

## **Abstract**

### **Purpose of the study**

This study investigated the sexual needs of school-going youths perinatally infected with HIV.

### **Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study were to: explore the sexual needs of school-going youths perinatally infected with HIV, the socio-demographic factors that influence these needs, establish knowledge of sexual needs among these youths and investigate the coping strategies employed in dealing with their sexual needs.

### **Methods**

The study was conducted through a cross-sectional study design, data was collected through September to early November 2013 using self-administered questionnaires from 339 respondents selected from school-going youths perinatally infected with HIV and utilizing the services of Mildmay Uganda. This sample size was obtained using Taro Yamane's formula. The data was analyzed using SPSS and presented in form of literal descriptions, tables, and figures.

### **Results**

The study established that the biggest percentage (34.8%) of school-going youths perinatally infected with HIV felt accepted by members of the opposite sex; 71.4% desired intimate body contact although 54.9% altogether reported that they had never engaged in intimate body contact; 51.6% had engaged in sexual intercourse, 43% of these having had their first sexual encounter between ages 15-17 years. Majority of the respondents have a moderate sexual desire. 66.1% respondents were in intimate relationships at that time; 90.9% of the study group had intentions of bearing children, and a big percentage (72.9%) were not using any family planning method; 82.9% had plans of getting married.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

The study concluded that the sexual needs of school-going youths perinatally infected with HIV are real and need to be addressed.

A number of factors play a role in determining these needs and how the youths cope with them. These factors include socio-demographic factors such as; sex, age, level of education, religion and relationship status and the knowledge that the youths have about their sexual needs as obtained from sex education, peers, adults and the media.

It is therefore essential that the public and policy makers take advantage of these factors both to help these youths achieve their sexual needs and to minimize risk-taking behavior among them that may only lead to further increase in the prevalence of HIV, posing a health threat to the entire public. This can be achieved through continuous health education using different media including newspapers, magazines, radio and television shows, social networking, to create awareness, and support for these youths where they can fearlessly disclose issues regarding their sexual needs and rights.