

Chapter 6 - Sexually Transmitted Diseases/Infections

During adolescence, young people develop the social and intellectual skills that will shape them as a mature adult. These changes provide developmental choices that can lead to risky behavior. A potential consequence of risky behavior is contracting a sexually transmitted disease (STD).¹ Infection with an STD can have lifelong consequences including infertility, social stigma, increased risk of certain types of cancers, and in the case of HIV/AIDS, the tragedy of dealing with an incurable, life-threatening illness. Although the occurrence of AIDS has declined over the past decade, HIV infections continue to rise in the adolescent population.² Rates of HIV infection are up for 15-19 year olds (but down for those under 14). Currently there are 2,206 adults and adolescents, and 17 children (under 13) living with HIV in Wisconsin. Half of all female adult and adolescent transmissions occur through heterosexual contact.³

Behaviors which increase the risk of contracting HIV and other STDs include: unprotected sex, sex with multiple partners, age of first sexual act and frequent sexual activity.^{1,4} Substance use increases sexual risk behaviors; it hinders cognitive thinking causing teens to engage in behaviors they may not otherwise when not under the influence. Intervention in schools about HIV or AIDS is increasing; ninety percent (90%) of 12th graders reported being taught about AIDS or HIV.⁴ In Wisconsin, youth who have conversations about HIV/AIDS with a parent or other adult family member has decreased since the 2001 survey.⁵

The following questions were asked:

- Have you ever had sexual intercourse? If so, how many different sexual partners have you had?
- How often do you and /or your partner use some form of birth control and what do you use?
- Have you ever had an STD?
- Have you ever shared needles with anyone?

¹ Harris, Kathleen M., Duncan, Greg J. & Boisjoly, Johanne. (2002). Evaluating the role of 'Nothing to Lose' Attitudes on Risky Behavior in Adolescents. *Social Forces*, 80, 1005-1039.

² Donenberg, Geri R., Emerson, Erin, Bryant, Fred & Scott, King. (2006). Does substance use moderate the effects of parents and peers on sexual behavior? *AIDS Care* 18, 194-200.

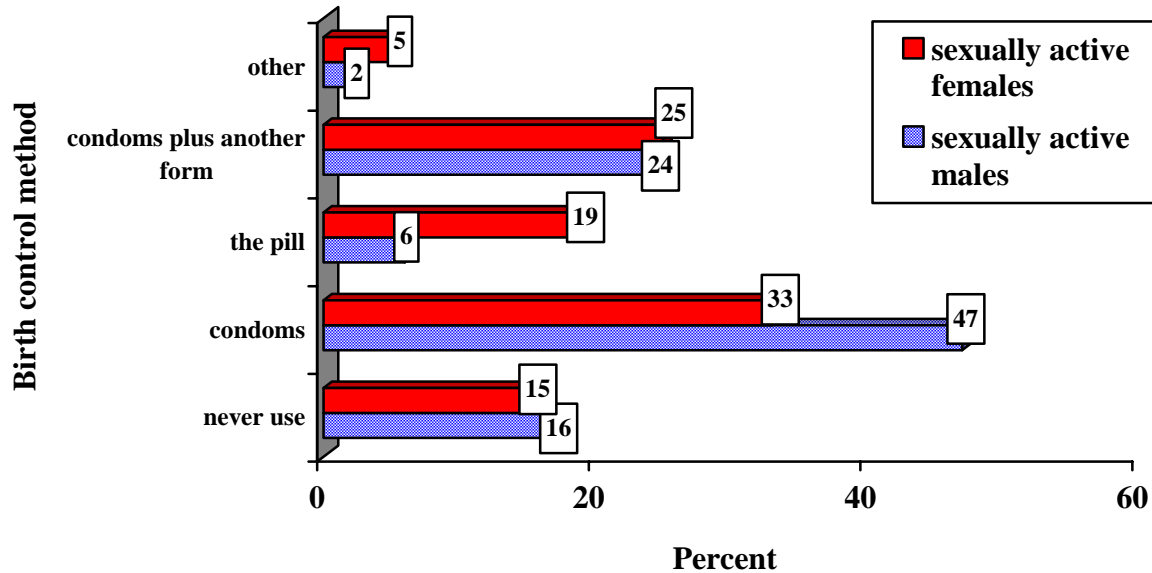
³ Summary Health Statistics for the U.S. Population: National Health Interview Survey, (2004)

⁴ Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. Surveillance Summary, 2004.

⁵ Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Survey: Executive Summary (2005).
Southwest Wisconsin Youth Survey 2006

BIRTH CONTROL METHODS

Responses of sexually active teens to the question, “If you use birth control, what kind do you usually use?”



Key Findings:

Sexually active males are more likely to report usually using condoms than females (47% vs. 33%).

Sexually active females (19%) are more likely than males (6%) to report usually using the pill alone for birth control.

Sixteen percent (16%) of sexually active males and 15% of sexually active females report they never use birth control.

Twenty-four percent (24%) of sexually active males and 25% of sexually active females report using condoms and another contraceptive (e.g. the pill, foam, etc.).

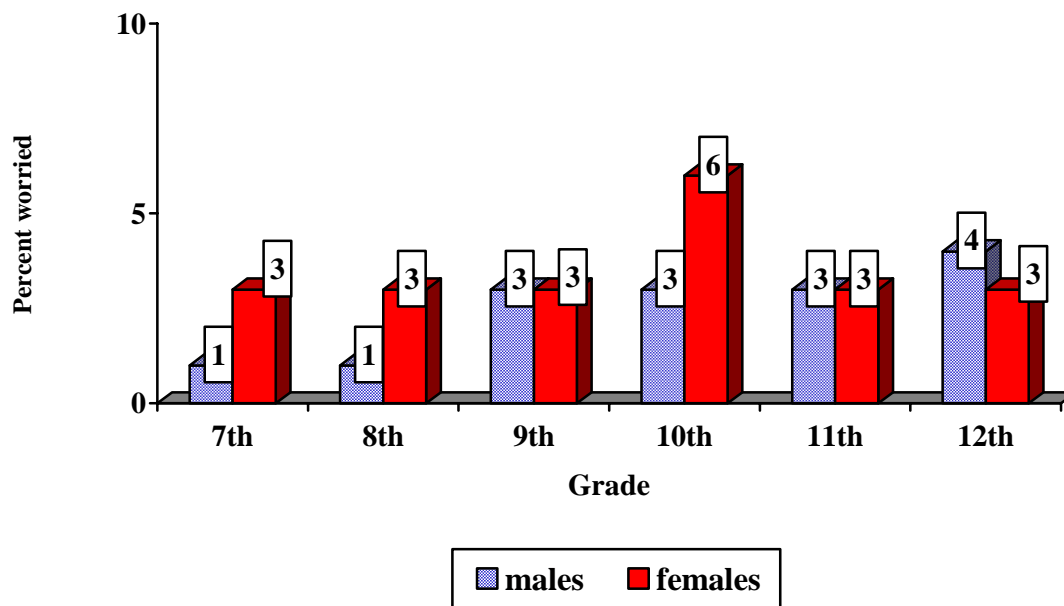
Other notable findings:

Fifty-five percent (55%) of sexually active teens report they “always” use some form of Birth Control.

Twenty-four percent (24%) of sexually active teen males and 20% of sexually active females report they “never” or “rarely” use birth control.

WORRY ABOUT SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

Teens who respond “No, but I am worried about contracting one” when asked “Have you ever had a sexually transmitted infection/disease?”:



Key findings:

Six percent (6%) of 10th grade females are worried about contracting an STD.

In 7th & 8th grade females (3%) are more likely to worry about contracting an STD compared to males (1%).

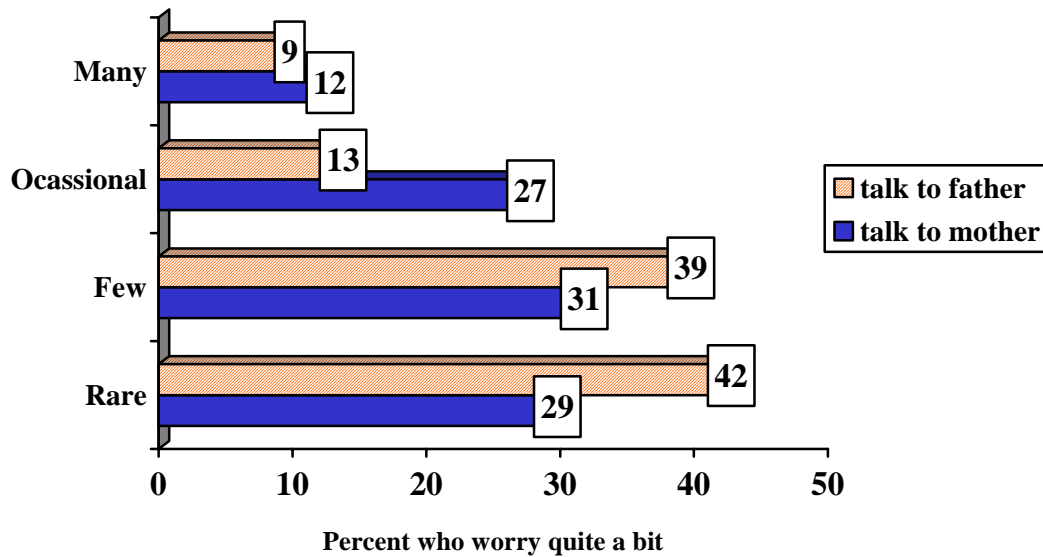
Except for 10th grade females the percent of students who worry about contracting an STD from 9th thru 12th grade is fairly consistent.

Other Finding:

Ninety-seven percent (97%) of teens report not having an STD.

WORRY ABOUT SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES vs FREQUENCY OF PARENTAL CONVERSATIONS

Teens who worry about catching a STD, compared to how often they have a good talk with their mother/father. *



*This graph combines a series of questions that include the teen's perception of how often they have had a good talk with their mother and father on a variety of topics. These topics include risks of drinking or taking drugs, dating and sex, birth control, risks of getting STD's, plans after high school or personal problems.

Key findings:

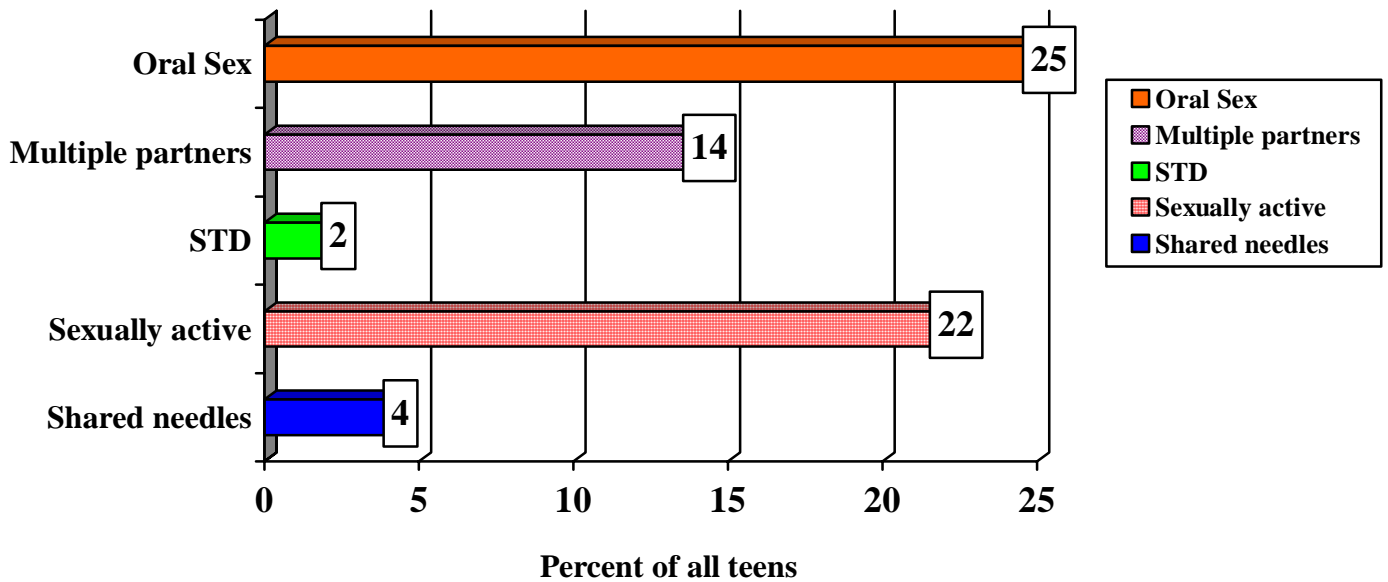
Twenty-nine percent (29%) of teens who worry about contracting an STD report "rarely" having good talks with their mothers. Twelve percent (12%) of the teens who are worried about contracting an STD have "many" talks with their mother.

Forty-two percent (42%) of teens who worry about contracting an STD report "rarely" having good talks with their fathers.

Teens who report worrying about catching an STD are more likely to have good talks with their mothers than fathers.

BEHAVIORS CONSISTENT WITH HIV RISK FACTORS

Teens who report behaviors consistent with HIV risk factors:



Key findings:

Four percent (4%) of teens surveyed report having shared a needle (for using drugs, taking steroids or diabetes medication, ear piercing or tattoos) at least one time in the past.

Twenty-two percent (22%) of all teens surveyed report engaging in sexual intercourse.

Two percent (2%) of all teens surveyed have had a STD in the past year or more than a year ago.

Fourteen percent (14%) of all teens surveyed report having multiple sexual partners.

Twenty-five percent (25%) of teens report engaging in oral sex.

Other notable findings:

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of sexually active teens have had multiple partners.

Twenty percent (20%) of sexually active males, and 16% of sexually active females report having five or more sexual partners.

Sixteen percent (16%) of sexually active teens report never using any method of birth control.

Eight percent (8%) of teens report engaging in oral sex without engaging in intercourse.

