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Does Condom Availability Make a Difference? An Evaluation of Philadelphia's Health Resource Centers

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In 1992, nine Philadelphia high schools opened drop-in centers where students could receive reproductive health information, condoms and general health referrals. Analyses of survey data collected in 1991 and 1993 suggest that the presence of the condom availability program did not increase the level of sexual activity among students in these schools and may have contributed to safer sex practices. The proportion of students who had used a condom at last intercourse increased from 52% to 58%; although the change was not statistically significant, it exceeded the increase in a group of comparison schools. Changes in the proportions of students who had ever had intercourse, who had had sex in the previous four weeks, who had used a condom at last intercourse and who had recently had unprotected sex were greatest in schools with higher levels of program usage; however, only the decline in recent unprotected intercourse among students in high-use schools (from 14% to 6%) approached statistical significance.

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