Differences in Reproductive Health Knowledge, Attitudes, and Intentions among Adolescents by Pre-Sexual Experience

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THE FINDINGS

Links between pre-sexual behaviors and vaginal sex

Students in the control group with pre-sexual experience at baseline were 4X more likely to have vaginal sex by 12 month follow up.

Knowledge, attitudes, and intentions of students, by sexual experience

Percentage of students who intend to have sex in the next year, by sexual experience

Attitudes towards having sex in early adolescence

Percentage of students reporting they are not at all likely to experience a pregnancy before age 20, by sexual experience

CONCLUSION

- When evaluating teen pregnancy prevention programs, failing to account for pre-sexual experience could bias impact findings, particularly when the outcome of interest is sexual initiation.
- Using pre-sexual experience as an outcome may improve evaluators’ ability to detect behavioral changes and to determine which curricula are most effective with younger, less sexually experienced teens.
- By understanding the prevalence of pre-sexual experience among students, as well as the intentions, knowledge, and attitudes associated with pre-sexual experience, providers of teen pregnancy prevention programs—particularly those working with populations of younger adolescents—can better target their curricula.