

ABSTRACT

Adolescents' Access to Health Care and the Constraints They Face in Acquiring Good Health

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In this study adolescents' access to health care is analyzed, based on a survey done in two secondary schools. Two hundred adolescents 14 - 19 years old were selected. A pretest and a focus group were used in the formulation of a quantitative and qualitative questionnaire. Questions were identified by number in order to maintain confidentiality. Data were collected over a 2 week period, and analyzed manually by a prepared coding system and by using the computer program SPSS.

Results showed that adolescents' main health problems were preventable, mostly stress and tension related. The health services available were utilized. Seventy eight point five percent of respondents accessed the private services, and 61.0% of the sample had health insurance. Access to contraceptive source was over the counter (65.0%), from pharmacies (53.0%), from medical sources and 12.0% from supermarkets.

Adolescents utilized health services for general health problems, but accessed services for sensitive areas such as contraceptives from an additional source. The study has demonstrated that adolescents' access is constrained when relating to reproductive health.