Tiffany Dickie

Ms. Dickie

Research Paper

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The Growing Rate of STI/STD in Young People: A societal concern

The rapid growing rate of sexually transmitted infections and diseases (STIs/STDs) among the adolescent population is at its highest in recent history. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention young people aged fifteen to twenty four “only make up twenty five percent of the sexually experienced population” and yet they contract nearly half of all STIs/ STDs (2011). There are factors at the individual, social, and environmental level which put young people at risk of contracting an STI/STD. There are also protective factors at these levels that can play a role in the prevention of contracting an STI/STD. The consequences of contraction extend beyond the individual to society and the relationships that the individual has with others. There are also various prevention and intervention programs in place for young people to prevent the contraction of STIs/ STDs or provide resources and consultation for young people who have acquired an STI/STD.

**Risk Factors:**

*Individual:*

Factors that put a young person at risk of contracting an STI/STD can be broken down into two different categories: behavioral factors and biological factors. Behaviours that can put a young person at risk include hazardous drinking or substance use, poor self-esteem, depression or mental illness, as well as promiscuous behaviours (Pediatr, 2007; Kirby and Lepore, 2007; Cook and Clark, 2005). Research conducted by Statistics Canada reveals that three of the most prevalent risk factors associated with young people contracting an STI/ STD are associated with promiscuous behaviours (2008). These factors include sexual intercourse at a young age, having multiple sexual partners, as well as engaging in unprotected sex. Pediatr supports this claiming that not only multiple sexual partners, but also frequent sexual encounters are associated with “low prevalence of condom use” among youth people (2007).

Biological factors that put a young person at risk of contracting an STI/STD…

*Social:*

*Environment:*

**Protective Factors:**

*Individual:*

*Social:*

*Environment:*

**Consequences:**

*Individual:*

*Society:*

**Programs in Place:**

*Prevention:*

*Intervention:*

**Conclusion:**

Works Cited