

No boundaries in Infection Research and Care



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STIs Testing Among Young People: Strategies, Results, and Educational Implications

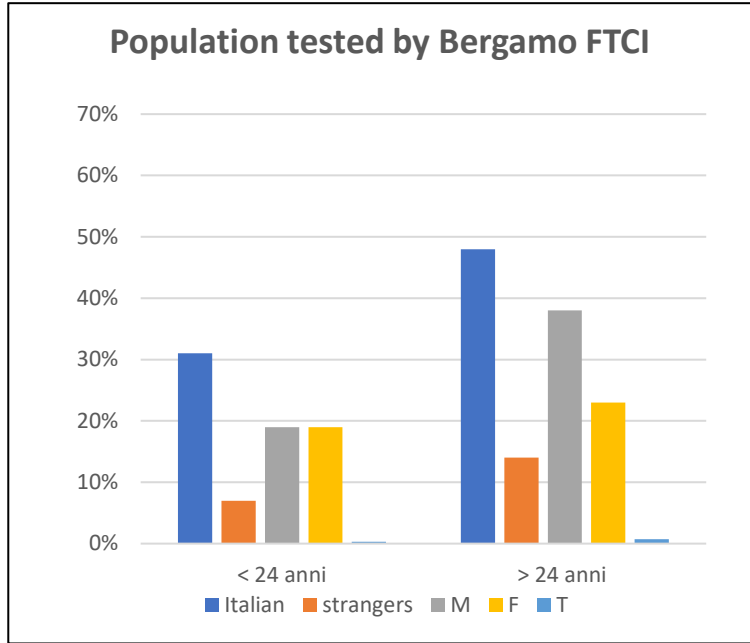
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Declaration of potential conflicts of interest

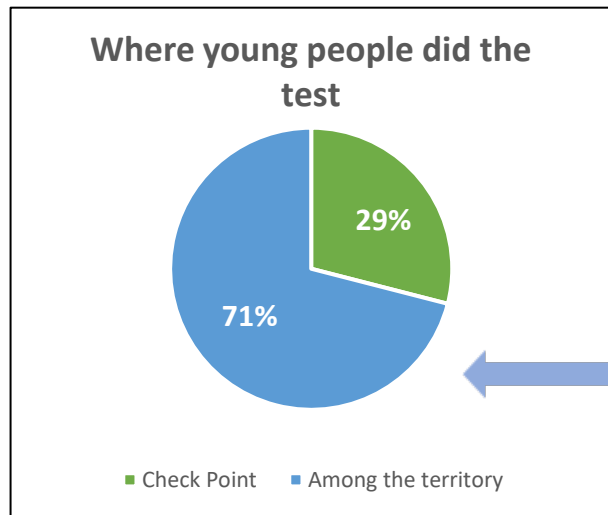
- Cooperativa Don Giuseppe Monticelli has received funds in support of the project *#CHIVuoleconoscere - Next Generation* from Community Award Program by Gilead Sciences.
- Cooperativa Don Giuseppe Monticelli, as leader of the Bergamo Fast-track City network, has received funds in support of the project *FriendlyTest 2.0* from a Community Grant by Gilead Sciences.
- Cooperativa Don Giuseppe Monticelli, as leader of the Bergamo Fast-track City network, has received a donation to support the project *Percorsi (pro)positivi* from ViiV Healthcare.
- Cooperativa Don Giuseppe Monticelli has received a contribution by Gilead for the creation of a Patient Solution aimed at distributing information material to the community of HIV patients to improve therapeutic adherence and the use of drugs.

Population tested by Bergamo FTCl



- From November 2021 onward, 2,877 individuals under 24 were tested for HIV, HCV, and Syphilis, representing 38% of all the tests did by the Bergamo FTCl.
- The median age at testing was 20.69 years: 2.3% were under 18, 50.4% identified as male, 48.7% as female, 0.5% as transgender, and 0.4% as non-binary.
- 92% of participants under 24 were first-time testers.

Where young people did the test



Where young people have been reached
Universities, high schools, CPIA
Locals, Bar, Pub
Events: Pride, Musical Concerts, Festivals
Youth meeting places

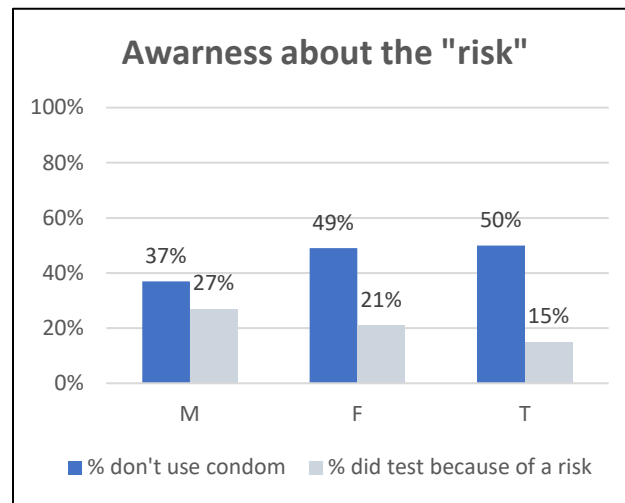
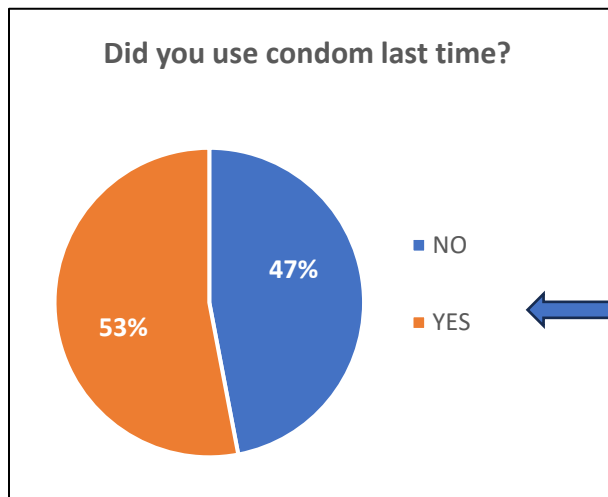
#cHIVuoleconoscere: education in Higher School

Anno scolastico/Progetto	Numero Istituti	Numero Classi	Numero studenti
2019/2020 #cHIVuoleconoscere	12	63	1412
2020/2021 #cHIVuoleconoscere	6	52	1192
2021/2022 #cHIVuoleconoscere 2.0	18	115	2443
2022/2023 #cHIVuoleconoscere –Test&Go	15	103	2267
2023/2024 #cHIVuoleconoscere –Fast-Track School	18	126	2380
2024/2025 #cHIVuoleconoscere – Next Generation (stima)	23	148	2813
TOTALI		607	12507

Impact index

- Young people aged 15 to 24 represent about 12% of the population in Bergamo and its province cohort.
- Relating the number of tests carried out by young people to the total population of young people in Bergamo gives an impact index of 2.4%; compared to the over 24s, where the index is 0.5%.

Awariness about risk



- 20% declared they did the test because of a risk, 83% for control (multiple answers allowed) but 47% said they didn't use condom in the last intercourse.
- Among those, only 24% stated that they did the test because they were aware of having taken a risk.
- These data do not differ in the adult population.

Conclusions

- Youth demonstrated higher testing participation, reflecting potential greater sensitivity, but also the impact of educational efforts.
- While their reactive case rate is lower (0,3%), risky behaviours are under-recognized. Testing initiatives enhance awareness, encourage safer behaviours and promote health-consciousness in early sexual experiences, fundamental to reduce future infections.
- Sex education should be supported financially and made curricular in schools, and the potential in terms of the propensity to be tested especially in the school environment should be exploited.

