



PATTERNS OF HIV BEHAVIORS AMONG COLLEGE STUDENT LET'S STOP HIV TOGETHER-REDUCE THE RISK

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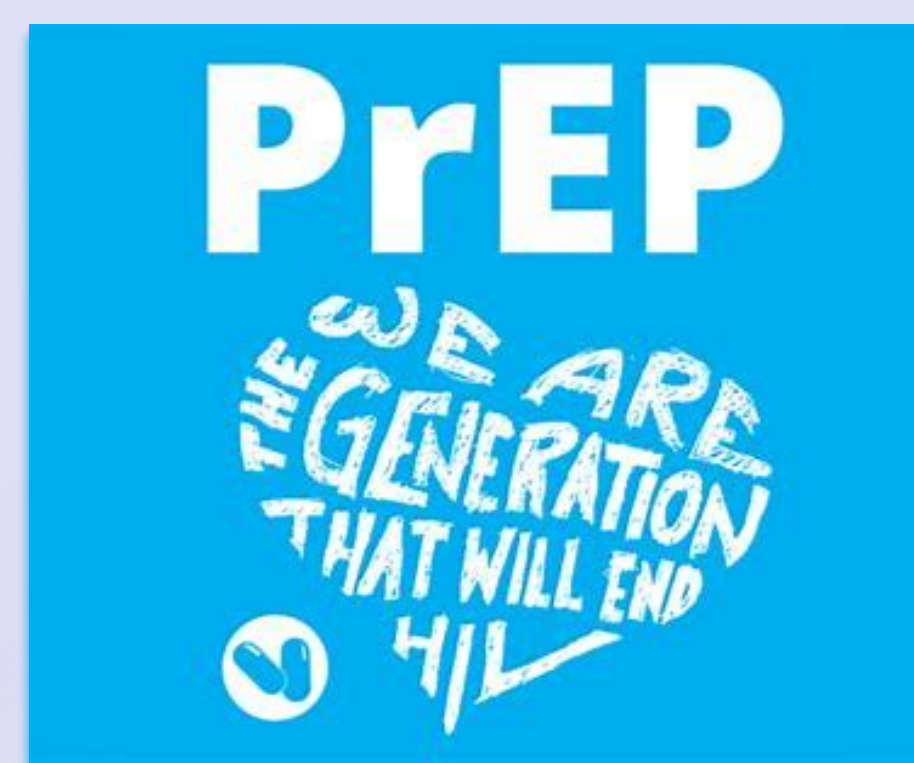


PURPOSE

This research examined the HIV Belief Inventory as a predictor of HIV preventive behaviors and to understand barriers among 18-35 year old college students, such as discussing HIV status with partners, using condoms, getting HIV tests, and using PrEP. The overall goal was to prevent HIV infections and to understand beliefs that reduce negative sexual behaviors and risk factors for HIV. College-aged students have the highest levels of rates for new cases of HIV, although often having a high level of knowledge about HIV and risk factors. In 2018, Memphis was ranked 4th with the highest rates of new HIV infections among all US cities. At the same time, 86% of individuals newly diagnosed with HIV were Black, and 63% were between 15-34 years old. Results from this study could be used to educate college students of the need to reduce the number of new cases of HIV in Memphis and Shelby County.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The demographics consisted of 200 male and female students ages 18 to 24 from the Memphis/Shelby County area. Surveys were given to students to obtain levels of knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions of patterns of sexual behaviors, beliefs of HIV risks, testing habits, and the use of PrEP.



METHODS

The research methods and procedures were designed to gain valuable perceptions about HIV knowledge, awareness, access to resources and services to reduce rates of new cases of HIV, reduce the number of individuals living with HIV, and increase the uptake of HIV testing and use of PrEP.

The Committee of HIV researchers, stakeholders, and students developed the qualitative survey for the study, designed to gain knowledge and attitudes about the difference in the use of condoms among committed and non-committed LGBT partners and the levels of confidence and skills to discuss HIV status, number of partners, and testing habits.

Flyers, emails, social media, and personal conversations encouraged students to participate in the study. Participants signed a consent form for the IRB-approved research project and received a ten-dollar electronic gift card for completing the survey.

OUTCOMES

The data collection process is not complete, significant expected outcomes from the research:

1. Condom use will be most prevalent among men sleeping with men.
2. Students will express a belief that condoms are effective but will not use condoms regularly.
3. Men will have a higher rate for HIV testing, compared to the rate for women.

STUDENT LESSONS LEARNED

Lessons Learned

1. That HIV testing is important to reduce the rate for new cases.
2. PrEP is effective in reducing viral load.
3. Discussing HIV status and condom use is essential for reducing new cases of HIV.

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