



So Much for Abstinence-Only

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A new federal study found that 26 percent of teenage girls 14 to 19 have sexually transmitted infections, including almost half of the African-American girls studied. The most common infection was the human papilloma virus (HPV), among 18 percent of the sample in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey. And the study did not even ask about syphilis and gonorrhea, which would make the rates even higher.

Matt Foreman of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force called the figures "shocking" and said in a statement, "It's long past time for the Congress to end all abstinence-only funding and to insist that every young person in this country have access to honest sex education that focuses on health, not moral judgments." More than \$1.5 billion has been spent on abstinence-only. "A waste of money," said Foreman, who also attacked the religious right for opposing the vaccination of young women against HPV.