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Competent sexual education as a potential STI prevention method: Reflections on ideas from across Europe

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Statement of the Problem: Preventing sexually transmitted infections from spreading is a complex process, based on theoretical findings, as well as thorough, interdisciplinary research, both of biological and psychological nature. Practical application is the crucial part of prevention; applying gathered knowledge in real-life scenarios, testing in practice and affecting actual people.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: First-person reports from international team of specialists were gathered. Issues regarding the application of existing knowledge in educating the public were analyzed. An internet search was conducted to obtain details regarding chosen implementation methods.

Findings: Certain deficit of STI prevention programs seems evident. Several social campaigns are cursory. Sexual awareness varies in EU from country to country, reflecting either progressiveness or conservativeness on the grounds of sexual education, and sexual education level itself. Examples of both exemplary and poor educational programs can be found. A selection of evidence-based, innovative and unique programs is presented; those included bring up important, yet controversial issues.

Conclusion & Significance: The core idea is to present already developed strategies that proved to be adequate and applicable in variety of contexts, and to draw from their experience while promoting sexual health and STI prevention.

Biography

Gabriela Gore-Gorszewska has her interest in human nature from both philosophical and psychological perspective (Master's degree from Jagiellonian University, Poland, in 2010 and 2016, respectively). In recent years, her interests focus upon human sexuality as seen by the psychologist. She has done her education from Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań, Poland, to achieve Diploma in Clinical Sexology. Her main area of expertise and research is sexual functioning of older adults. Her aim is to promote accurate and up-to-date knowledge about age-related changes in sexual life. She believes there is still not enough understanding and too much prejudice among healthcare professionals, experts and authorities, seniors themselves and general population, especially within the communities with strong sexual taboo and/or religious attitudes present.

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