

HIV/AIDS KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDES

OREGON BENCHMARKS ¹

YEAR 2000 GOALS

Increase the percentage of HIV cases with an early diagnosis to:

85%

The next twelve questions measure knowledge of the Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus (HIV) and attitudes among Oregon high school students.

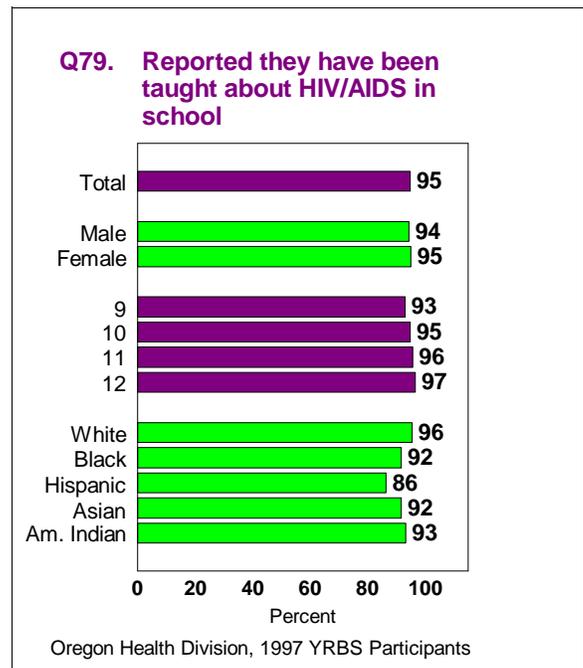
Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is the fifth leading cause of years of potential life lost before age 65 in Oregon and is the third leading cause of death among young adults age 25 to 34.¹² Seventeen percent of new AIDS cases in Oregon are among people age 20 to 29. Because of the long latency period of the human immunodeficiency virus (as long as 7 to 10 years), these people were very likely infected as teenagers. Since there is currently no cure for AIDS or vaccine to combat the virus, education is the most important prevention strategy.

WHAT OREGON STUDENTS REPORTED

Q79. Have you ever been taught about AIDS or HIV infection in school?

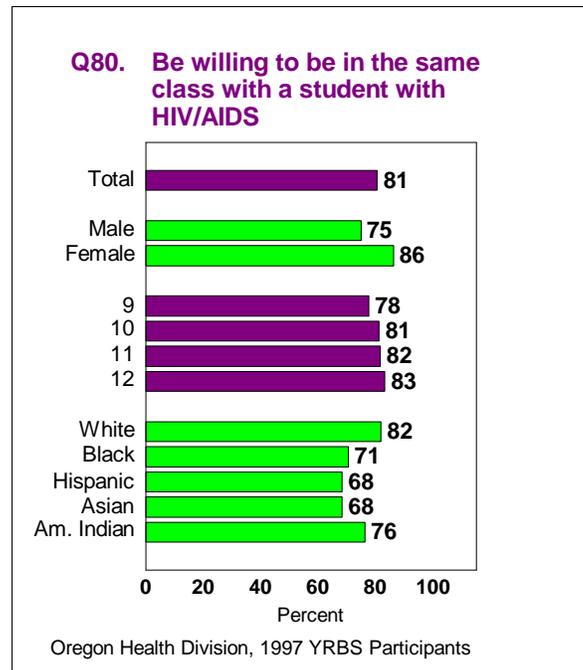
Ninety-five percent of Oregon YRBS participants report having been taught about HIV/AIDS infection in school. There were no statistically significant differences between male and female students. As grade level increased, the number of students who had been taught about HIV *significantly* increased. *Significantly* fewer Hispanic (86%) and Asian students (92%) reported they were taught about HIV in school. (NOTE: Since HIV/AIDS education is required from K-12 in Oregon, this should be 100 percent.)

In 1995, 86 percent of students participating in the national YRBS reported they have been taught about HIV/AIDS in school.



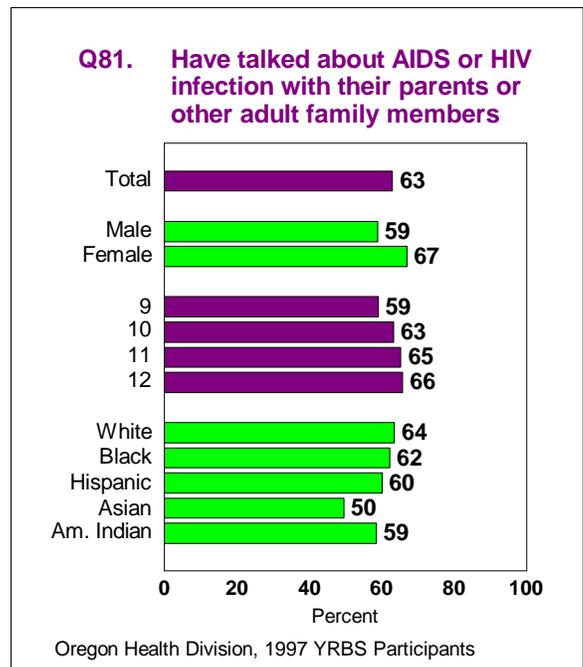
Q80. Would you be willing to be in the same class with a student with HIV/AIDS infection?

Eighty-one percent of Oregon YRBS participants were willing to be in class with a student with HIV/AIDS, including *significantly* more females (86%) than males (75%). As grade increased, the percentage who were willing to be in class with a student with HIV *significantly* increased. *Significantly* fewer African American (71%), Hispanic (68%), Asian (68%), and American Indian (76%) students were willing to be in class with a student with HIV.



Q81. Have you ever talked about AIDS or HIV infection with your parents or other adults in your family?

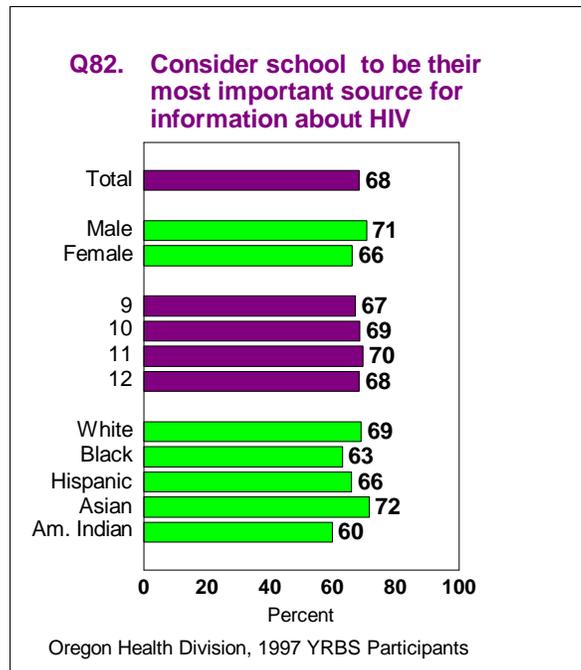
Sixty-three percent of Oregon YRBS participants have talked about the AIDS/HIV infection with their parents or other adults in their family. *Significantly* more females (67%) than males (59%) talked about AIDS/HIV infection with their parents or other adults in their family. As grade increased, the percentage who talked with parents or adult family members about HIV *significantly* increased. *Significantly* fewer Asian (50%) students have talked about HIV with their parents or adult family members.



In 1995, 63 percent of students participating in the national YRBS reported having discussions about HIV with parents or other adult family members.

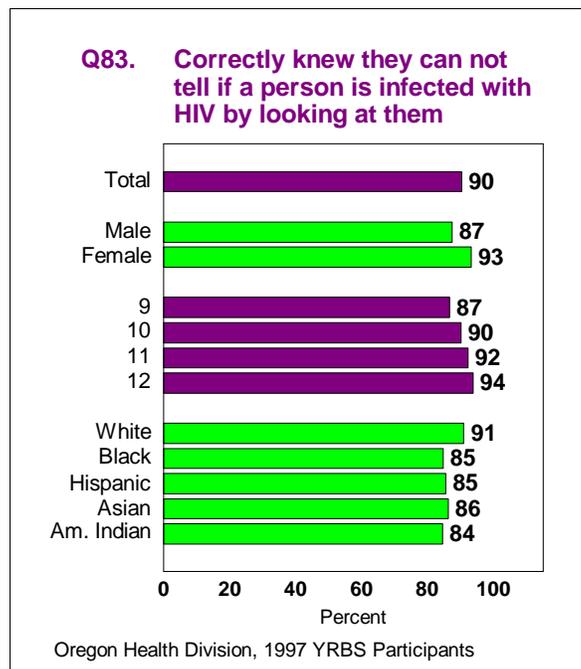
Q82. What do you consider to be the one most important source from where you have gotten your information about AIDS/HIV infection?

Overall, 68 percent of Oregon YRBS participants considered school (classroom instruction, teachers or school counselors, and brochures available at school or school health center) to be their most important source for information about HIV. *Significantly* more males (71%) than females (66%) consider school to be their most important source of information about HIV. There was no statistically significant difference by grade level. *Significantly* fewer American Indian students (60%) named school as the best source of information.



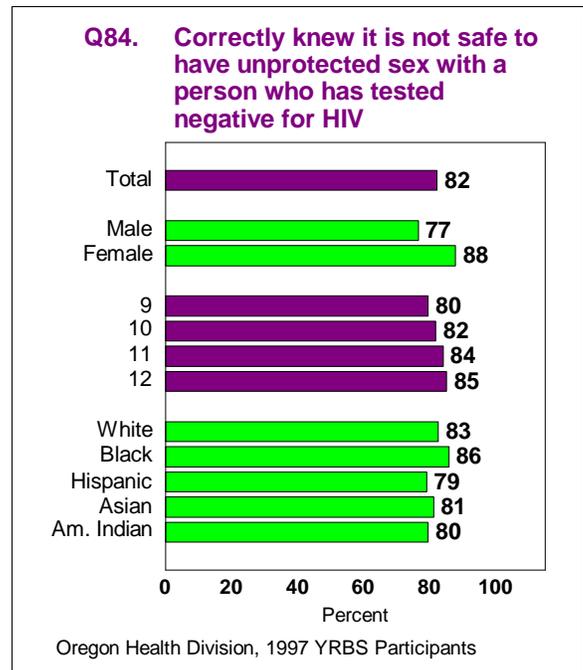
Q83. Can you tell if people are infected with HIV (the AIDS virus) just by looking at them?

Overall, 90 percent of Oregon YRBS participants correctly knew they can not tell if people are infected with HIV by looking at them, including *significantly* more female students (93%) than male students (87%). As grade increased, this knowledge *significantly* increased. *Significantly* fewer African American (85%), Hispanic (85%), Asian (86%), and American Indian (84%) students knew that you can not tell by looking if a person has HIV.



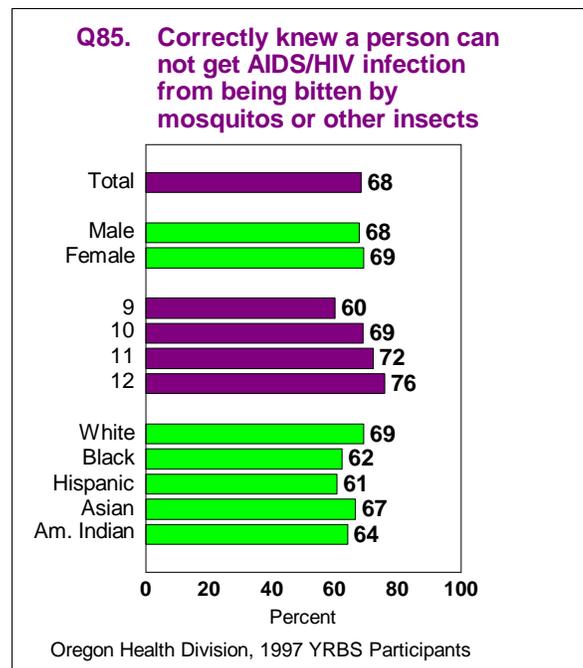
Q84. Is it safe to have unprotected sex (no condom used) with a person who has tested negative for HIV?

Eighty-two percent of Oregon YRBS participants correctly knew it is not safe to have unprotected sex with a person who has tested negative for HIV, including significantly more female students (88%) than male students (77%). As grade increased, the number of students who knew unprotected sex is not safe significantly increased. Significantly fewer Hispanic (79%) students knew unprotected sex is not safe.



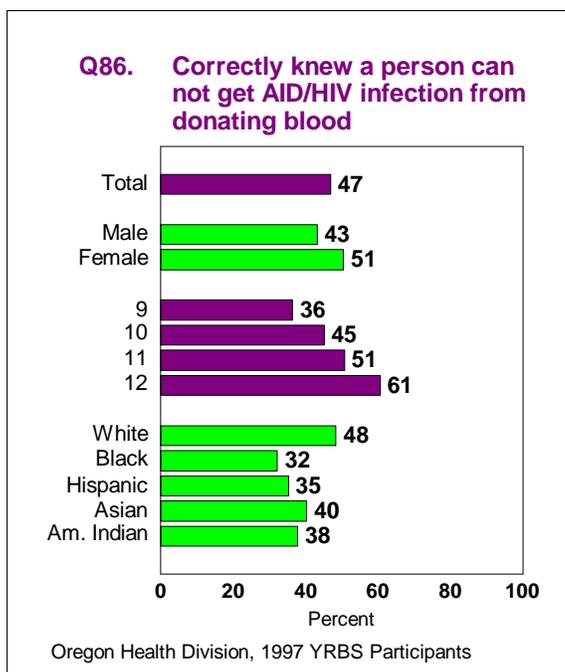
Q85. Can a person get AIDS/HIV infection from being bitten by mosquitoes or other insects?

Sixty-eight percent of Oregon YRBS participants knew a person can not get HIV from being bitten by mosquitos or other insects. There was no statistically significant difference by gender. As grade increased, significantly more students knew HIV can't be transmitted by an insect bite. Significantly fewer African American (62%) and Hispanic (61%) students knew HIV can not be transmitted by an insect bite.



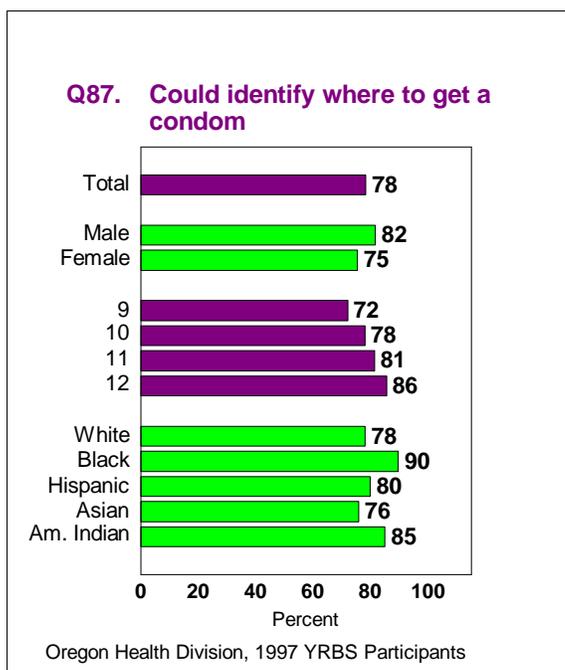
Q86. Can a person get AIDS/HIV infection from donating blood?

Only 47 percent of Oregon YRBS participants correctly knew that a person can not get HIV from donating blood. *Significantly* more female students (51%) than male students (43%) knew the correct answer. As grade increased *significantly* more students knew HIV can not be contracted by donating blood. *Significantly* fewer African American (32%), Hispanic (35%), Asian (40%), and American Indian (38%) students were aware that a person can not get HIV from donating blood.



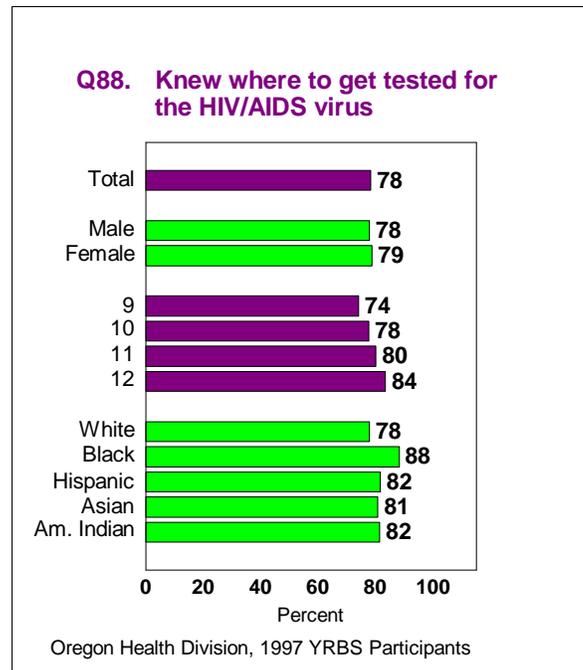
Q87. If you wanted them, where would you go to get condoms?

Seventy-eight percent of Oregon YRBS participants could identify a place to get a condom. *Significantly* more male students (82%) than female students (75%) could identify a source. As grade increased, *significantly* more students knew where to get a condom. *Significantly* more African American students (90%) and American Indian students (85%) knew where to get a condom.



Q88. If you thought you were exposed to the HIV/AIDS virus, where would you go to be tested?

Seventy-eight percent of Oregon YRBS participants could identify a place they could get tested for HIV if they thought they had been exposed. There was no statistically significant difference by gender. As grade increased, *significantly* more students knew a place they could get tested for HIV. *Significantly* more African American (88%) and Hispanic (82%) students knew where they could get tested for HIV.



WHAT OREGON STUDENTS WROTE:

There are many things I think kids are doing right now that definitely need to be talked about. Sex and drugs are the most important because both can kill you. I think its the parent's responsibility to talk to their kids about these issues. If (the parents don't talk to them) then the kid could make a fatal decision. If parents do not want to talk about these subjects then the school or a special counseling center should be made available to make the kids feel comfortable to talk.

I think the biggest problem that health care professionals face is in presenting vital information such as AIDS and sex education in a way that isn't offensive to parents. I think a lot of students want to learn, but its hard to get parents to consent to sex or AIDS education which they themselves are too uncomfortable to talk about. The children pay the price because their parents won't teach them or can't teach them about these issues and also won't allow their children to learn about them from willing educated sources. I was in a teen theater group which worked with issues such as AIDS, sex, STDs and drugs and it was educational and enjoyable for me, but we couldn't perform in any high schools in (this) area.

Some parents don't let their kids take sex ed classes offered. They say "We teach that at home." When sex is brought up at home they say, "Later", or "Why do you need to know", etc. Somehow our schools need to be more open about sex, AIDS and STDs. I was raped. I want to tell others about my problem. The school said "No."

I'm concerned about AIDS and know its serious but I'm not concerned for myself because me and my partner are monogamous. We have been together for three years and he's the only sexual partner I have ever had and I'm the only one he has had. I have seen someone [with] AIDS. Its not glamorous and I think students need to know AIDS is more than an STD, how you get it and that its fatal. We need to know what happens to a person's body who's dying of AIDS.

Kids are having sex whether adults like it or not. I think condoms should be in vending machines. I mean if they're gonna have sex you can at least provide them with condoms. Also if kids ask for condoms give them to them. That shows responsibility and also the desire to prevent AIDS and other things. Don't ignore that. It can be life or death for someone.

Our peer education programs for HIV/AIDS are very good. They make it easy to talk about issues and are more fun than listening to a lecture. We also had an HIV+ speaker come to our school and it was very moving. Our school's policy on condom distribution, however, is not so good. Students can only get condoms if they have a sexually transmitted disease, which kind of defeats the purpose. This ought to be changed.

The most valuable AIDS awareness I've received in high school was an AIDS panel of speakers. Talk about a wake-up call! Condoms should be accessible in schools.

I would like to comment that the survey on sexual intercourse was good but I think you need to add (something) in general about making out. That's a problem today because it leads to oral sex, which is not healthy and very unsafe.

I think our health class is really, really good. I have learned so much (more) in just this year about health topics than I have in most of my life. I think I like (the education) because it covers drug/alcohol abuse, AIDS, sex education and other things teenagers really need to know. I know personally it has really made me think about having sex in high school.