

KEY FINDINGS

Stigma is lower among those with greater knowledge about HIV and AIDS.

Knowledge is higher and stigma lower among older than younger youth.

Knowledge was higher among those who used computers frequently and lower among those who spent more time in religious organizations and youth centres.

HOW CAN WE REDUCE STIGMA AND IMPROVE KNOWLEDGE?

- ✓ Improving knowledge and debunking myths could encourage HIV prevention methods and reduce stigma.
- ✓ Increase resources to support culturally competent, comprehensive sexual health education in schools and through other youth-friendly media (e.g., electronic media).
- ✓ Partnerships between faith communities, youth service organizations, public health, and the AIDS Committee of Windsor should be sustained to develop and support programmes to increase knowledge about HIV and AIDS and reduce stigma.
- ✓ Find ways for PHA to interact with youth.
- ✓ Include parents and community leaders in education programmes.

HOW IS HIV TRANSMITTED?

- ➔ HIV can be found in certain bodily fluids (e.g., blood, semen & pre-ejaculate, vaginal fluids, breast milk).
- ➔ HIV can be transmitted through risky activities (e.g., unprotected sex, sharing needles, mother to child transmission) and direct access to the bloodstream through cuts, tears, and IV needles.

REFERENCES AND ELECTRONIC COPIES OF THIS FACT SHEET ARE AVAILABLE AT:

- 🌐 <http://www.aidswindsor.org/Programs-and-Services/african-caribbean-services.html>
- 🌐 <http://www.accho.ca/>

Research team: Eleanor Maticka-Tyndale, Kenny Gbadebo, Michael Brennan, Jelani Kerr, Francisca Omorodion, Valérie Pierre-Pierre, and Robb Travers.

This project would not have been possible without the work and commitment of Michael Antwi, Danaït Asgedom, Lydia Chan, Rebecca Friesen, Tamara Hurst, Tola Mbulaheni, Karen Metcalfe, Robert Mihan, Rhulangane (David) Mungwete, Pauline Nash, Sanford Tyndale, the Youth Advisory Committee, all the Windsor/Essex youth, community members, and community leaders who participated in the study. Many thanks to Chris Carriere for his graphic design and OHTN for their generous support.

For information on HIV/AIDS and HIV testing, go to:

- 🌐 AIDS and Sexual Health Infoline (1-800-668-2437 or <http://sexualhealthontario.ca/>)
- 🌐 <https://aso411.ca/>
- 🌐 <http://www.acby.info>
- 🌐 <http://www.aidswindsor.org>
- 🌐 <http://www.accho.ca>



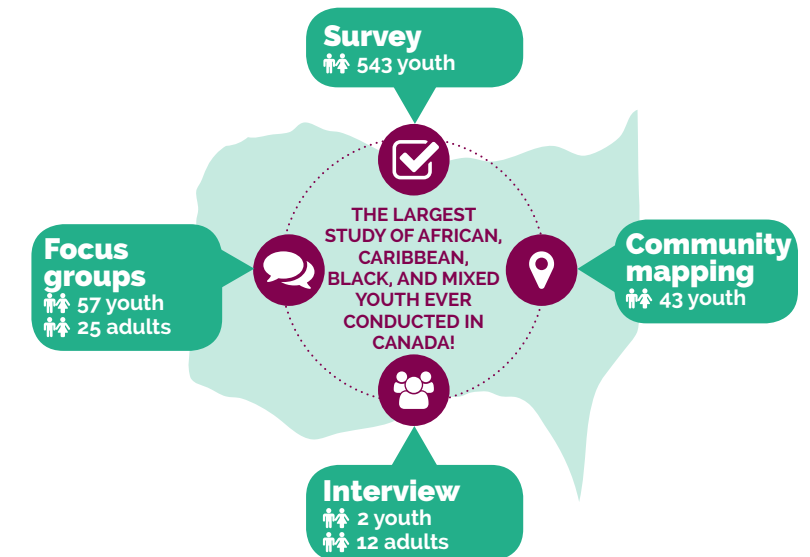
PROMOTING & OWNING EMPOWERMENT & RESILIENCE AMONG AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN, & BLACK YOUTH IN WINDSOR

HIV STIGMA & KNOWLEDGE

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Funded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), this community-based research project identified factors that (a) contribute to infection with the human immune-deficiency virus (HIV) and other sexual health outcomes among African, Caribbean, Black, and mixed youth, and (b) reduce vulnerability.

WHAT WE DID



Where? Windsor & Essex County, Ontario.

When? March 2013 to July 2014.

Who? Single African, Caribbean, and Black youth, 16-25 years old.

WHO PARTICIPATED?

11% Black

Their families had lived in North America for at least 2 generations, and their ancestors came from Africa

32% Caribbean

They or their parents were born in the Caribbean

7% Mixed

Only one parent can trace his or her heritage to Africa

50% African

They or their parents were born in Sub-Saharan Africa

20%

In Canada less than 4 years

25%

In Canada 4 years or more

55%

Born in Canada

- 50% female, 50% male; 3% identified as transgender.
- 95% heterosexual, 5% lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, questioning or asexual.
- 74% Christian, 13% Muslim.
- 86% full-time students, 7% part-time students.

WHAT IS HIV STIGMA?

Stigmatizing people with HIV or AIDS (PHA) involves applying negative labels and/or stereotypes to them (e.g., the belief that people with HIV are dirty), as well as discriminating against them according to these labels.

WHY IS HIV STIGMA A PROBLEM?

- Stigma negatively effects HIV prevention behaviours.
- When stigma is high in a community, people with HIV are reluctant to disclose their status to others, to take prescription medications consistently, and often isolate themselves from others.

In our study:

- Youth had low levels of stigmatizing attitudes.
- On average, youth answered 68% of the HIV knowledge questions correctly.

We looked at: Personal Characteristics

- Sex
- Age
- Ethnic/racial group
- Religious denomination
- A student or not
- Religiosity

Attitudes and Knowledge:

- Knowledge about HIV/AIDS
- Sense of responsibility for condom use
- Stigmatizing beliefs/ attitudes
- Sense of belonging

Experiences:

- HIV test history
- Experiencing discrimination
- Risky sexual behaviour
- How youth spend free time



YOUTH WHO EXPRESSED LOWER LEVELS OF STIGMA WERE MOST OFTEN:

FEMALE

OLDER

CHRISTIAN OR OF NO RELIGION

MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT HIV/AIDS

THOSE WHO HAD BEEN TESTED FOR HIV

YOUTH WITH GREATER HIV/AIDS KNOWLEDGE WERE MOST OFTEN:

FEMALE

OLDER

CHRISTIAN OR OF NO RELIGION

SPENDING MORE TIME ON COMPUTERS

SPENDING LESS TIME AT YOUTH CENTRES AND CHURCH SERVICES

LOWER IN STIGMATIZING ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS

YOUTH PERCEPTIONS OF PEOPLE WITH HIV/AIDS

In focus groups, when asked about personal contact with people living with HIV, youth consistently expressed concerns indicative of stigmatizing attitudes:

- They would refuse to sleep in the same bed as someone who is HIV positive.
- Those who would sleep in the same bed would disinfect everything immediately after.
- Some would lend clothes to someone who is HIV positive, but would never wear them again.
- They would not let someone who is HIV positive babysit their children.

MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS RELATED TO HIV/AIDS IN THE COMMUNITY

Some youth believe that HIV can only be transmitted through sex.

"Actually yeah, for the most part it does (have to be through sex) unless they're born with it...maybe they caught it, I don't know from somewhere else."

Many youth believe that HIV is transmitted through casual contact:

"You cannot smoke, share clothes, or even shake hands with someone who has HIV. You can get HIV from sharing cups, cutlery, etc."

Many youth do not trust that condoms can prevent HIV transmission.

"You can get HIV even if you're wearing a condom during sex."