SANTÉ QUÉBEC

Québec Survey of Risk Factors Associated with AIDS and Other STDs Conducted with Individuals Aged 15 to 29 Years

1991

HIGHLIGHTS
Les parfums de l'amour

Protégez-vous avec plus de saveur!

Fruty est maintenant disponible chez

FRUTY MARKETING
C.P. 505 Sainte-Julie, Québec, J5E 1X7. (514) 922.2002

On les trouve maintenant un peu partout.

Demandez Fruty?
QUÉBEC SURVEY OF RISK FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH AIDS AND OTHER STDs CONDUCTED WITH INDIVIDUALS AGED 15 TO 29 YEARS

Who are the 3 000 young Québécois who responded to the survey?

- They ranged in age from 15 to 29 years...
  - 29% were aged 15 to 19 years
  - 31% were aged 20 to 24 years
  - 40% were aged 25 to 29 years
- 49% were women and 51% men

- Of the respondents...
  - 45% were active in the workplace
  - 39% were students
  - 9% were unemployed or on welfare
  - 7% fell into other categories
- 45% lived in the Montréal area and 55% were residents of municipalities outside Montréal.

As a token of our gratitude to key participants in the study, namely our 3000 respondents, we have decided to dedicate this brochure to all young people across Québec who fall into the target age group. The following pages highlight important findings respecting AIDS and STD awareness, experience with love relationships, as well as sexual and preventive behaviour and practices. Through the financial and artistic co-operation of Fruty Marketing, CKOI FM and Communik Concept Inc., we have successfully achieved our major objective which was to inform young people of the results generated by a survey of concern to them all!

Survey subsidized by Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux, Gouvernement du Québec, 1991
This is a short quiz... See how you measure up to survey respondents by answering True or False to each of the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Answers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) One can be infected by the AIDS virus without showing symptoms of the illness</td>
<td>T or F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Once one has contracted an STD, one cannot catch it again</td>
<td>T or F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) A person can be cured of AIDS if treated in the early stages of the disease</td>
<td>T or F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) One can contract an STD without showing any symptom of the illness</td>
<td>T or F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Contraceptives = protection against transmission of STDs</td>
<td>T or F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) + sexual partners = + risk of contracting the AIDS virus or an STD</td>
<td>T or F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Use of condoms = lesser risk of contracting the AIDS virus</td>
<td>T or F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Tests for detection of the AIDS virus are available</td>
<td>T or F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Contraceptives = protection against transmission of the AIDS virus</td>
<td>T or F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10) Use of condoms = lesser risk of contracting STDs</td>
<td>T or F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) New sexual partner = + risk of contracting the AIDS virus or an STD</td>
<td>T or F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12) The AIDS virus contracted by injection of drugs can be transmitted sexually</td>
<td>T or F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The correct answer to statements 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12 is True. Statements 2, 3, 5 and 9 are false.

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2 Santé Québec (1991), *Quebec survey of risk factors associated with AIDS and other STDs conducted with individuals aged 15 to 29 years, Chapter III, MSSS, December*
Are you among the 95% of young people who indicated that a new sexual partner increased the risk of contracting the AIDS virus or an STD? Or the 94% who knew that contraceptives did not protect against transmission of STDs or the AIDS virus? Or the 78% who were aware that there exists no cure for AIDS even if the patient is treated in the early stages of the disease!

Proportion of correct answers to twelve awareness statements

Did you, like the vast majority (87%) of young Québec respondents, answer at least 10 out of the 12 questions correctly? Bravo! Like your peers, you have a sound knowledge of AIDS and other STDs. If you encountered some difficulty with statements 1, 2, 3 and 4, you compare favourably with other people of your age group in that you are less familiar with the medical and clinical aspects of AIDS and STDs than with behaviour and practices necessary to prevent or avoid the risks involved (statements 5-12).
Information sources by age group

Like us, you can see that information sources vary with age. If you are aged 15 to 17 years, school constitutes the primary source of information (80%), whereas if your boyfriend or girlfriend (or your friends) is aged 25 to 29 years, television is the principal source of information (66%). There is, however, one exception: regardless of age group, one young person in four indicated that he or she relied upon social or health professionals for information.

Desired information source by age group

As you can see, respondents of all age groups preferred social or health professionals to all desired information sources. One young person in two wished to receive information FIRST HAND from social workers, doctors, nurses or other qualified professionals.
Do you currently have a boyfriend, girlfriend, spouse or regular partner?

At the time the survey was conducted, two young Québécois in three answered «Yes» to the above question. The proportion of young people with a regular partner indeed increased with age. Accordingly, respondents aged 15 to 17 years generally indicated that they did not have a boyfriend or girlfriend.

Proportion of respondents with a boyfriend or girlfriend at the time of the survey by age and sex.

The proportion of girls with a boyfriend was always generally higher than boys with a girlfriend. However, the gap was less apparent among respondents aged 15 to 17 years where as many boys as girls indicated having a regular girlfriend or boyfriend.

3 Santé Québec (1991), previously mentioned report, Chapter IV
At the time the survey was conducted, eight young respondents in ten aged 15 to 29 years declared having had a regular partner for a year or more. Only 8% were starting a new relationship (i.e. three months or less).

Girls were generally involved in love relationships longer than boys.

It also appeared that the duration of relationships increased with age: the older we get, the longer the relationship. Interestingly enough, results showed that one adolescent in three aged 15 to 17 years indicated having been involved with a regular partner for over a year.

Average duration of love relationships among young people by age group and sex

And if we asked you “How long have you been going out with your friend?”
We asked respondents if they ever discussed the four following issues with their regular partner: sexuality in general, birth control, prevention of AIDS and other STDs, and the use of condoms.

Proportion of young people who discuss sexuality and birth control with their regular partner by age group and sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Male Sexuality</th>
<th>Female Sexuality</th>
<th>Birth Control by Men</th>
<th>Birth Control by Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18-19</td>
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<td>20-24</td>
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<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
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</table>

Yes! We talk a lot about both sexuality and birth control with our regular partner. The older we get, the more we talk about it and... of course, girls are more inclined to do so than boys.

Proportion of young people who discuss AIDS and STD prevention, as well as the use of condoms with their regular partner by age group and sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>STD and AIDS Prevention by Men</th>
<th>STD and AIDS Prevention by Women</th>
<th>Condoms by Men</th>
<th>Condoms by Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15-17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>18-19</td>
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<td>20-24</td>
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<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
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Unfortunately STD prevention and the use of condoms are not discussed enough. And this applies to both boys and girls regardless of age. In this instance, however, it was the younger respondents who stole the show. Those in the 18-19 age group indeed approached both issues more often than any other, and boys more often than girls! As for the those aged 15 to 17 years, they were the ONLY group to discuss the use of condoms as frequently. We are therefore making headway... The more we talk about these issues, the faster we will take action to prevent AIDS and other STDs.
Did you know that 60% of respondents in the 15-19 age group have already made love (sexual intercourse with penetration) and that this percentage rises to 90% for the 20-24 age group, and to 96% in the 25-29 age group?

Proportion of young people having made love by age group

If you are good in mathematics, you will by now have figured out that 84% of respondents in the 15-29 age group have already made love, regardless of sex. However, the survey pointed up that those who had yet to have sex did not do as well in the awareness test on Page 2. Careful now! Although making love will not increase awareness, concern about AIDS and STDs will, even if you are NOT SEXUALLY ACTIVE.

4 Santé Québec (1991), previously mentioned report, Chapter V
The survey showed that sexually active young people in the 15-29 age group had had an average of six different sexual partners. Girls admitted to four, whereas boys told of double that figure or eight.

Number of sexual partners by age group and sex

Allow us to draw your attention to the fact that girls always have fewer sexual partners than boys and that the gap widens with age. Girls in the 15-19 age group said that they had had three partners whereas boys in the same group talked of five. Girls aged 20 to 24 years still had had only three partners while boys of the same age were up to seven. Young women in the 25-29 age group indicated four partners, whereas young men admitted to an average of nine.
Even if you have never made love, the following is of concern to you.

We asked our sexually active respondents if they had made love...

1) with a person they knew well but was not their boyfriend or girlfriend;
2) with a person they knew little about;
3) with a person who took drugs;
4) with a person who practised anal sex?

AND... with or without condom?

Proportion of young people having had high risk sexual intercourse during which they used condoms or not

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of young people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>35 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>30 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 %</td>
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<td>20 %</td>
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<td>15 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 %</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

There is risk involved in making love with a person from any one of these four groups. However, the use of a condom eliminates this risk almost entirely. If you don't use condoms, you yourself become a high risk partner. THINK ABOUT IT...

If you are male, there is all the more reason to think about it. Statistics show that 28% of all men, as opposed to 18% of women, are high risk partners.
When we asked respondents if they had ever used condoms, here's what they answered:

Use of condoms by young people by age group

First very positive fact: more than eight young people in ten in the 15-29 age group (85%) mentioned that they had already used condoms on at least one occasion.

Taking the age factor into account, you can readily see that 91% of respondents in the 15-19 age group who had already made love have used condoms at least once compared with only 85% of young people in the 20-24 age group and 83% of young adults aged 25 to 29 years.

5 Santé Québec (1991), previously mentioned report, Chapter VI
More than 40% of respondents who indicated having used condoms admitted to having stopped using them!

Use of condoms by young people in the 15-29 age group

This means that if you try it, you won't necessarily make a habit of it!

Perhaps, like us, did you think that young people having never used condoms or having stopped using them consider the possibility of contracting AIDS or another STD as remote? Well, think again!

Proportion of young people using condoms or not according to perceived risk level

Yes, you read well: 59% of young people having never used condoms or having stopped using them consider the risk of contracting AIDS or another STD as high!!!

Once again, as specialists and professionals have already discovered, knowing that one is at risk does not necessarily lead to preventive measures being taken. Not so great...
Factors fostering the use of condoms

"I would be more inclined to use condoms if my boyfriend or girlfriend were to ask me!"

As you can see, partner requests largely outweigh the five other factors fostering the use of condoms. More than six respondents in ten said that they would use condoms more often if their partner requested them to do so.

Does this sound familiar? If so, talk to your partner about it... Take it from us. If you ask your partner, he or she will more than likely agree to use condoms.
The following table shows the weekly consumption of alcohol for young people who said they drank alcohol.

Average number of alcoholic drinks by age group and sex

As you can see, young people in the 15-17 age group consume an average of 4 alcoholic drinks a week while those in the 18-19, 20-24 and 25-29 groups estimate their average consumption to be 5 or 6 drinks.

Given these averages, do you drink more or less than other people in your age group?

If we compare the average consumption patterns of girls and boys, we observe that, with the exception of boys aged 20 to 24 years who appear to drink 5 times more than girls in the same age group, male respondents rated their consumption at twice that of female respondents.

For more information on alcohol, drugs and sexuality, please consult the report mentioned in the footnote at the bottom of the page.

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6 Santé Québec (1991), Alcohol and drug use among young Québécois aged 15 to 29 years, Standing Committee on the Battle against Drugs, Gouvernement du Québec.
Conclusion and acknowledgements

This brochure presents findings we felt should be included in a broadly circulated publication. We also recommend that you read the two reports to which we refer throughout this brochure. They address issues of concern to YOU, they talk about YOU and they report what YOU have told us.

Now a word about our key contributors.

Aline Émond, Director of Santé Québec, who supported the idea of feeding survey results back to those directly concerned, namely young people across Québec.

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Bye for now and good luck!
Québec survey of risk factors associated with AIDS and other infections.