

Of Interest to Teachers

AIDS in the United States

AIDS is spreading with frightening speed throughout the United States and the rest of the world. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that by the end of 1993 the cumulative total of AIDS cases reported in the U.S. was 339,250, with 97,368 new cases of AIDS reported in the U.S. between October 1992 and September 1993.

Adolescents are not exempt from contracting the HIV virus. The CDC reveals that by September 1993 the cumulative total of AIDS cases reported in the 13- to 19-year-old group was 977 for males and 1,412 for females. However, the CDC is reporting only adolescents with full-blown AIDS. No one knows how many adolescents are HIV infected and capable of transmitting the virus. Most HIV-infected adolescents who have not yet developed AIDS look healthy and free from disease, and are often unaware that they are carrying the virus.— From *HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report* 5:3 (1993), pp. 3-19.

Nearly Half of U.S. College Students Are Binge Drinkers

Nearly half of U.S. college students are binge drinkers who cause a variety of "secondhand" problems on campus, from vandalism to rape to fatal accidents, according to an extensive new survey released in December 1994.

The findings, culled from a survey of 17,592 U.S. college students, present a picture of campuses awash in beer, where a projected three million students go on drinking sprees even though most are too young to drink legally. On some campuses, the rate of binge drinking soared to 70 percent of the student body, with fraternities and sororities having the highest rates.

At a news conference announcing the study, which appeared in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, researcher Henry Wechsler said 50 percent of male students and 39 percent of female students are binge drinkers, with beer being the beverage of choice.

The Harvard study used a database of 25,627

students at 140 four-year colleges in 40 states and the District of Columbia. The schools were selected to be representative of all schools, and students were asked to complete a 20-page questionnaire. About 69 percent complied.

Researchers defined binge drinking as the consumption of five or more drinks in a row for men; four or more for women. Wechsler said studies show that women experience the same effects of alcohol at lower levels than men.

Overall, the study found that about 16 percent of all students reported having no alcoholic drinks in the previous year. Another 40 percent said they drank but did not binge. The remaining 44 percent said they had had enough drinks to meet the binge definition, with half describing themselves as frequent binge drinkers. Less than 1 percent of the binge drinkers, including the frequent bingers, said they had a problem.

Binge drinking rates varied widely, from 1 percent of the student population on some campuses to 70 percent on others. Colleges in the Northeast

Advertisement
Removed

Of Interest to Teachers

and North Central areas of the U.S. reported higher levels than those in the West or South. College size did not seem to be a factor, although residential campuses had higher levels of binge drinking than commuter schools.

Students reported about the same drinking rates from age 17 through 23, although after age 24, the rates tapered off.

Students interviewed about adolescent drinking rates cited peer pressure and said that many students drink in order to get drunk.

Wechsler and Rep. Joseph P. Kennedy II of Massachusetts denounced the brewing industry for spending millions to promote drinking and for sponsoring athletics or other campus events aimed at promoting drinking, and called for health warning labels on alcoholic beverage advertising.—Reported in the *Washington Post*, December 7, 1994, p. A17.

Substitutes—Education's "Dirty Little Secret"

Across the United States, thousands of substitute teachers walk into schools each morning to teach subjects they may not know to students they've never met. They are often poorly paid and inadequately trained. Some have only a high school education and are motivated to do little more than baby-sit.

"It's one of [education's] dirty little secrets," says Bob Moore, of the Maryland State Teachers' Association. The problem is growing worse as age and increased stress lead to more absenteeism among full-time teachers, forcing public school systems to rely more than ever on substitutes. The situation, which costs systems millions of dollars a year, is ruled by supply and demand, and demand far exceeds the supply of those willing to work for wages that may be as low as \$35 a day.

Given the already pressing shortage of acceptable applicants, administrators say, there is no way to raise minimal academic standards to ensure that effective teaching actually takes place. Many systems require that substitutes have only two years of college; some ask for no college experience at all.

Yet the demands of the job are daunting: Substitutes frequently get little respect from students, who see their appearance in class as a chance to goof off, and little help from the absent teachers, who may leave behind no lesson plans.

Substitutes might be asked to teach classes for which they are ill-prepared, with the subject and

level of students varying from day to day.

The issues behind the use—and perhaps abuse—of substitutes are complex, but teacher absenteeism is a key factor. Urban schools usually have worse rates and private schools better ones, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. Other factors include teachers' exposure to a variety of illnesses, increasing average age of U.S. teachers, and on-the-job stress.

Substitute pools often have high turnover rates, sometimes as much as 50 percent, primarily because people move or find other work. Schools have been so pressed to find substitutes that they sometimes place people in classrooms without adequate background checks. Fairfax, Virginia, school officials found that one of their regular sub-

stitutes was a convicted murderer who had escaped from a prison van. That incident prompted several nearby vicinities to insist that substitute candidates be fingerprinted and that the FBI do a nationwide search for any criminal history.

Administrators say that although such serious problems rarely arise, they do have problems with applicants who have lied about their work backgrounds.

For substitutes, it is a challenge to control classroom behavior and to teach subjects with which they are perhaps poorly acquainted. Said Moore, of the Maryland teachers' association, "It's like being a new teacher on the first day of school—every day."—Reported by the *Washington Post*, November 28, 1994, p. A1. ✍

ADVENTIST COLLEGES ABROAD ANNOUNCES STUDENT-TEACHER SUMMER ADVENTURES ABROAD

Study abroad this summer at the crossroads of Asia in Singapore or Taiwan, on the Swiss border of eastern France, near the Alps of Austria, at the foot of the Acropolis in Athens, in the Italian Renaissance art city of Florence, by the shores of the Mediterranean in Spain, or in South America's largest city, Sao Paulo. Earn one year of academy or college-level language credit in just six weeks.

Asia, Europe, and South America beckon North American Division teachers and students to nine summer programs. Chinese (Mandarin), French, German, Greek (Intermediate New Testament), Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish language programs as well as international business and missions courses highlight summer offerings. Teacher, staff, or parent sponsors can receive free tuition, and room and board scholarships for every eight or ten students going, depending on the program. There's even a one-week professional language teachers' seminar July 31 to August 4 at Seminar Schloss Bogenhofen near Salzburg, Austria.

Program applications are available to Adventist senior academy registrars and modern-language teachers or from Adventist college and university admissions offices or modern-language chairpersons. For more information write ACA, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20905-6600 or call (301) 680-6444.

ADVENTIST COLLEGES ABROAD 1995 SUMMER PROGRAMS

Program	Costs*	Dates
Asian: Singapore	\$2,210	June 16 - Aug. 18
Chinese: Taiwan	\$2,360	June 23 - Aug. 4
French: Collonges, France	\$1,880	June 16 - July 27, 28
German: Bogenhofen, Austria	\$1,990	June 16 - July 27, 28
Greek: Athens, Greece	\$2,410	June 16 - July 27, 28
Italian: Florence, Italy	\$1,730	June 16 - July 27, 28
Portuguese: Sao Paulo, Brazil	\$1,570	June 16 - July 27, 28
Spanish: Sagunto, Spain	\$1,820	June 16 - July 27, 28

*Costs do not include international air fares, additional pleasure trips, travel documents, or other personal expenses.