

San Diego, California

Respect Yourself, Protect Yourself: Increasing Condom Use Among Sexually Active Teens

Problem Overview

According to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), the San Diego Unified School District (SDUSD) experienced a steady decline in the number of high school students ever having sexual intercourse—from 48% in 1991 to 39% in 2007. During this same time, condom use during last sexual intercourse increased from 43% to 57%. SDUSD realized that providing a stronger message about condom use as part of the district's required HIV/STD prevention program was needed.

Program/Activity Description

The SDUSD Sex Education and HIV Prevention program, funded by the CDC's Division of Adolescent and School Health, recognized the importance of engaging its partners to bolster prevention education efforts. Health educators from Planned Parenthood, Family Health Centers, YMCA, Operation Samahan, and Family Cares attend SDUSD training to learn about the district's curriculum, policies, and procedures so they can assist with classroom instruction. Using their special expertise and training, these educators supply information on services available at their youth-serving clinics and lead discussions on condom use and HIV/STD prevention.

According to classroom teacher reports for the 2008–2009 school year, more than 85% of 8th–12th grade students received sex education that included information on HIV/STD prevention and testing and information on risk reduction, including a condom demonstration. SDUSD and its health education partners also

- Provided information on the rights of minors to access confidential medical services and contraceptive methods.
- Expanded information supplied about youth-serving clinics.
- Encouraged students to take responsibility for their reproductive health.

Partners also helped SDUSD establish new policies and procedures to allow students access to confidential medical services during the school day, if needed.

Program/Activity Outcomes

2009 YRBS results showed that the percentage of high school students who ever had sex remained stable (compared to 2007) at 39%. Condom use during last sexual intercourse, however, increased significantly from 57% in 2007 to 66% in 2009; among 10th-graders, 70% reported condom use during last sexual intercourse. Plans are to strengthen efforts to reach 12th-grade students—who reported a higher rate of sexual intercourse (50%) compared to 10th-grade students (41%), but a lower rate of condom use during last intercourse (57%).