

# HIV PREVENTION TRAININGS AMONG YOUTH IN ESTONIA BY ASSOCIATION ANTI-AIDS

Ljudmilla Priimägi

NGO Estonian Association Anti-AIDS, Tallinn, Estonia

## Background

to prevent HIV among youth at risk; to develop skills of safe behavior in relation to HIV infection.



## Methods

interactive trainings in schools (incl. vocational schools) and youth summer camps; peer education trainings. The work is mainly targeted to North East Estonia that is a region with a high HIV prevalence. Trainings last for 4 hours and include the following:

- talk to peers and partners about sex and sexuality and how to say NO,
- understand his/her own and others feelings related to sex and sexuality as well as identify prejudices,
- increase self-esteem,
- estimate his/her own risk for sexually transmitted infections, incl. HIV,
- healthy behavior: safer sex, not using illegal drugs or safer use of drugs,
- tolerance and support for people living with HIV and AIDS,
- where and how to get help.

## Results

During last five years the Association carried out nine interactive training projects involving more than 13 000 young people. Thanks to the work of our and other NGO's, schools, mass-media and information campaigns organized by the National Institute for Health Development, the awareness of young people has significantly increased. Percentage of young people aged 15-24, who answered correctly three questions about HIV, increased from 53% in 2003 to 82% in 2007. However, consistent condom use with a non-regular partner during last twelve months changed only a little - from 46% in 2003 to 50% in 2007. We should realize that long-lasting effect could be achieved only with continuous HIV prevention and sexual health education.



Young people are a diverse group with a widely divergent risk of getting HIV. Youth not injecting drugs and not having sex with (former) injecting drug users are at a low risk. More at risk are those who do inject drugs or have sex with someone who has injected drugs.

Based on WHO estimates, we hope that HIV/AIDS epidemic in Estonia is decreasing as the incidence has decreased yearly, especially among teenagers. Age of newly infected people has increased from 15-19 to 20-29 and older. About half of newly infected people are injecting drug users.

## Conclusion

Estonia has had remarkable development in HIV prevention during last years; however there are issues to be concerned about, including the decrease of funding during an economical crisis. Injecting drug use remains widespread in Estonia and there is a threat of HIV is being sexually transmitted from drug users into general population. As a result we should put more stress on work with people over 20 years in addition to work with youth and risk people. Important is also support of people, living with HIV/AIDS.



# Abstract Book



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