

The Blumenfeld Education Letter

"My People Are Destroyed For Lack Of Knowledge" HOSEA 4:6

Vol. IV, No. 11 (Letter # 39)

EDITOR: Samuel L. Blumenfeld

November 1989

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide knowledge for parents and educators who want to save the children of America from the destructive forces that endanger them. Our children in the public schools are at grave risk in 4 ways: academically, spiritually, morally, and physically — and only a well-informed public will be able to reduce those risks.

"Without vision, the people perish."

AIDS Spreading Among Teenagers

New federal statistics indicate that the AIDS virus is now spreading rapidly among teenagers. Between July 1988 and August 1989, the number of teenagers with AIDS jumped by 43 percent, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

As of October 1989, 421 cases of AIDS among 13- to 19-year-olds had been reported to the CDC. That number includes only teenagers who have actually developed the disease, not those who have been infected by the virus but as yet show no symptoms.

What is especially disturbing, experts agree, is the evidence that many adolescents of both sexes are engaging in behavior that puts them at potentially high risk.

Experts say that although teenagers account for less than 1 percent of all reported AIDS cases, their sexual behavior, including intercourse with multiple partners and infrequent use of condoms, may make them more vulnerable than many adults to the deadly virus.

Teen Girls at Risk

The CDC estimates that between 1 million and 1.5 million people in the United States have been infected by HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, for an

infection rate of from 4.3 to 6.5 per 1,000. According to the data, female teenagers are more likely than adult females to contract AIDS. The male-to-female ratio of teenage AIDS cases is 5 to 1; among adults, it is 12 to 1.

Heterosexual contact is the biggest single source of exposure to the virus by female teenage patients. Some 72 percent of the female teenagers with AIDS are black or Hispanic. This is probably the result of the higher intravenous-drug-use rates among minority males.

At a 1987 Congressional hearing, former U.S. Surgeon General C. Everett Koop warned of a future "explosion" in the number of teenagers infected with the AIDS virus. The data indicate that Dr. Koop's prediction is coming to pass:

About one-fifth of the nearly 110,000 AIDS cases diagnosed to date in the U.S. have been found in people in their 20's. Many of these people were obviously infected as teenagers, as the incubation period can be as long as 10 years.

Of teenagers applying for the military between October 1985 and June 1988, 0.04 percent tested HIV positive. Among teenage Job Corps applicants, 0.33 percent have tested positive since 1987.

The Blumenfeld Education Letter is published monthly. Sources of products and services described are not necessarily endorsed by this publication. They are intended to provide our readers with information on a rapidly expanding field of educational activity. Permission to quote is granted provided proper credit is given. Original material is copyrighted by Hosea Communications, Incorporated. Rate: 1 year \$36.00. Subscription Address: Post Office Box 45161, Boise, Idaho 83711, Phone (208) 322-4440.