

ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Knowledge of correct condom use and consistency of use among adolescents in four countries in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Abstract

Using data from the 2004 National Adolescent Surveys, this paper undertook a detail analysis of knowledge of correct condom use and consistency of use, as well as their covariates, among adolescents in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Malawi and Uganda. The strongest predictor of knowledge of correct condom use among both male and female adolescents is exposure to a condom use demonstration. In Burkina Faso, Ghana and Uganda, adolescents who have seen a condom demonstration are 2 to 5 times as likely as those who have not to have good knowledge of correct condom use. Age, ever received sex education in school, ever attended school and exposure to the radio are also significant predictors of knowledge of correct use, particularly among men. As indicated by behavior among young men, the extent to which adolescents use the condom consistently varies across countries. Yet, it is nowhere near the required 100% level. The proportion reporting consistent use of the method in the 3 months preceding the survey is 38% in Burkina Faso, 47% in Ghana, 20% in Malawi and 36% in Uganda. Age difference between partners is a major determinant of consistent use of condoms: young men whose partner is 0-4 years younger are about two and a half times more likely to use condoms consistently than those whose partner is 5-9 years younger. Other important predictors of consistent condom use are residence, education, living arrangement and exposure to mass media, specifically the radio and newspaper. Findings from this study point to areas that policy and program can address to provide adolescents access to the kinds of information and service they need to achieve healthy sexual and reproductive lives.

Keywords: Correct condom use, Sex education, Adolescents

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