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Institutionalized problems with HIV education in Milwaukee Public Schools and its impact on Milwaukee's MSM community

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The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Wisconsin directly impacts the MSM community disproportionately as compared to other communities such as drug users or heterosexuals. HIV rates among MSM groups in Wisconsin have remained stable for almost a decade while there has been major decrease in the HIV infection rates of heterosexuals. Milwaukee County is of chief concern, as it constitutes 16% of the population of Wisconsin, yet 50% of new HIV infections. The sexual education curriculum in Milwaukee is extremely ill-prepared to combat HIV, as it only mentions the terms gay six times (none of which relate to HIV) and MSM five times, while mentioning HIV over 300 times. The public schools are educating heterosexual students how to protect themselves and largely unable to teach MSM students what they need to know related to their unique sexual practices, norms and anatomies. This, I believe, constitutes extreme institutionalized homophobia resulting in life-threatening consequences for Milwaukee's MSM community.

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