



# Action Brief

## Reducing Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) among NYS Young People

### STDs in New York State

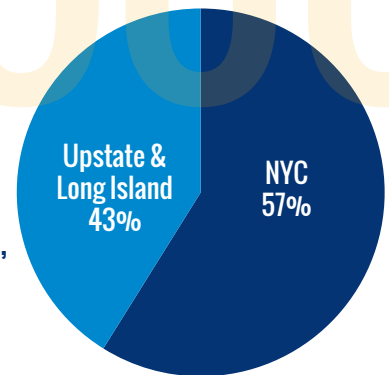
Teens and young adults are disproportionately affected by sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). While this age group makes up about 14% of NYS population, **3 out of 5 STDs were among young people.** Although many STDs can have serious consequences if untreated, many people don't have symptoms. Most people don't know they are infected.

Chlamydia (CT) and gonorrhea (GC) are the two most common reportable STDs. Both **disproportionately affect teens and young adults.** Viral STDs, including genital herpes and genital warts, are not reportable, but are very common.

# 69,500

New STD infections in New York Young People (15-24 yrs.)<sup>†</sup>

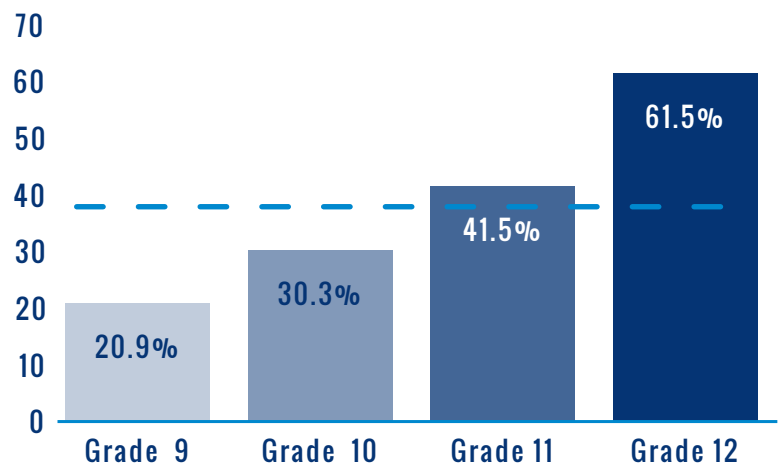
Geographic Distribution of CT and GC in NYS Young People (15-24), 2013



### Who is at Risk?

Fewer than 2 out of 5 (37.9%) NYS high school (HS) students have had sex, with the number of students reporting past sex increasing by grade.<sup>‡</sup>

Percent of NYS HS Students Who Report Past Sexual Intercourse, 2013 (37.9% Overall)<sup>‡</sup>



Significant health disparities exist for racial and ethnic minority populations. Compared to White, non-Hispanic New Yorkers<sup>†</sup>:

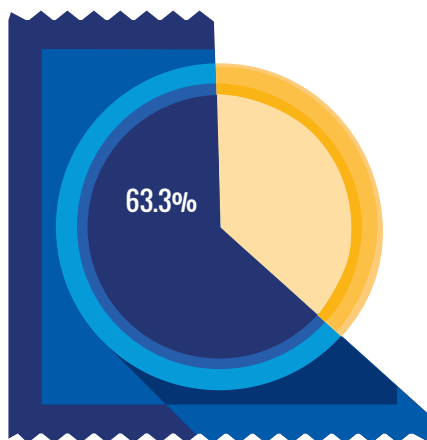
- CT rates are **7.7 times higher** and GC rates are **13.8 times higher** among Black, non-Hispanic people; and
- CT rates are **3 times higher** and GC rates are **3.1 times higher** among Hispanic/Latino people.

STD rates are also higher among gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men (MSM). Regardless of age, MSM account for 3 out of 4 cases of early syphilis. Young MSM are also at increased risk for oropharyngeal and rectal STDs, which are not detected in standard urine-based STD testing.

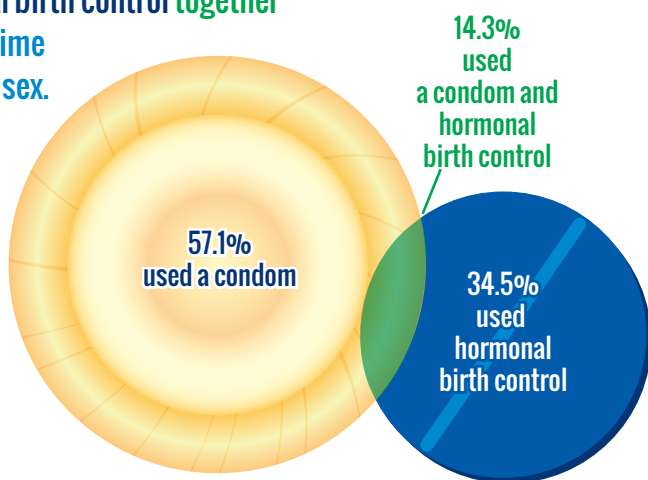
Nationally, among sexually active teens, **1 in 4 will have an STD by age 18.**

## Reducing the Risk: Combined Use of Condoms and Birth Control

Most New York high school students reported using a condom the last time they had sex.†



Only 1 in 7 females reported using both condoms and hormonal birth control together the last time they had sex.



Among NYS high school students, condoms are the most widely used form of contraception.

Condoms play a critical role in STD, HIV and unintended pregnancy prevention. For sexually active people, condoms are the only form of protection against all three. Use of hormonal birth control **in combination** with a condom is recommended, reducing the risk of STDs, HIV and unintended pregnancy.

While 2 out of 3 sexually active students report using condoms the last time they had sex, there is room for improvement. This is particularly true for 9th grade students, who were less likely than older peers to use condoms.



## Take Action: Reduce STDs, HIV and Unintended Pregnancy among NYS Young People

There are many ways in which New York communities can support our teens and young people to prevent STDs, HIV and unintended pregnancy.

- Incorporate strategies from the New York State Youth Sexual Health Plan (<http://bit.ly/NYSYSHP>).
- Engage local schools and colleges to provide comprehensive, age appropriate and medically accurate sexual health education.
- Encourage routine STD and HIV testing among sexually active young people.
- Encourage young people to talk with their health care providers about sexual health.
- Promote access to condoms and hormonal birth control methods, including long acting reversible contraceptives (IUDs, implants).
- Promote HPV vaccination for males age 11-21 and females age 11-26.
- Promote Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) to HIV negative at-risk young people.
- Link young people to the NYS Take Control! Campaign ([www.facebook.com/takecontrol](http://www.facebook.com/takecontrol)).

### Information Sources

† New York State Department of Health, Bureau of STD Prevention and Epidemiology, 2014

‡ CDC Youth Behavior Risk Surveillance System – High School, NYS, 2013

National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, [www.bedsider.com](http://www.bedsider.com)