

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

SEXUAL ACTIVITY

U.S. HEALTHY PEOPLE YEAR 2000 OBJECTIVES

- 5.4 Reduce to 15 percent or less the percentage of adolescents who have engaged in sexual intercourse before age 15
- 5.5 Increase to at least 40 percent the percentage of ever sexually active adolescents age 17 or younger who abstained from sexual activity for the previous three months
- 5.8 Increase to at least 85 percent the proportion of people ages 10-18 who have discussed human sexuality, including correct anatomical names, sexual abuse, and values surrounding sexuality, with their parents and/or have received information through another parentally endorsed source, such as youth, school, or religious programs

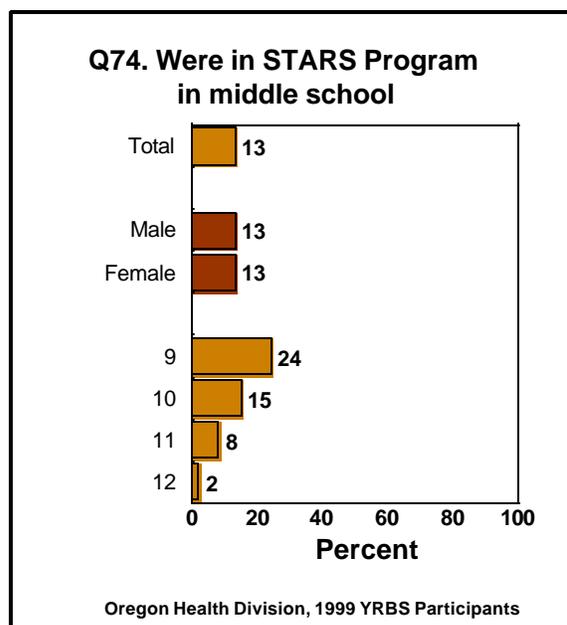
The next eight questions measure the prevalence and perceptions of sexual activity, number of sexual partners, age at first intercourse, alcohol and drug use, and condom use among Oregon high school students.

Engaging in early sexual activity puts a teenager at physical risk of unwanted pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) as well as adverse effects on social and psychological development.¹ A large percentage of YRBS participants who reported having sex at an early age also reported some history of sexual abuse.² Risk factors such as a large number of sexual partners and an early age at first intercourse are associated with STDs.³ Alcohol and drug use may influence initiation of sexual activity and unprotected sexual intercourse.³

WHAT OREGON STUDENTS REPORTED

Q74. Many middle school students take the STARS (Students Today Aren't Ready for Sex) classes. These classes teach refusal skills to limit sexual involvement. Were you in a STARS class in middle school?

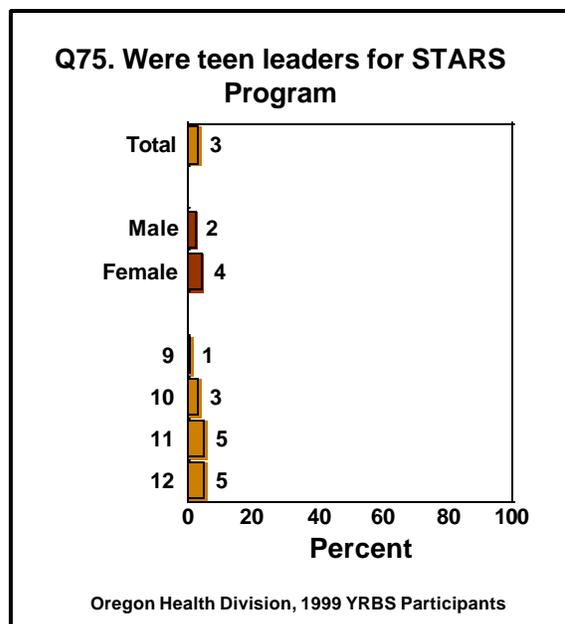
Thirteen percent of all 1999 YRBS participants were in a STARS class in middle school. The STARS program began in 1995 as a pilot project in four Multnomah County middle schools. By the 1998/1999 school year, a version of the STARS program was in 400 middle schools in 31 of Oregon's 36 counties. Male and female students participated in STARS in equal proportions. The large decrease for older students is due to the fact that STARS was not yet widely implemented when they were in middle school.



Q75. Many high school students become teen leaders for the STARS program. Were you ever a teen leader for the STARS program?

Three percent of the Oregon 1999 YRBS high school students reported that they were teen leaders for the STARS program.

Twice as many females as males (4 vs. 2 percent) reported having been teen leaders. As grade increased, more students (5 vs. 1 percent) reported having been teen leaders for STARS.

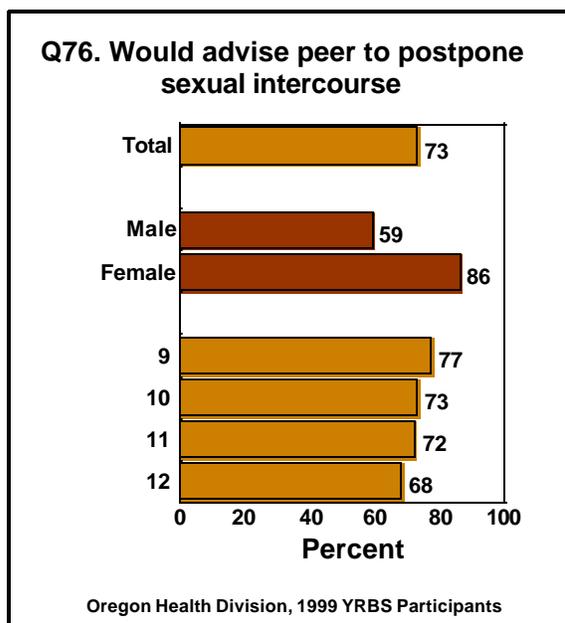


Q76. If a classmate, your same age and sex, asked you for your advice about whether to start having sexual intercourse, what would you probably say?

Seventy-three percent of Oregon 1999 YRBS participants reported that they would advise a classmate of the same age and sex to wait, either until married or until they were older, before beginning to have sexual intercourse.

Female students were one and one-half times more likely than male students (86 vs. 59 percent) to advise waiting before having sexual intercourse. Slightly more students advised waiting until older in general (rather than waiting until married).

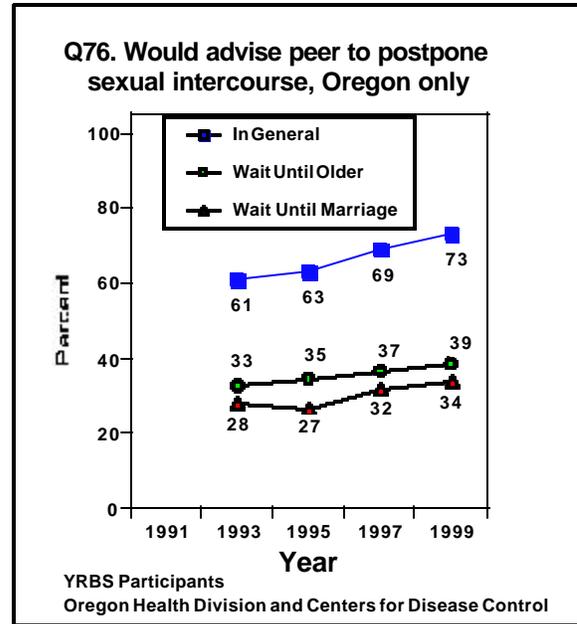
The proportion of students advising postponement of sexual intercourse dropped by almost 12 percent from 9th to 12th grade. However, among those students who advised postponing sex, the proportion of students advising to wait until married, versus waiting until they are older, increased by grade (43% of 9th graders versus 50% of 12th graders).



Q76. DATA TRENDS

The percentage of students who say they would advise their friends and peers to postpone sexual intercourse has increased by 20 percent since 1993.

Of those who advised postponement, a little less than half reported that they would advise to wait until marriage, while a little over half opted for the more general statement, "wait until you are older." These proportions have remained fairly consistent over time.

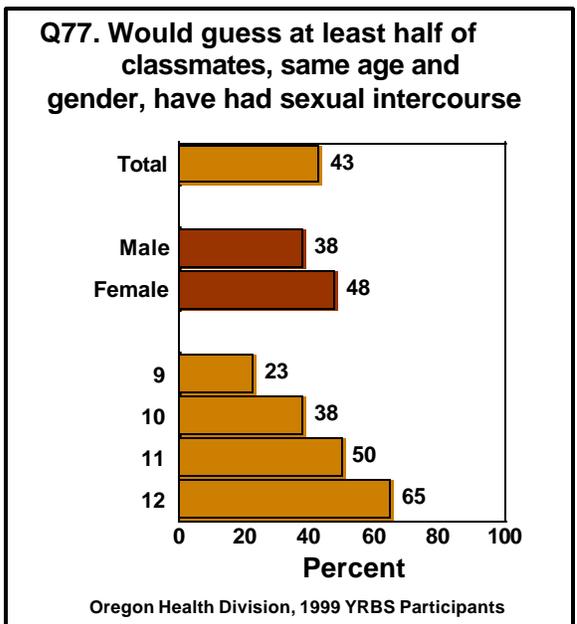


Q77. *What percentage of your classmates, your same age and sex, have had sexual intercourse? (What) would you guess?*

Forty-three percent of Oregon 1999 YRBS participants guessed at least half of their classmates of the same age and gender have had sexual intercourse.

Fewer male students than females (38 vs. 48) believed that at least half of their classmates had ever been sexually active. 12th graders were almost three times more likely than 9th graders to believe that at least half of their peers had engaged in sex.

In 1997, virtually the same percentage of students guessed that at least half of their classmates were sexually active.

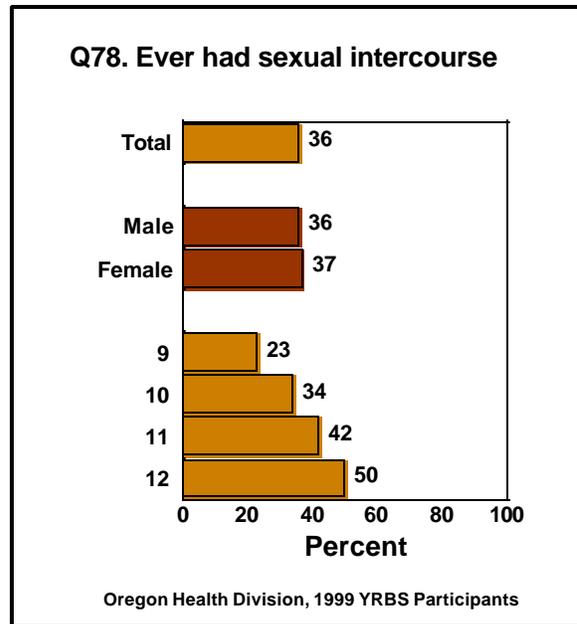


Q78. Have you ever had sexual intercourse?

Thirty-six percent of Oregon 1999 YRBS participants reported that they had ever had sexual intercourse.

There was little gender difference in those reporting that they had been sexually active. However, the proportion of students who had ever been sexually active doubled between 9th and 12th grade. Among 12th graders, slightly more females than males (52% vs 48%) reported ever having had sexual intercourse.

Oregon's 1997 YRBS showed similar patterns by grade and gender.

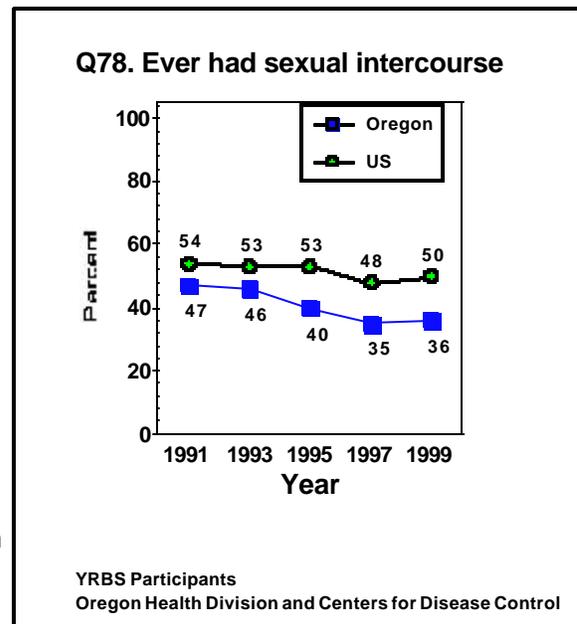


Q78. DATA TRENDS

The proportion of sexually active teenagers has been dropping both statewide and nationally. The Oregon percentage has decreased by 23 percent from 1991 to 1999. Nationally, data indicate a 7 percent decrease from 1991 to 1999.

Reporting of sexual activity in the national survey data showed less of a difference between grades, but more difference between genders.

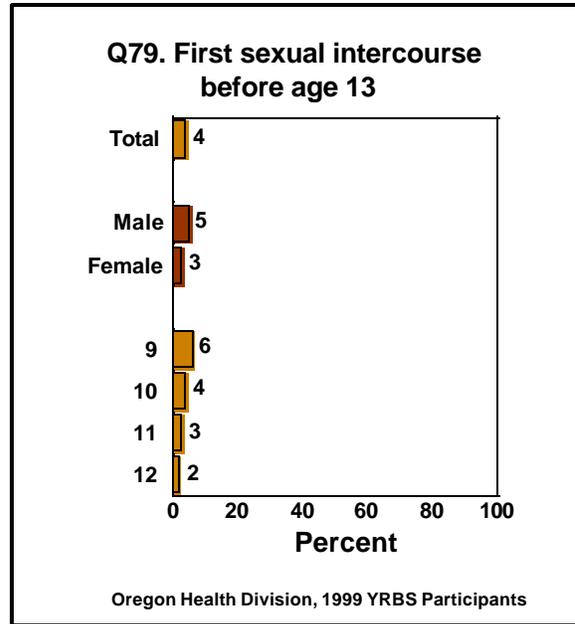
Nationwide, the proportion of sexually active teens increased 66 percent by grade; 39 percent of 9th graders versus 65 percent of 12th graders said they had been sexually active. Among all grades in the national study, slightly more males than females (52 vs 48 percent) had ever engaged in sex.⁴



Q79. How old were you when you had sexual intercourse for the first time?

Four percent of Oregon 1999 YRBS participants had sexual intercourse for the first time prior to age 13. Of those who had sex prior to age thirteen, 39 percent also reported some form of sexual abuse.

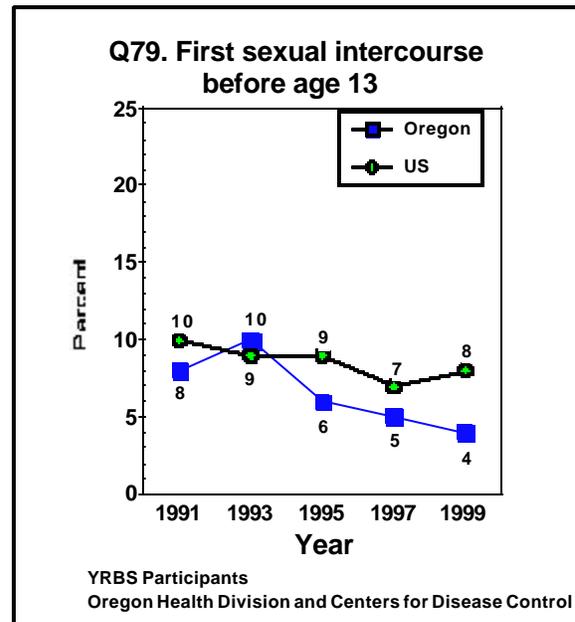
More males than females (5 vs 3 percent) engaged in sexual intercourse for the first time prior to age 13. As grade level increased, the percentage of students who reported having intercourse before age 13 decreased by one third. However, this decrease may simply reflect attrition patterns in school attendance. More students have left school by 12th grade than at the beginning of high school, and studies indicate that a substantial percentage of those who leave school may be among those most at risk for a variety of health-related behaviors.⁵



Q79. DATA TRENDS

Both in Oregon and nationwide, the proportion of students reporting early initiation of sexual activity has exhibited a downward trend. The Oregon percentage has decreased by 50 percent since 1991; nationally the decrease is about 20 percent.

Because the age range of YRBS participants includes students younger than age 15, the national reporting uses age 13 in analysis of early initiation of sexual intercourse. As noted at the beginning of this chapter, the US Healthy People 2000 objective 5.4 is to reduce the percentage of adolescents who have engaged in sexual intercourse prior to age 15, and age 17. Data from the Oregon 1999 survey indicates that among respondents aged 15-17, the state's female YRBS participants meet the objective (15 percent), whereas 16 percent of male participants aged 15-17 have engaged in sexual intercourse prior to age 15.²

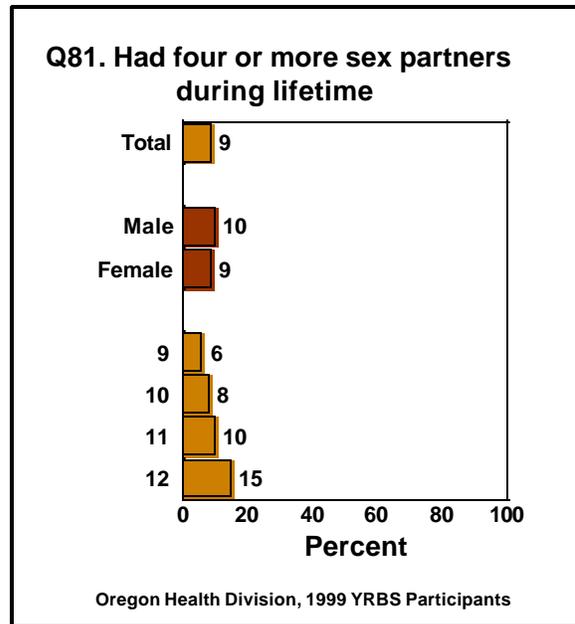


Q81. During your life, with how many people have you had sexual intercourse?

The CDC uses proportion of youth who have had sex with four or more partners as one of the measures for risk of STDs and other health risks.⁴ Nine percent of Oregon 1999 YRBS participants have had sexual intercourse with four or more people during their lifetime.

Slightly more male than female students (10 vs. 9 percent) reported this level of multiple sexual partners in their lifetime. Nationally, however, the difference between male and female students was more pronounced (19 vs. 13 percent).

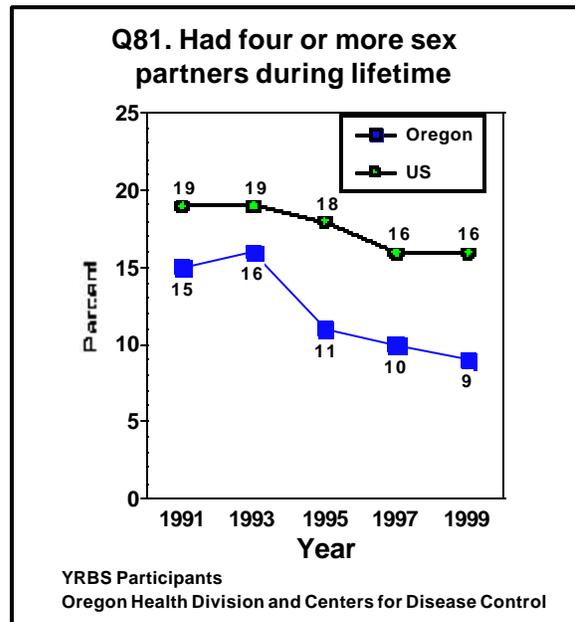
The proportion of Oregon students reporting four or more lifetime sex partners more than doubled from 9th to 12th grade.



Q81. DATA TRENDS

Fewer Oregon teenagers reported multiple sexual partners than students nationally. The trend shows that Oregon percentages have been consistently lower than the national average.

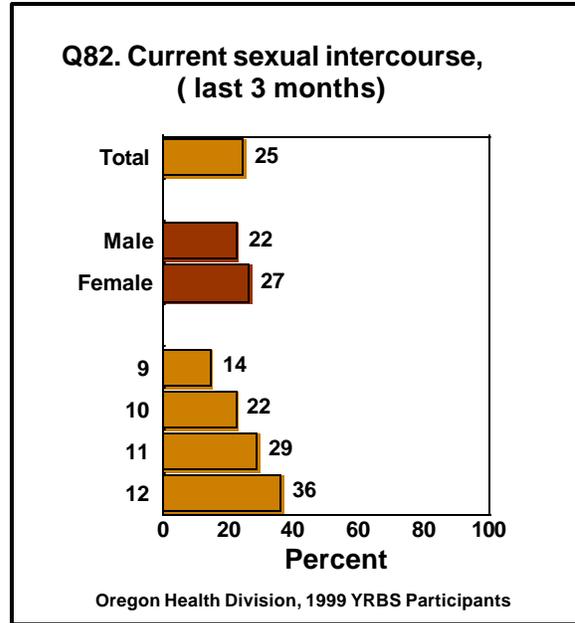
Since 1991, the proportion of Oregon students reporting multiple sex partners has decreased by 40 percent. Nationwide, this proportion has decreased less dramatically, by 16 percent.



Q82. During the past 3 months, with how many people did you have sexual intercourse?

Current sexual activity is measured by student reports regarding whether they have had sexual intercourse with one or more partners during the three months prior to taking the survey. Twenty-five percent of all Oregon 1999 YRBS participants reported having current sexual activity.

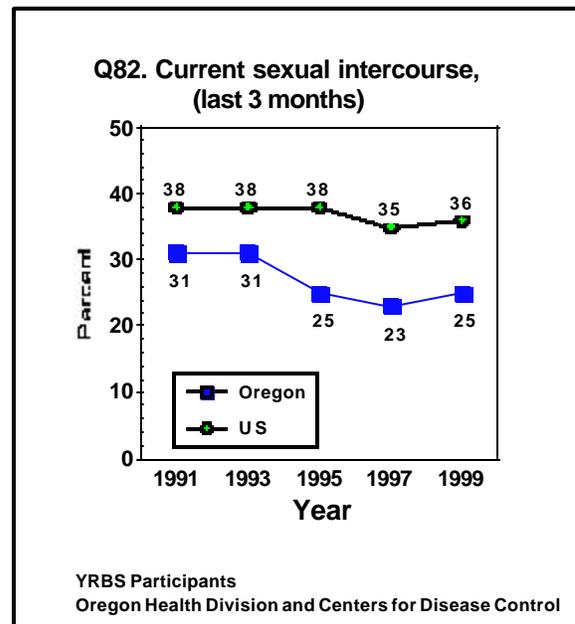
The proportion of students who reported being currently sexually active was similar among males and females, but increased by over one and a half times between ninth and twelfth grades.



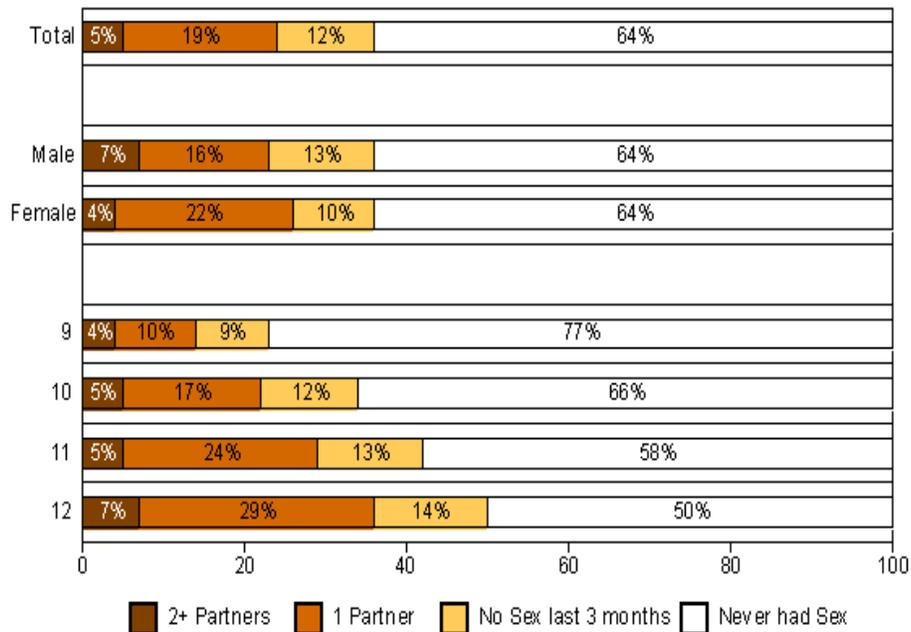
Q82. DATA TRENDS

The proportion of students reporting current sexual activity—sexual intercourse in the three months preceding the survey—has decreased in Oregon by 19 percent since 1991. Nationally, no significant decrease has been found.⁴

Nationally, 72 percent of the students who had ever had sex reported being currently sexually active.⁴ Among Oregonian students who ever had sexual intercourse, 67 percent reported current sexual activity. This proportion is similar to those who reported current sexual activity in the 1997 Oregon YRBS (66 percent of those who ever had sex).



Q82. Sexual Activity in past 3 months



Oregon Health Division, 1999 YRBS Participants

The table above shows the proportion of survey respondents by number of sex partners (if any) in the past three months. More males than females (7 versus 4 percent) reported being currently or recently sexually active with more than one partner. The proportion of students reporting current sexual activity increased by 61 percent from ninth to twelfth grade, with the bulk of the increase occurring among those reporting one current or recent sex partner. Those who reported having ever had sex but being currently abstinent also increased by 36 percent between ninth and twelfth grade. Proportions in all categories are similar to those reported in 1997.

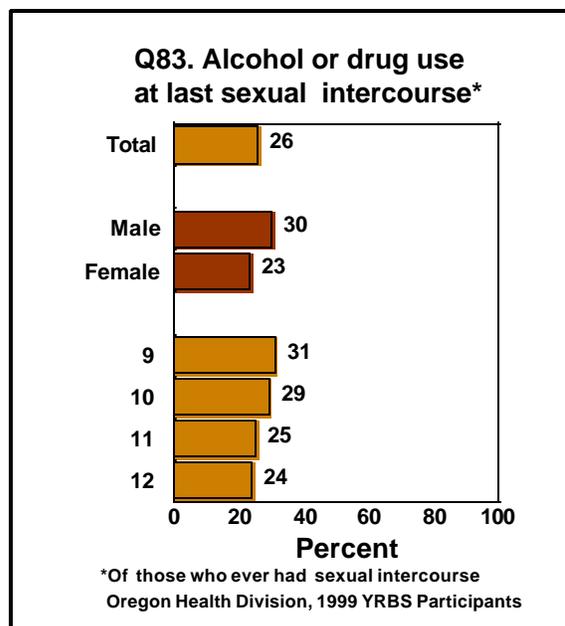
Of those who ever had sexual intercourse, almost one third (33%) were currently abstinent. More males than females (36 versus 28 percent) were currently abstinent. However, female students who were currently sexually active were much more likely than their male counterparts (90 versus 63 percent) to have had only one recent sexual partner. Over three quarters of Oregon’s currently sexually active students reported having only one sexual partner during the three months preceding the survey.

Among those who were 17 or younger, 33 percent of ever sexually active teens who reported being currently abstinent. This proportion was the same as that of the total YRBS respondent population, and compares to the Healthy People 2000 goal for current abstinence (at least 40%).

Q83. Did you drink alcohol or use drugs before you had sexual intercourse the last time? [Of YRBS participants who have ever had sexual intercourse]

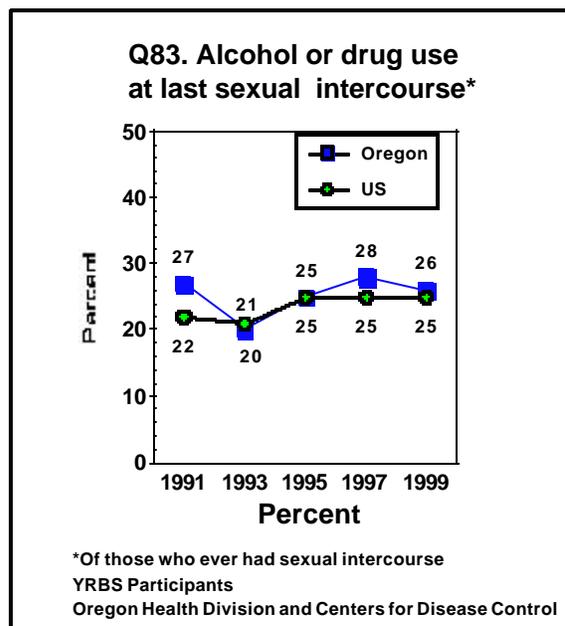
Twenty-six percent of sexually active 1999 YRBS participants drank alcohol or used drugs before their last sexual intercourse.

More males than females (30 vs. 23 percent) drank alcohol or used drugs before the last time they had intercourse. More Oregon female students than those nationwide drank or used alcohol before sex (23 vs. 19 percent).⁴ As grade level increased, 23 percent fewer students reported using alcohol or other drugs before intercourse.



Q83. DATA TRENDS

Slightly more Oregon students than those nationwide report alcohol and drug use prior to sexual activity. It is unclear whether there has been an upward trend in the Oregon data, or whether the proportion has remained about the same. National data, however, exhibits no significant change in the percent of students using alcohol or drugs prior to sexual activity.⁴



WHAT OREGON STUDENTS WROTE

Advising peers about whether to have sex:

"I would probably tell them that they need to find out from themselves if they are ready and then tell them I am waiting until after marriage."

"I would ask them if they liked the person a lot and then if it really, truly felt right then do it – but use protection."

"I wouldn't answer any. I would ask them if they are ready to take on the responsibilities of sex, like getting pregnant. If they are ready, age has a part in sex but not a huge part."

"On question 76, I don't like the responses. I would tell my friend that if they were ready and loved their partner to do what they wanted. I would not say that they were too young or should wait because it is that person's choice."

"I think people should at least wait until they are legal to have sex or until they are ready. And it should be with only one partner."

Other comments:

"There is so much emphasis and pressure as teenagers to become sexually active. Not so much intercourse but other things as well. I don't really know where anyone would start to deal with the problems with peer pressure/sexual activity. But it's just a suggestion to think about."

"I was sexually involved once this year. It was not forced, but I was drunk and wouldn't have done it had I been sober."

"The second person I had intercourse with was intoxicated and so was I....I was kinda talked into it, I really did not want to!"

"Sex isn't a bad thing with one partner that you absolutely love."

"Some people have had sex because it was forced. (These) questions about the topic overlook that."

"We need programs to keep teens away from having sex."

"I think this survey is a very good thing. I also think more schools need sex-ed classes. There is a lot of sex, drugs, and alcohol going on in our school, but it is hard to prevent it."

"My healthy lifestyle comes from sports and having STARS and leadership classes and my parents and I."

"I know I (and many of my friends) would be more sexually active as well as experiment with drugs if I did not have the FFA (Future Farmers of America) program."

PREGNANCY

U.S. HEALTHY PEOPLE YEAR 2000 OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 Reduce pregnancies among females aged 15-17 to no more than 50 per 1,000 adolescents
- 5.2 Reduce to no more than 30 percent the proportion of all pregnancies that are unintended
- 5.6 Increase to at least 90 percent the percentage of sexually active, unmarried, people aged 19 or younger who use contraception; especially combining methods effectively preventing pregnancy and providing barrier protection against disease

OREGON BENCHMARKS YEAR 2000 GOALS

- 43 Reduce pregnancies among females aged 15-17 to no more than 15 per 1,000 female adolescents

The next three questions measure the use of contraception and occurrence of pregnancy among Oregon high school students.

Nationally, 66 percent of births among teenagers occur as a result of unintended pregnancies.⁶ Teenage pregnancies place the mothers and their infants at lifetime risk for social and economic disadvantages.⁷

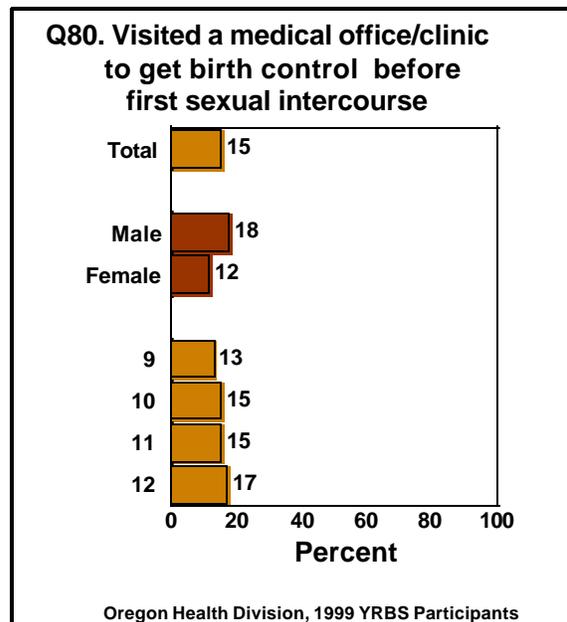
During 1998, 3,176 Oregon females age 10-17 were pregnant and 1,967 gave birth. The pregnancy rate among 10 to 17 year-old Oregonian girls was 17.2 per 1,000 (the birth rate was 10.7 and the abortion rate was 6.6 per 1,000).⁸

WHAT OREGON STUDENTS REPORTED

Q80. When did you first go to a medical office or clinic to get a method for preventing pregnancy? (Of YRBS participants who had ever had sexual intercourse)

Fifteen percent of the 1999 YRBS participants who had ever had sexual intercourse had gone to a medical office or a clinic to get birth control prior to the experience.

Males were one and a half times more likely than females (18 vs. 12 percent) to have sought birth control at a clinic or medical office prior to first intercourse. Among students who had been sexually active, 23 percent more 12th graders than 9th graders had sought birth control prior to first intercourse.

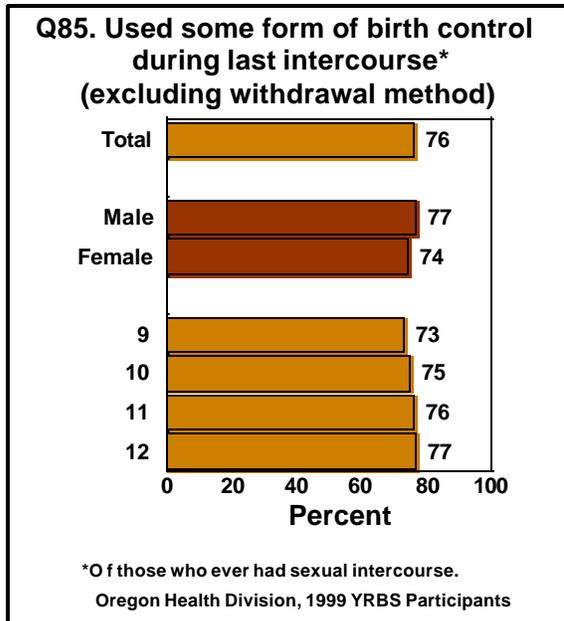


Q85. The last time you had sexual intercourse, what one method did you or your partner use to prevent pregnancy? [Of YRBS participants who ever had sexual intercourse]

Of Oregon 1999 YRBS participants who had ever had sex, 76 percent said they or their partner used some form of birth control (pills, condoms, or other methods, excluding withdrawal) during their last sexual intercourse.

Males were slightly more likely to report birth control use than females (77 vs. 74 percent). Use of birth control among those who had ever been sexually active rose slightly by grade.

Fifty-one percent of students who had ever had sex reported that they used condoms as their method to prevent pregnancy, the last time they had sex.



Currently sexually active teenagers reported use of a birth control method at last intercourse in higher proportion than those who have had sex but have been abstinent in the last three months (see table below). Among those who had sex in the last three months, the largest proportion of students named condoms as the main method used to prevent pregnancy at last intercourse. The pill was the second most commonly used primary birth control method.

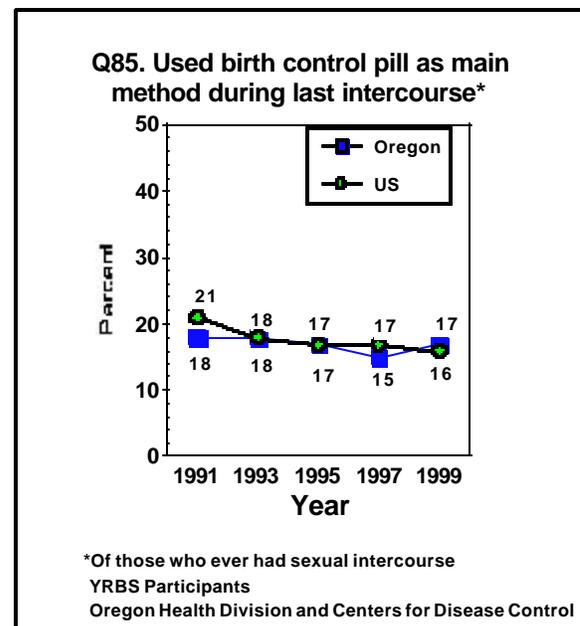
Sexual Activity Status	A Birth Control Method Used at Last Intercourse (excluding withdrawal method)				
	1991	1993	1995	1997	1999
Of all those who ever had sexual intercourse	70%	71%	73%	72%	76%
Only those who are currently abstinent	66%	65%	72%	69%	73%
Only those who are currently sexually active	72%	74%	74%	73%	77%

In 1997, the survey response options changed to include the birth control shot. The birth control shot is a synthetic version of the progesterone hormone, like the pill. However, the mode of delivery is different (injection versus oral), and the injection is every three months instead of a daily dose. Prior to 1997, the shot would have been included in the 'some other method' response. The table below shows birth control pill and injected shot use among high school students who had been sexually active in the three months prior to the survey. The results indicate that a majority of those who checked 'other' in prior years may have been using the shot. Some types of birth control shots have been available since the early 1990's.

Selected Birth Control Method	1991	1993	1995	1997	1999
pill	18%	18%	17%	15%	17%
shot	na	na	na	6%	6%
'some other method'	9%	5%	5%	3%	2%

Q85. DATA TRENDS

National reporting regarding birth control use focuses on the birth control pill. Therefore the comparison shown here includes only birth control pill use, even though condom use was more frequently reported than pill use, as the main method to prevent pregnancy. In 1999, Oregon had a slightly higher proportion of birth control pill use (among those teens who have ever had sexual intercourse) than the nation, although the percentage has stayed fairly close to national levels during the past five times the survey has been administered. The state trend does not appear to be following the slight national downward trend.

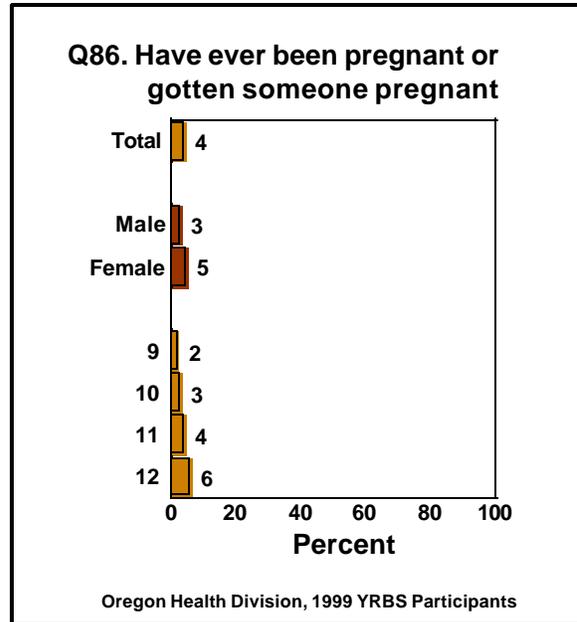


Q86. How many times have you been pregnant or gotten someone pregnant?

Four percent of Oregon 1999 YRBS participants reported having been pregnant or getting someone pregnant one or more times.

Almost twice as many females as males (5 vs. 3 percent) reported being involved in a pregnancy. Involvement in pregnancies tripled as grade levels increased.

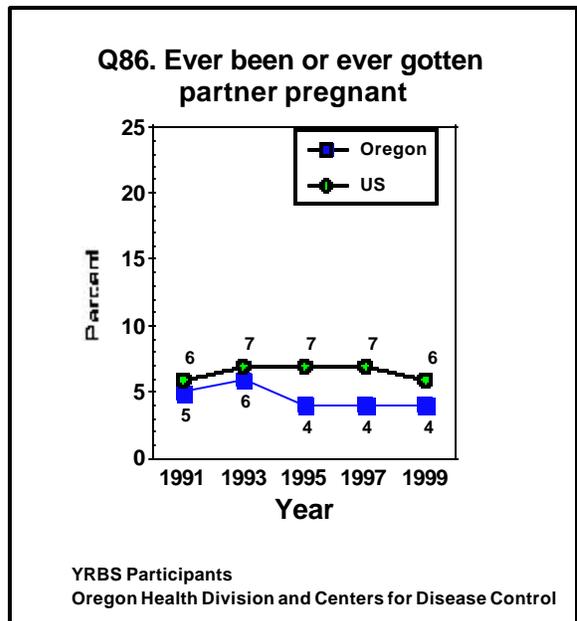
Of those who had ever been sexually active, 11 percent reported being pregnant or getting their partner pregnant.



Q86. DATA TRENDS

The proportion of Oregon YRBS participants who report being involved in a pregnancy has remained level and slightly below the national percentages reported in the national YRBS survey.

Among states reporting in the 1999 YRBS Surveillance Summary, the proportion of high school students involved in a pregnancy ranged from 2.8 percent in Nebraska to 8.4 percent in Mississippi.⁴



WHAT OREGON STUDENTS WROTE

"I'm 16 with a child and life is hard, and I even have the baby's father with me and supporting us. Teenagers don't really understand or care about STDs/HIV/Pregnancy until it happens. Knowing that even if you tell them what can happen, they are still going to do it, scares me!"

"I have been lectured more than once on being sexually active, and I have a baby. But I'm still in school, and I'm doing Okay."

"I recently had a child, and now my life is hard with school and everything. You could try and encourage teens like me to stay in school to discuss preventing this in REALLY IN DEPTH DETAIL, so that you get their attention. Because I know I wish I would have used birth control, and I didn't even though I was aware of it."

"I have been pregnant and received an abortion. That was the hardest thing I've ever had to go through, and I think you need to educate more kids and remind them it can happen to you."

"I think teen sex should be stopped and that girls under the age 17 or 18 should have to have an abortion if she becomes pregnant so that they can finish school and save guys from child support."

"They should put condoms in the schools and have birth control available. The reason teens get pregnant is because it is hard to get birth control, and you have to get your parent's signature. Tell me, who wants their parent to know? Not me! I will take my chances."

"Schools should talk more openly about sex/pregnancy/STDs and talk about its consequences. Birth control and contraceptives should also be openly talked about."

"I think [my school's sex education program] is great. It really is good to go teach the kids so we won't have teen pregnancy."

"I do not believe [my school's sex education program] is a good program. It doesn't show kids what they can do to prevent STDs or a pregnancy. I feel we should give a class about sexual awareness, not abstinence."

"I think that there should be a place that you could go to get birth control and counseling that would be totally confidential; no questions asked."

"I think that if our school had a nurse or a Health Center that would help out a lot. We should have a place where kids may go to get condoms/birth control, etc if they are planning on sexual activity. That way there would be less teen pregnancies, abortions, and unwanted babies."

SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

U.S. HEALTHY PEOPLE YEAR 2000 OBJECTIVES

- 19.1b Reduce gonorrhea among adolescents aged 15-19 to an incidence of no more than 375 cases per 100,000 adolescents
- 19.2 Reduce the prevalence of *Chlamydia tracomatis* infections among young women under 25 to no more than five percent
- 19.10a Increase the proportion of sexually active, unmarried young women aged 15-19 whose partner used a condom at last sexual intercourse to 60 percent or more
- 19.10b Increase the proportion of sexually active, unmarried young men aged 15-19 who used a condom at last sexual intercourse to 75 percent or more
- 19.12 Increase to at least 95 percent the proportion of schools that have appropriate HIV and other STD education curricula for students in 4th-12th grade, preferably as part of comprehensive school health education based upon scientific information that includes the way HIV and other STDs are prevented and transmitted

OREGON BENCHMARKS YEAR 2000 GOALS

- 47 Reduce annual percentage of new HIV cases with an early diagnosis (before symptoms occur) to 85 percent or less

The next five questions measure knowledge of the sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and attitudes among Oregon high school students.

AIDS is the seventh leading cause of death for youth aged 15-24 nationally⁹ and it is the twentieth leading cause of death in Oregon.¹⁰ In 1997, 5 percent of new HIV cases in Oregon were diagnosed among those aged 18 or younger.¹¹

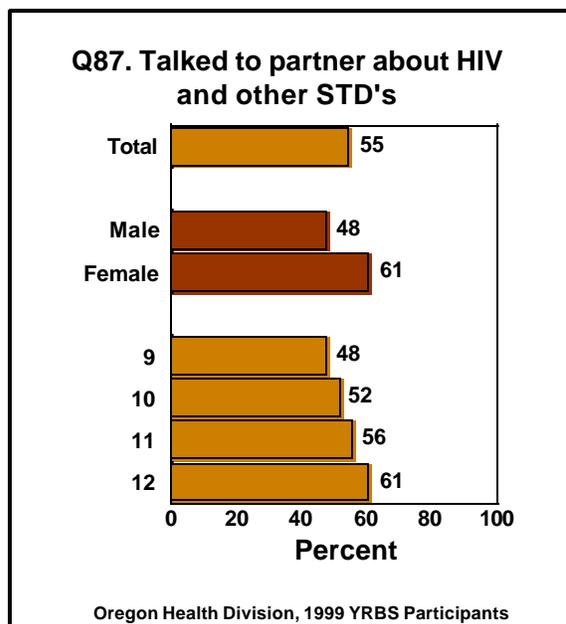
STDs are the most frequently reported communicable diseases in the state of Oregon. In 1998, 2,327 15-19 year olds were diagnosed with chlamydia (40 percent of chlamydia cases) and 215 were diagnosed with gonorrhea (24 percent of gonorrhea cases).¹² The proper use of latex condoms by males during every sexual encounter is extremely effective at reducing the risk of STDs, including HIV infection.¹³

WHAT OREGON STUDENTS REPORTED

Q87. If you have had sexual intercourse, did you talk with your partner about HIV and other STDs? [Of YRBS participants who have ever had sexual intercourse]

Over half (55 percent) of the Oregon 1999 YRBS participants who had ever had sexual intercourse had talked with their partner about HIV and STDs. Another six percent had talked to at least one of their partners, but not all, about HIV and STDs.

More females than males (61 vs. 48 percent) had talked with their partner. As grade level increased, the percent of sexually active teenagers who talked with their partner about STDs increased by 27 percent.

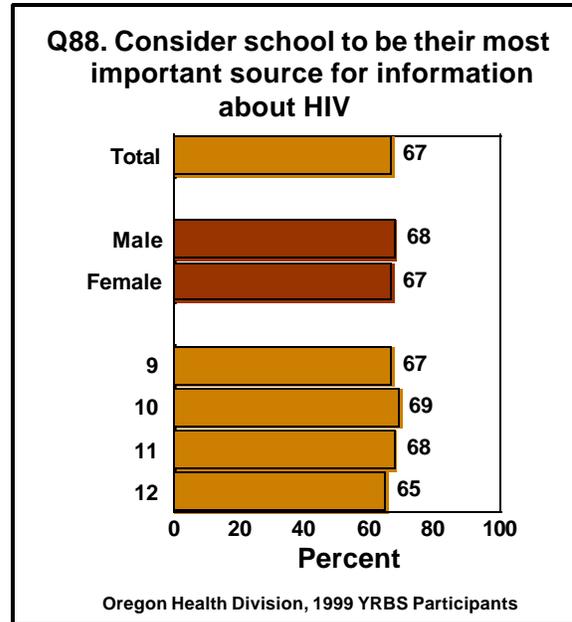


Q88. What do you consider to be the one most reliable or accurate source from where you have gotten your information about AIDS/HIV infection? (Choose one)

Overall, 67 percent of Oregon 1999 YRBS participants considered school to be their most important source for information about HIV infection and AIDS. Listed school-related sources of information included classroom instruction, teachers or school counselors, and brochures available at school or the school health center.

Males and females did not differ much in their responses to this question, although females were more likely to have listed brochures as their most reliable or accurate source.

In 1997, 68 percent of the Oregon participants felt school was their most important source for information on HIV/AIDS.



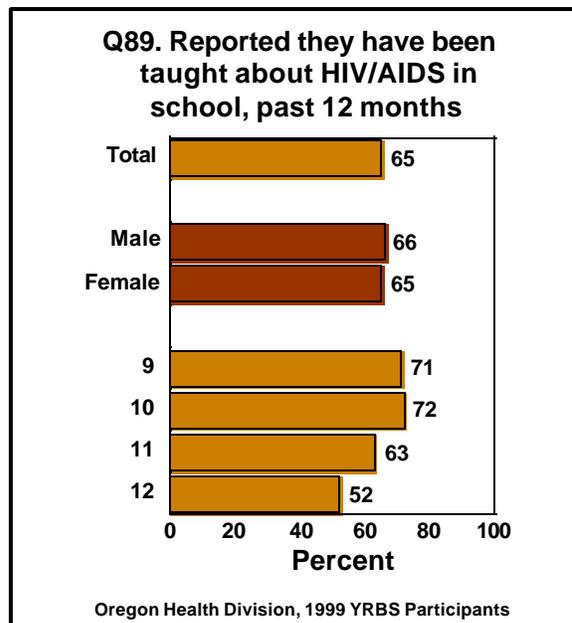
Q89. During the last 12 months, have you ever been taught about AIDS or HIV infection in school?

Sixty-five percent of Oregon 1999 YRBS participants reported having been taught about HIV/AIDS infection in school in the past year.

There were practically no differences between male and female responses to this question. Students in 11th and 12th grade, however, were less likely to have received HIV/AIDS education in the past year.

This question changed in 1999, when the qualification “during the last 12 months” was added to the question.

In the 1997 survey, 95 percent of the students reported ever being taught about HIV/AIDS in school.

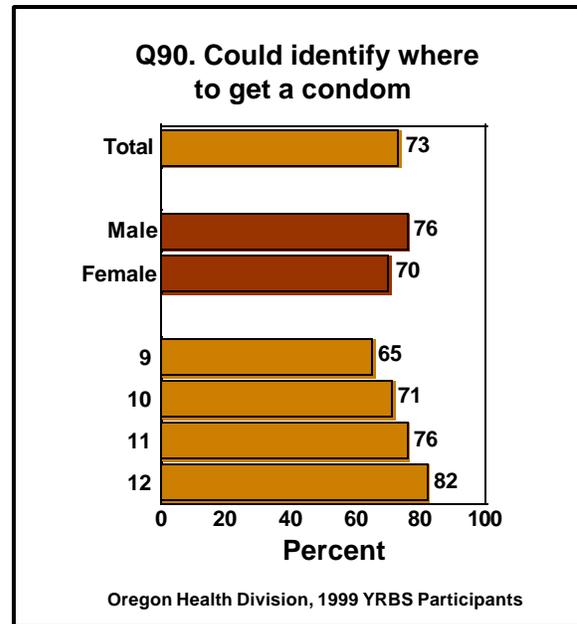


Q90. If you wanted them, where would you go to get condoms? (Select only one response)

Seventy-three percent of Oregon 1999 YRBS participants could identify a place to get a condom.

More males than females (76 vs. 70 percent) could identify a source. Stores and pharmacies were the most frequently named source (44 percent). Twelfth graders were 26 percent more likely to know where to get condoms than were ninth graders.

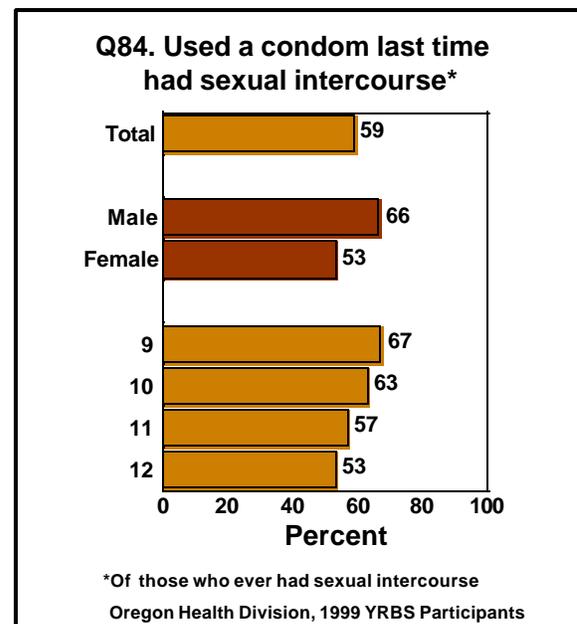
In 1997, 78 percent of the Oregon YRBS participants could identify where to get a condom.



Q84. The last time you had sexual intercourse, did you or your partner use a condom? [Of YRBS participants who ever had sexual intercourse]

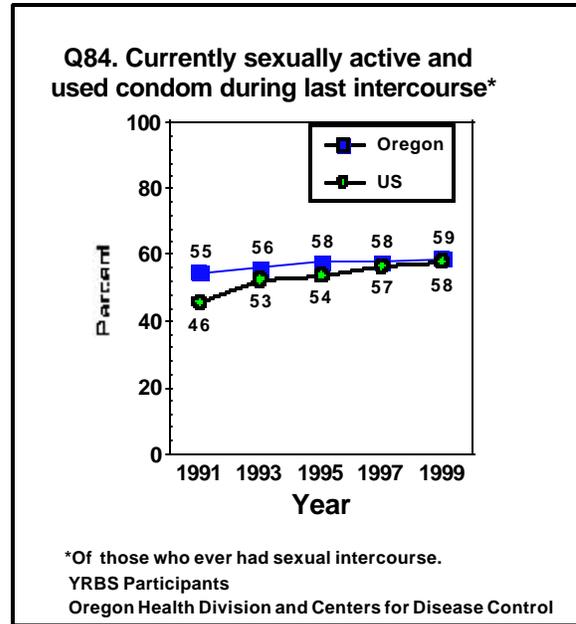
Among 1999 YRBS participants who had ever had sex, 59 percent used a condom, or their partner used a condom, during their last sexual intercourse.

More males than females (66 vs. 53 percent) reported condom use during their last sexual intercourse. As grade level increased, use of a condom before last intercourse decreased by 21 percent.



Q84. DATA TRENDS

In Oregon, the proportion of sexually active YRBS participants who report using a condom at last intercourse has not changed significantly since 1991. Nationally, this proportion increased by 21 percent from 1991 to 1999.



Condom use at last intercourse is consistently lower among currently sexually active students than among those who reported that they were abstinent in the past three months.

Sexual Activity Status	Condom Used at Last Intercourse				
	1991	1993	1995	1997	1999
Currently abstinent	58%	61%	66%	64%	67%
Currently sexually active	53%	54%	54%	55%	55%

WHAT OREGON STUDENTS WROTE

"I think there needs to be someone who knows all about AIDS, etc. to come and talk to the school. People still don't know about it."

"I think that teens these days need to be more informed on STDs or HIV inside the community of our school. At least that would help with all the rumors or worries."

"I'm not dumb. If I plan on having sex with a girl, I'm gonna talk about HIV and STD's 'cause I don't want to get a disease and I don't want her to."

"I think that there should be more sexual education. Last year, I lived in an area where it was forbidden to talk about anything related to sex in the classroom, including sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS. The school actually took away our health books and cut out the portion of the books dealing with those issues. This is totally wrong. Adults know that kids don't just follow what they're told to do, so what makes them think that the students will abstain from sex just because they're told to and no other info is given?"

"Schools should make it easier to get condoms. Maybe in the bathrooms or somewhere private where no one can find out, not even an adult."

"You need to teach more about safe sex instead of abstinence 'cause kids are gonna do it, anyways, you might as well teach them how to protect themselves."

"Start prevention classes at a much younger age and focus on kids having good self-esteem. Also condoms need to be offered more because whether students are responsible or not they will still have sex. Protect them!"

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