

Preventing exposure to sexual risk and HIV in South Africa through SDG-aligned provisions



Toska, E., Campeau, L., Cluver, L., Orkin, M., Berezin, M. N., Sherr, L., Laurenzi, C. A., Bachman, G. (2019) Consistent provisions mitigate exposure to sexual risk and HIV among young adolescents in South Africa. *AIDS and Behavior*. DOI: 10.1007/s10461-019-02735-x

STUDY DETAILS

? Which provisions are associated with preventing exposure to sexual risk in early adolescence?

👥 3,635 school-going adolescents aged 10-17 in three South African provinces (Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape and Western Cape).

📄 Measures: Data was pooled from two large longitudinal datasets and collected between 2010-2012, and 2014-2017.

🔍 Analyses: Multivariable logistic regression tested associations between provisions and incident sexual risk exposure.

KEY MESSAGES

- Exposure to sexual risk in early adolescence strongly predicts HIV infection, but evidence for prevention of sexual risk in **younger** adolescents is limited.
- Consistent access to combinations of supportive factors may prevent sexual risk exposure among younger adolescents and help delay the onset of high HIV-risk.
- Caregiver supervision, abuse-free homes, school feeding and knowledge of HIV prevention were strongly associated with preventing exposure to early sexual risk.
- The combination of all four provisions resulted in a greater risk reduction than each individual factor alone.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Four factors were associated with reduced sexual risk exposure:

1. School-feeding
2. Abuse-free homes
3. Caregiver supervision
4. HIV prevention knowledge

Number of Provisions	Sexual Risk Exposure (%)
None	13%
1 Provision	8.6%
2 Provisions	~4.5%
3 Provisions	~2.5%
All	1%

Individual and combined effects of the 4 provisions

Between baseline and follow-up, **8.6%** of participants reported sexual risk exposure.

Each factor individually **reduced** sexual risk exposure by **33%** to **57%**.

A combination of all four factors resulted in a **92% reduction** from **13%** to **1%**.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

- **Combination prevention programming** (involving elements of economic strengthening and psycho-social support) can reduce early sexual risk exposure among young adolescents in South Africa.
- **Consistent access** – as opposed to intermittent access – to provisions can have substantial impacts in delaying exposure to sexual risk in younger adolescents and reduce HIV incidence rates.
- **Early, consistent access to protective programming at home and school** is critical to preventing early sexual risk exposure and preventing HIV infection in vulnerable young adolescents, with a focus on:
 - reducing food insecurity
 - strengthening caregiver-adolescent relationships
 - improving correct HIV prevention knowledge
 - preventing violence in the home

THANK YOU



CONTACT

Dr Elona Toska: elona.toska@uct.ac.za | www.acceleratehub.org