

ABSTRACT

Adolescent Health and the Adolescent's need for specialised health services and Health Promotion Activities in Kingston.

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The adolescent period marks the important transition from childhood to adulthood. It is not an easy time for the youngster as he/she undergoes changes that are physical, emotional and social in nature. It is considered by the experts as one of the healthiest time in ones life. This age group however, is involved in much risk taking which is likely to lead to health problems.

Whereas services are provided for children and adults, the adolescents do not seem to be any medical group's primary concern. Knowledge of the health problems and needs must be obtained in order to plan specific health programmes and health promotion activities.

A sample of 176 adolescents from three high/secondary schools in Kingston was selected and data gathered from them. The findings revealed that 62.8% of the boys were aware of their health status while only 49% of the girls were aware.

The major health problem as perceived by the adolescents are pregnancy and its complications, emotional problems, drug use and violence. The adolescents stated that the responsibility of their health care was their own with only a few stating

that parents share the responsibility.

The adolescents utilized the private and public facilities but preferred to go to the private doctors because of the privacy that is offered. There was general satisfaction with health care received and they did not identify alternative health care facilities. The adolescents' knowledge of health promotion was very limited with 42.8% stating that they did not know what it was. Those who responded thought that it was synonymous with health education or health improvement. The need for more information, education and counselling was seen to be crucial.