

Emotional Response to First Intercourse and Contraception Use among Adolescents

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Over a period of 15 years the researchers have gathered survey data from adolescents in secondary schools in Canada, United States, and South Africa. A large segment or, in some cases, the total population of selected secondary schools have been surveyed using an extensive paper and pencil instrument developed by the researchers. The age of first intercourse has remained steady over time with roughly 50% of students reporting having had sexual intercourse before high school graduation. Reported contraception use has increased from near 40% in the early 1990s to over 85% in 2001. Over time we have found that gender differences have substantially decreased in all aspects of sexual behaviour except in young peoples' emotional response to first sexual intercourse. The responses from those who report their first sexual experience to be voluntary are significantly different for males and females. Consistently the males aged 13 to 19 report more positive emotional responses towards first sexual intercourse, while the females consistently report more negative emotion. In the current study we have compared emotional response during first intercourse with contraception use across gender and age. These findings have important implications for planning sex education programs for secondary school students.