

New York City, New York

New York City: Bringing HIV/AIDS Prevention Education into the Spotlight

Problem Overview

New York City remains the epicenter of the U.S. HIV/AIDS epidemic, with almost 200,000 cases diagnosed as of December 2005. Each year, young people in New York City engage in high rates of sexual risk behaviors, putting themselves at risk for becoming infected with HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases. For example, according to the 2005 Youth Risk Behavior Survey,

- 48% of New York City public school students ever had sex.
- 31% of students who were sexually active during the last 3 months did not use a condom during the last sexual intercourse.
- 18% reported having sex with four or more people in their lifetime.

Program/Activity Description

To ensure that New York City students receive the most accurate, up-to-date HIV prevention education, the city's Department of Education's Office of Health and Family Living (OHEFL) updated its HIV/AIDS curriculum in December 2005. The updated curriculum is science-based, skills-driven, standards-based, and integrated into the overall educational program.

Then, in 2006–2007 with support from CDC, OHEFL began providing professional development to teachers, administrators, and parent groups to ensure that the curriculum was effectively delivered to students. To provide professional development to staff in more than 1,400 schools, OHEFL implemented activities aimed at reaching the greatest number of staff, such as

- Providing training on curriculum implementation to more than 340 elementary, middle, and high school teachers.
- Establishing a cadre of trainers to provide curriculum implementation trainings to their peers.
- Securing funds to hire Planned Parenthood of New York City to train 900 school-based parent coordinators on how to discuss the curriculum with parents.
- Developing a presentation and support materials for schools to use when communicating with parents about the curriculum.

Program/Activity Outcome

Over the course of a year, OHEFL provided more than 2,000 teachers, administrators, and parents with the skills and resources needed to effectively deliver the HIV/AIDS curriculum. As a result of its efforts, OHEFL secured additional funding from New York State for its HIV prevention programs, and from the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to design and implement an HIV prevention peer leadership pilot program.

