

A Need to Intensify HIV and AIDS Education in Secondary Schools

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ABSTRACT The purpose of this paper was to investigate Grade 12 learners' perceptions of their exposure to HIV and AIDS in two purposively selected high schools in the Eastern Cape in South Africa. A qualitative methodology that involves the use of focus group discussions for data collection was used. The findings revealed that the teaching of HIV and AIDS or life skills education in schools is not yielding the expected results. It was also found that some of the participants did not use condoms, hence there is a need to promote abstinence and consistent use of condoms as a preventive measure against unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV. The study recommended that learners' active involvement in extracurricular activities would help them develop self-esteem and the ability to resist drugs and other risky sexual behaviors that makes them vulnerable to HIV and AIDS.