NEWS

Protectaid: a new vaginal sponge
Protectaid (Sinclair Pharmacy) is impregnated with F-5 gel, which contains three different spermicides (nonoxynol-9, sodium cholate and benzalkonium chloride). It is available OTC in the UK.

References

Britons test age of consent
A quarter of the British population is having sex before the age of consent, a world-leading sex survey has revealed.

The 2000 Durex Global Sex Survey, carried out in 27 countries worldwide, reveals a further 15% have lost their virginity by the age of 17.

While the global average for first time sex is 18.1, Britons are a year younger. This is younger than the Dutch (17.3) and Italians (17.6), but older than the Americans (16.4) and French (16.7).

The survey by Durex shows Britons are having sex 109 times a year, on average. This is more than the Germans (97), Australians (98) and Dutch (90), but significantly less than the Americans (132), Russians (122) and the French (121).

More than four in 10 Britons (43%) are making love between two and four times a week, while 5% claim to be having sex at least once a day.

Source: *Durex: Global Survey 2000*

Alcohol concern
A recent study by Alcohol Concern shows that one in seven 16-24 year olds had unprotected sex after drinking, one in five had sex they later regretted and 10% could not even remember whether or not they had had sex the night before.

The report, entitled ‘Britain’s Ruin?’, highlights alcohol as a risk factor in relation to sexual health, and highlights the importance of education to prevent young people ending up in a situation they later regret.

A copy of the report is available from the Alcohol Concern website at www.alcoholconcern.org.uk.

Source: *Barrier Protection Digest 18th September 2000*

More cash for pregnancy projects
The Department of Health has announced a total of £7.5 million in grants for projects focusing on areas with high rates of teenage pregnancies.

The funding from the Local Implementation Fund is part of the Government’s strategy to halve the number of teenage pregnancies by 2010.

Projects around the country include: pregnancy prevention in Calderdale targeting care-leavers and young offenders; a Doncaster project using drama, art and photography to spread safer sex messages; and career training for peer educators in Essex.

Yvette Cooper, Minister for Public Health, said: “The establishment of a Local Implementation Fund was part of the strategy outlined in the Social Exclusion Unit Report on teenage pregnancy. It is administered by the Teenage Pregnancy Unit at the Department of Health. Areas with high rates of teenage pregnancy can bid, via their health authorities, for grants to develop integrated and innovative schemes to prevent teenage pregnancies or support teenage parents”.

Source: *Barrier Protection Digest 18th September 2000*

First time sex
Nine percent of girls lost their virginity before they were 13, according to a survey in a young women’s magazine.

The survey, in 19 magazine, also showed that half of all respondents first slept with their partner between the ages of 14 and 16, and 10% claim they were drunk when they lost their virginity. A quarter had their first sexual experience on a one-night stand.

Seventy-one percent claim to have had a one-night stand without using a condom, citing a variety of reasons including: “I was too drunk to care”, “he pressurised me into sex without it” and “I didn’t dare ask him to wear one”.

The results of the survey were published in the same month that the Public Health Minister Yvette Cooper pledged to focus on boys in a bid to cut the number of unplanned teenage pregnancies.

Ms Cooper said: “It is the girls who are mostly left holding the baby and we have to look at ways of making boys recognise the consequences. The boys have to start facing up to responsibilities”.

The Government’s national blitz on teenage pregnancies is due to be spearheaded by an as yet unnamed football or showbiz celebrity.

Source: *Barrier Protection Digest 18th September 2000*

STIs increasing
Between 1998 and 1999 the number of new cases of gonorrhoea rose by 25% and genital chlamydial infection by 16%, with the largest increases seen amongst teenagers. The rate of gonorrhoea has increased by 39% amongst teenage males and by 24% amongst teenage girls since 1995.

Source: *Family Planning Association*
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