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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The importance of educating the youth and young entertainers with respect to HIV/AIDS has been recognized by the National HIV/AIDS Commission who had initiated the Richard Stoute Teen Talent HIV/AIDS Workshop as one of the mediums of reaching the youth in this regard. The first of these workshops was held on September 3, 2002 and saw over ninety young people in attendance.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The Teen Talent workshop which was hosted on September 3, 2002 was the first in a series initiated by the National HIV/AIDS commission which sought not only to educate but to gather information that would help the Commission in making its programmes and initiatives more specific to the needs of the two segments that were in attendance. Subsequent to the workshop a survey was conducted among participants to assess their level of knowledge regarding HIV/AIDS. It is hoped that the study would provide information that would inform future workshops and initiatives targeting the youth and young entertainers.

3.0 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND SCOPE OF WORK

For ease of reference, the Terms of Reference and Scope of Work for the exercise are enumerated below as follows: -

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The objective of the research exercise is as follows: -

- *To analyse data collected from the Richard Stout Teen Talent HIV/AIDS Workshop Survey*

SCOPE OF WORK

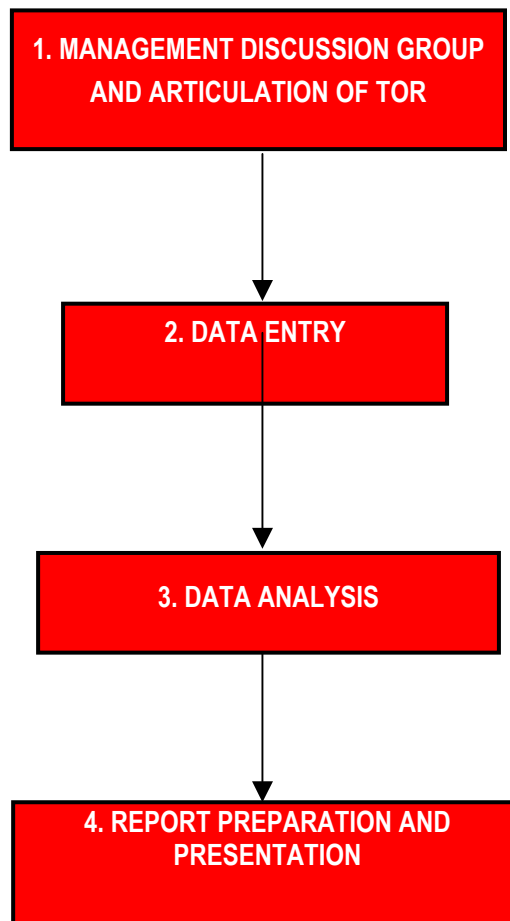
- To perform data entry operations on data collected during the Richard Stout Teen Talent Workshop Survey
- To analyse data collected from ninety-three questionnaires
- Prepare a report on the findings of the survey

4.0 METHODOLOGY

4.2 METHODOLOGY

The methodology for the exercise is outlined in the figure below.

Figure 1: Summary of the Approach and Methodology



4.2.1 SAMPLE COMPOSITION

The sample consisted of ninety three respondents (30.9% males and 69.1% females) between the ages of ten and twenty four from eight of the island's eleven parishes. More than half (55.4%) of the sample was from St. Michael. Over one-third (68.9%) of the males were between the ages of eighteen and twenty one, whereas 76.2% of the females were between the ages of fifteen and nineteen. This constituted 51.6% of the sample.

4.2.2 MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION GROUP

The Management Discussion Group was an opportunity for the engagement team and the client to discuss the exercise to determine specific content and time commitments of the deliverables.

4.2.3 DATA ENTRY

Data from completed questionnaires were entered into a specialized software programme where the responses were translated into tabular, graphical and textual information for analysis.

4.2.4 DATA ANALYSIS

Responses to dichotomous questions were given as frequency distribution statistics. Statistical data was cross-tabulated to compare and contrast perceptions between respondent segments.

5.0 FINDINGS

5.1 MEANING OF HIV

When asked the meaning of the letters in HIV over ninety percent of the respondents answered correct for the first and last letters. Only 6.6% answered incorrectly with regards to the letter “H” while only 1.3% did not know what the “V” meant. There seemed to be some doubt as to the true meaning of the “I”. Words offered included “infectious”, “immune” and “infected”

5.2 MEANING OF HIV DIAGNOSIS

Seven in every ten respondents were able to answer definitively that a diagnosis of HIV does not mean that one has AIDS. Seven percent answered “yes” while a further 21.9% gave no answer which could be interpreted as an indication of doubt. Those who were able to give a correct response represented 44% of those who answered correctly to the meaning of “HIV”. Thirty percent represented those who posed “Human Immune Virus” as the true meaning of the acronym. Over two-fifths (42.9%) of those who said “yes” to an HIV diagnosis being AIDS had also answered correctly.

The fifteen to nineteen age group was the only group that believed that HIV is AIDS.

5.3 MEANING OF AIDS

Sixty-nine percent of participants knew the full meaning of “AIDS”. However, over ninety seven percent knew what the last three letters stood for but only 86.7% knew the meaning of the “A”. Proposed answers included words like “Abstinence”, “Active”, “Acute”, and “Advance”. None of the respondent who had advanced a correct meaning for “AIDS” had given a correct response for “HIV”.

5.4 WAYS PREVENTING HIV

Consensual opinion was that abstinence and condom use were two ways of preventing HIV. Other prevention methods suggested by respondents included not sharing needles, being faithful, and avoiding contact with blood. However 2.3% suggested oral and anal sex as ways of preventing HIV. These suggestions were offered by both males and females sixteen years of age.

5.5 KNOWLEDGE OF HIV TRANSMISSION

More than a half of the sample indicated that they knew “a lot” about HIV transmission whereas one third (33%) said they knew “something”. Two thirds (67.3%) of the sixteen to nineteen group indicated that they knew a lot about HIV transmission this included those who had suggested that oral and anal sex were way of preventing HIV. Of those ten to fifteen years of age only 10% indicated that they knew “a lot” about HIV transmission, 33.3% knew nothing, and 8.7% and 10.7% knew “a lot” and “something” respectively.

In most instances the percentages of females who had any degree of knowledge were two to four times that of the males.

5.6 CARE AND SUPPORT OF PERSONS WITH HIV/AIDS

Nearly eighty five percent of the respondents have some level of knowledge about the care and support of persons with HIV/AIDS. One-third (33.7%) knew “a lot”, 24.1% “something”, and 27.7% “a little”. One-fifths of those who “know a lot” were nineteen years of age. Five percent of those who “know something” were eleven years and 9% of who “know a little” were eleven and twelve years. Those nineteen years of age also constituted the largest group that “know nothing”. Again more females were knowledgeable in this area than males. They made up 75%, 77.3% and 83.3% of those who “know something”, “a little”, and “nothing” respectively.

5.7 ANTIRETROVIRAL THERAPY

Only 5.7% of the sample knew about this therapy and, as the level of knowledge decreased the percentages of participants increased with over one-third (35.7%) indicating that they knew nothing about the treatment. This was more popular with those seventeen years and older and among females.

5.8 SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES

Females were more knowledgeable than males with regard to sexually transmitted diseases. For those of both sexes who knew anything about the diseases these were the older respondents from sixteen year and up.

5.9 HIV TEST

One-third of the respondents had indicated that they have had an HIV test. These were eighteen years and up, which was more than the older twenty four year olds where only 3.2% have had an HIV test. Those who have never had the test cited being worried about the results, that people would find out, and not knowing where to go as reasons for not doing so. Eight in every ten respondents said that never felt the need to have one done. One-half and one-third of the seventeen and nineteen year old respondents indicated that they were worried about the results. However, the majority of those between fifteen and nineteen indicated that they never felt the need for a test.

5.10 SUGGESTIONS TO HELP PREVENT HIV/AIDS

Some of the suggestions to help promote abstinence and HIV/AIDS prevention included:

- By putting on a cartoon about HIV
- Teach students from primary school and up
- Youth lectures by other young people or even with persons who have HIV
- More workshops and organizations on the actual streets of Barbados
- Show the “raw” pictures of AIDS victims and their plight on national television

6.0 CONCLUSION

It is evident that though young people are aware to some extent about HIV and AIDS there remains a great deal for them to learn and their perceived knowledge is in some instances a major cause of concern. For example, those who believe that oral and anal sex are some of the ways of preventing HIV. The findings also revealed that more effort needs to be directed toward those between the ages of sixteen and nineteen, and especially males who know considerably less than females in almost all instances.