	11.6 ±1.8

**Table 2. Trends in HIV-Related Risk Behaviors Among U.S. Students in Grades 9–12, by Race/Ethnicity,\* Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 1991-2005**

	1991	1993	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	Changes from 1991–2005
<b>Ever had sexual intercourse</b>									
All Students	54.1 ±3.5**	53.0 ±2.7	53.1 ±4.5	48.4 ±3.1	49.9 ±3.7	45.6 ±2.3	46.7 ±2.6	46.8 ±3.3	Decreased, 1991–2005
Black Students	81.5 ±3.2	79.7 ±3.2	73.4 ±4.5	72.7 ±2.8	71.2 ±8.1	60.8 ±6.6	67.3 ±3.3	67.6 ±3.1	Decreased, 1991–2001 No change, 2001–2005
Hispanic Students	53.1 ±3.5	56.0 ±4.1	57.6 ±8.6	52.2 ±3.6	54.1 ±4.8	48.4 ±4.5	51.4 ±3.2	51.0 ±4.3	No change, 1991–2005
White Students	50.0 ±3.2	48.4 ±2.8	48.9 ±5.0	43.6 ±4.2	45.1 ±3.9	43.2 ±2.5	41.8 ±2.7	43.0 ±4.1	Decreased, 1991–2005
<b>Were currently sexually active</b> (Had sexual intercourse with ≥1 person during the 3 months preceding the survey.)									
All Students	37.5 ±3.1	37.5 ±2.1	37.9 ±3.5	34.8 ±2.2	36.3 ±3.5	33.4 ±2.0	34.3 ±2.1	33.9 ±2.5	Decreased, 1991–2005
Black Students	59.3 ±3.8	59.1 ±4.4	54.2 ±4.7	53.6 ±3.2	53.0 ±8.9	45.6 ±5.4	49.0 ±2.9	47.4 ±2.6	Decreased, 1991–2005
Hispanic Students	37.0 ±3.6	39.4 ±3.7	39.3 ±7.1	35.4 ±3.9	36.3 ±4.0	35.9 ±3.2	37.1 ±2.8	35.0 ±3.9	No change, 1991–2005
White Students	33.9 ±2.8	34.0 ±2.1	34.8 ±3.9	32.0 ±3.1	33.0 ±3.3	31.3 ±2.2	30.8 ±2.0	32.0 ±3.3	No change, 1991–2005
<b>Had sexual intercourse before age 13 years</b>									
All Students	10.2 ±1.6	9.2 ±1.3	8.9 ±1.4	7.2 ±0.9	8.3 ±1.2	6.6 ±0.9	7.4 ±1.2	6.2 ±0.8	Decreased, 1991–2005
Black Students	28.2 ±2.8	28.0 ±2.8	24.2 ±3.4	21.7 ±2.3	20.5 ±4.8	16.3 ±2.6	19.0 ±2.4	16.5 ±2.4	Decreased, 1991–2005
Hispanic Students	8.9 ±1.7	9.7 ±2.0	8.8 ±2.9	7.7 ±1.4	9.2 ±1.3	7.6 ±2.0	8.3 ±1.4	7.3 ±1.9	Decreased, 1991–2005
White Students	6.7 ±1.1	5.6 ±1.0	5.7 ±1.1	4.0 ±0.8	5.5 ±0.7	4.7 ±1.1	4.2 ±0.9	4.0 ±0.8	Decreased, 1991–2005

	1991	1993	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	Changes from 1991–2005
<b>Had sexual intercourse with 4 or more persons during their life</b>									
All Students	18.7 ±2.1	18.7 ±2.0	17.8 ±2.7	16.0 ±1.4	16.2 ±2.6	14.2 ±1.2	14.4 ±1.6	14.3 ±1.5	Decreased, 1991–2005
Black Students	43.1 ±3.5	42.7 ±3.9	35.6 ±4.4	38.5 ±3.6	34.4 ±10.3	26.6 ±3.7	28.8 ±2.5	28.2 ±2.6	Decreased, 1991–2005
Hispanic Students	16.8 ±2.6	18.6 ±3.1	17.6 ±3.7	15.5 ±2.4	16.6 ±3.6	14.9 ±1.7	15.7 ±2.2	15.9 ±2.4	No change, 1991–2005
White Students	14.7 ±1.8	14.3 ±2.1	14.2 ±2.4	11.6 ±1.5	12.4 ±2.1	12.0 ±1.4	10.8 ±1.5	11.4 ±1.8	Decreased, 1991–2005
<b>Did not use a condom during last sexual intercourse</b> (Among currently sexually active students.)									
All Students	53.8 ±3.3	47.2 ±2.7	45.6 ±3.5	43.2 ±1.6	42.0 ±4.2	42.1 ±2.2	37.0 ±2.5	37.2 ±2.1	Decreased, 1991–2005
Black Students	52.0 ±3.8	43.5 ±3.8	33.9 ±4.8	36.0 ±2.8	30.0 ±5.4	32.9 ±3.5	27.2 ±3.7	31.1 ±3.6	Decreased, 1991–1999 No change, 1999–2005
Hispanic Students	62.6 ±6.2	53.9 ±4.4	55.6 ±11.1	51.7 ±5.6	44.8 ±6.8	46.5 ±5.1	42.6 ±5.3	42.3 ±4.1	Decreased, 1991–2005
White Students	53.5 ±4.6	47.7 ±3.9	47.5 ±4.0	44.2 ±2.0	45.0 ±5.1	43.2 ±3.0	37.5 ±3.1	37.4 ±2.5	Decreased, 1991–2005
<b>Lifetime illegal injection drug use</b>									
All Students	NA***	NA	2.1 ±0.4	2.1 ±0.5	1.8 ±0.4	2.3 ±0.4	3.2 ±1.2	2.1 ±0.3	No change, 1995–2005
Black Students	NA	NA	1.1 ±0.6	1.0 ±0.7	0.9 ±0.5	1.6 ±0.7	2.4 ±1.1	1.7 ±0.9	Increased, 1995–2005
Hispanic Students	NA	NA	2.2 ±0.9	2.2 ±0.6	1.8 ±0.8	2.5 ±0.7	3.9 ±2.1	3.0 ±1.0	No change, 1995–2005
White Students	NA	NA	2.0 ±0.6	1.8 ±0.5	1.6 ±0.4	2.4 ±0.5	2.5 ±1.3	1.9 ±0.4	No change, 1995–2005

\*Data are presented only for non-Hispanic black, non-Hispanic white, and Hispanic students because the numbers of students from other racial/ethnic populations were too small for meaningful analysis.

\*\*The 95% confidence interval provides the range of values within which the "true" percentage lies. A 95% confidence interval means that if the survey were repeated many times, the "true" value would fall within the interval 95% of the time. When the confidence interval is relatively narrow, the estimate is more precise. Wider confidence intervals diminish the ability to report results with precision. For example, if the confidence interval ranges from a low of 82% to a high of 98%, the "true" estimate of the behavior 95% of the time could be as low as 82% or as high as 98%.

\*\*\*NA = Not available.

For more information on the YRBS, go to [www.cdc.gov/yrbs](http://www.cdc.gov/yrbs).

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