

ABSTRACT
The Knowledge, Attitudes,
Practices and Beliefs of young teenagers in Portmore
with regard to HIV/AIDS
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Although HIV/AIDS is a preventable disease, it has caused a good number of families, communities and nations tremendous grief and sorrow since its advent twenty-one years ago. Young people are at the hub of the HIV/AIDS pandemic; prevention programmes should be directed at them to drastically reduce the incidence of new HIV infection among them.

The purpose of this study was to explore the knowledge, attitude, practices and beliefs of young teenagers ages 12-15 in high school in the Portmore community in St Catherine, a parish that showed a significant increase in incidence of HIV infection in the year 2001.

A cross sectional study was conducted with the use of a self-administered questionnaire to gather information from one hundred and thirty-four students in two high schools in Portmore.

The young teenagers had a fair general knowledge of HIV/AIDS but many of them did not seem to understand the concept and nature of the disease. They were very knowledgeable of the mode of transmission of the disease. Some of them report engaging in some practices that put them at risk of contracting the disease. They had some encouraging attitudes and beliefs to HIV/AIDS that may enable them to respond positively to prevention programs directed at them to empower them to take responsibility for their health, by engaging in safe sexual practices that will keep them HIV/AIDS free.