

What kids want to know

Students' Unedited Questions and Comments about AIDS

A positive long-term effect from HIV sexual risk prevention interventions was more effective with middle school students than high school students
(*Archives of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine*, Oct 2001).

Students continue to ask:

- Why did God invent AIDS?
- Did God make AIDS to get rid of the gay people?
- Why does the Catholic Church want people to get AIDS? (no condoms allowed)
- If everyone used condoms, there would be no AIDS.

The Good News & the Bad News

Medical advances can enable persons diagnosed with HIV infection to live longer lives. This is the "good news" but it is somehow getting lost in the translation. More and more teachers are reporting the "bad news." Students now view HIV infection and AIDS as something a person just lives with instead of something that a person dies from. They think HIV infection is like diabetes. You just take medication and continue your life.

Teachers continue to report that many students don't realize their behaviors can put them at risk. Some still think of AIDS as a disease only gay persons or intravenous drug users get. Others believe that condoms always prevent HIV infection.

Parents must address these issues as students' questions can begin in the 4th grade.

18% of the 5th graders questions are about AIDS, another
4% are about the other STD

5th Grade Girls Questions

What does AIDS do?

When did people discover AIDS and HIV?

Why is there no way to stop HIV and AIDS?

How can I prevent myself from having AIDS?

Children my age should know if they do it they might get AIDS.

Young people should know sex without protection causes AIDS.

How do people get AIDS by having a child?

5th Grade Girls - Kids our age need to know...

Should know sex could give you AIDS or a child.

Should know that if we don't use condoms then we'll get AIDS from sex.

Should know about drugs and AIDS.

Should know that sexual reactions can give them AIDS.

5th Grade Boys

Why is there no way to stop HIV and AIDS?

How can I prevent myself from having AIDS?

Should know all about AIDS and how you can get it.

What does AIDS do?

When did people discover AIDS and HIV?

How do people get AIDS by having a child?

5th Grade Boys - Kids our age need to know...

Children my age should know if they do it they might get AIDS.

Young people should know that sex without protection causes AIDS.

Should know sex could give you AIDS or a child.

Should know that if we don't use condoms then we'll get AIDS from sex.

Should know about drugs and AIDS.

Should know that sexual reactions can give them AIDS.

6th Grade Girls

What is AIDS?

How do you get AIDS from sex?

How do men and women get AIDS?

Can you get AIDS from becoming pregnant?

Want to know about AIDS and how you get it.

If a girl gives a boy head will she get AIDS?

6th Grade Boys

Why does AIDS effect sex and what are AIDS?

How do you get AIDS?

Can you die from AIDS?

What does HIV have to do with sex?

What if I've already had sex, and I used a condom, but I am not sure if I have Aids or not?

How come we can't cure AIDS

7th and 8th Grade Questions

How did AIDS come about?

How many ways can you catch HIV and AIDS?

How do you prevent AIDS?

How will you be able to get AIDS or not get AIDS?

How can you get AIDS and STDs?

How do you get AIDS from other people?

How can you get AIDS if you are probed?

Can you get AIDS by having your private parts touched if that person has AIDS?

Can you get an AIDS if you let someone do you in the butt?

Why haven't they cured AIDS yet?

How do you know if you got AIDS? You may not be going around having sex that's the only way I know how to get AIDS.

How do you tell if you have AIDS without going to the doctor?

If you have sex, how can a person protect themselves (male/female)?

7th and 8th Grade – Kids our age need to know...

Please note the students' use of the word "protection" at the end of this list.

Four in five women said that a man or woman who carries a condom is "responsible (Kaiser Family Foundation/SELF magazine National Survey of Women on Their Sexual Health).

Teens need to know about AIDS and HIV.

Teens need to know that if you are going around having sex at a young age you need to stop because have you heard of AIDS or STDs? If you don't want to catch AIDS, then don't have sex.

Teens should know you can get or give AIDS, HIV or any other STD.

Teens should know about what diseases you can have from sex.

Teens should know that there are a lot of diseases in this world so if it comes to having sex or whatever you and your partner do, you should always use **protection**.

I think we should know about AIDS, diseases from sex and ways to **protect** yourself

We need to know about **protection** and AIDS.

Teens need to know when they have sex to use **protection**.

Teens should always wear **protection**.

High School Students Questions

Where did HIV come from? As in how it originated?

How many people have HIV or AIDS in the United States?

How old do you have to be to get AIDS?

Does birth control protect from HIV?

If you have sex with someone who has AIDS...what is the chance of you getting AIDS?

I thought that HIV/AIDS is air born and transmitted by sex but there are cases that come from unexplained source. What's the new information of those unexplained sources?

Through intercourse, if one partner has AIDS, will it be definite that the other will receive AIDS?

High School Students - Kids our age need to know...

What STDs are and how you get them.

How HIV is 100% stopped by condoms and the like.

About AIDSs and the dangers of having unprotected sex.

The risks of unsafe sex.

How having sex can screw up your life i.e. dangers - STDs and AIDS, teen pregnancy, which lead to child support, abortion, etc.

The only thing that they should know about birth control and the badness of AIDS and other than that, parents don't need to be too concerned because they have no business with that.

Everything we need know about how to stay safe.

They need to be informed about how easy it is to get AIDS or any STD, as well as emotional effects later in life, particularly from casual promiscuous sex.

For help in answering these questions see:

Parents' Answers — AIDS/STDs

*Teaching Tools "Myths and Realities" about
STD/HIV Infection*

*Teaching Tools — The Full Picture - Effectiveness of Birth Control
Methods in Preventing Pregnancy and STD/HIV Infection*