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STD/AIDS risk reduction : a community health education intervention for youth living in slum and shanty settlements within the city of Colombo.

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The objectives of this study were to determine the knowledge, attitudes and practices related to STD and AIDS among youth living in slum and shanty communities in the city of Colombo and to evaluate the effectiveness of an educational program in changing these. A wide disparity was identified between the knowledge on STD and AIDS. Attitudes towards persons with STD/AIDS were more positive than attitudes towards diseases. Risk behaviors were common among males. Injection drug use was very minimal. This study has demonstrated that youth do acquire new knowledge and change attitudes and behavior when exposed to a well planned, comprehensive educational intervention. This change may be temporary in nature, however, it may be maintained by continuing reinforcement from time to time. This aspect needs to be researched further.