

Issue 2
Nov 02

Youth AIDS Action

Latin American and Caribbean Youth HIV/AIDS Quarterly Newsletter

Young Men as Health Allies

Regional Conference on the Promotion of Male Health and Gender Equity

Specialists in adolescent male health met in Rio de Janeiro August 27-30, 2002, to discuss how to involve young males in health promotion. During the meeting, participants reviewed state-of-the-art research programs featuring young males, health and gender, and also shared how these research findings have been incorporated into policies and programs at the international, national and local levels in Latin America, the Caribbean, and the rest of the world. The PAHO Adolescent Health and Development Unit's new publication, Hacerse hombres, was launched during the event. The conference was also the setting for the Project H training seminar, where 120 participants learned how to use the five manuals supported by PAHO that make up this program for working with young men: Sexuality and Reproductive Health, Fatherhood and Caregiving, From Violence to Peaceful Coexistence, Reasons and Emotions, and Preventing and Living with HIV/AIDS. The Project H series also includes a video, "Once Upon a Boy", a cartoon featuring the life of a young boy and the construction of masculinity from childhood to adolescence. For more information about Project H and its accompanying materials, see the "Project H" section of this newsletter.



"Becoming Men"

Hacerse hombres: New document on adolescent male health

It's estimated that, in Latin America and the Caribbean, the health burden for men is 26% higher than for women (Lundgren, R. Research Protocols, <http://www.paho.org/English/HPP/HPF/ADOL/protocol.pdf>). Most of this morbidity is associated with the social construction of masculinity. This new Spanish-language document published by PAHO's Adolescent Health and Development Unit analyzes the link between masculinity and the reproductive health of young men. Written by Rodrigo Aguirre and Pedro Güell, it is based on qualitative research done by PAHO in the year 2000 in nine Latin American and Caribbean countries: Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico and Nicaragua. The document includes a chapter on risk behaviors, among them unprotected sexual activity and promiscuity. If you would like to receive a copy of this free book, please write to singlets@paho.org.

loveLife: Fighting HIV/AIDS in South Africa

South Africa's loveLife initiative seeks to reduce HIV infection among South African adolescents by promoting sexual health and healthy futures for young people. The initiative's comprehensive sexual health strategy uses social communication to promote sexual responsibility and healthy living, while developing adolescent-friendly services regarding the sexual health concerns and needs of young people. The program uses four main components: awareness and education; service development; outreach; and monitoring and evaluation, combining sexual health education with popular culture to grab and hold the attention of young people, as well as confront deeply ingrained attitudes toward sex and sexuality and relationships between men and women. loveLife is being implemented by a consortium lead by the Kaiser Family Foundation. For more information, visit www.lovelife.org.za and www.kff.org/docs/sections/safrica/loveLife.html.

Links

- www.bemfam.org.br (Brazilian NGO dedicated to reproductive health)
- www.foro2003.sld.cu/ingles/index.html (II Latin American and Caribbean HIV/AIDS Forum)
- www.fhi.org/en/youth/youthnet/pubs/lens.html (YouthNet newsletter)



Project H: Reducing HIV Risk

Promoting the sexual and reproductive health of young Latin American women by engaging young men is the goal of Project H, a five-year plan instituted by Brazil's Promundo Institute in 1999. Reducing HIV risk in young people is a major part of this plan, which has five lines of action:

- Train health staff in how to work with young men
- Engage young men in supporting the contraceptive and HIV prevention decisions of young women
- Implement communication strategies to promote behavior change among young men
- Promote greater condom use by young men through targeted social marketing
- Evaluate and advocate to ensure sustainability.

According to Promundo, targeting young men is essential because research with young men and women has shown that it is generally young men who decide and control how and when young women have sex. Project H ("H" stands for "Hombres" in Spanish and "Homens" in Portuguese, both words meaning "Men") designed its multi-year initiative to reach young men by developing strategic relationships at the macro-policy level, shaping a field of young men's involvement, developing program tools and providing technical assistance. Eight organizations take part in Project H: PAHO/WHO, USAID, UNAIDS, IPPF/WHO, UNFPA, the Population Council, PATH and SSL International. To request the Project H manuals and video, visit www.promundo.org.br.



**Every minute,
five people ages 15 to 24
are infected with HIV
AIDS has no cure, but
HIV can be prevented**

--from *Meeting the Needs of Young Clients*, FHI, 2000

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Caribbean
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Send name, profession,
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HIV/AIDS Event Calendar
www.calsplus.com/sida

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