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| AIDS in South Africa |
| H312 Term Paper |
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HIV/AIDS is known as *the* epidemic of the 21st century, and its impact is felt strongly on a global scale. However, different parts of the world are affected on different levels. South Africa, a modern, developed country, has felt the impact of HIV/AIDS in a huge way. HIV/AIDS has become a serious issue in South Africa because of its social and political climate, public perception of the disease, and infection vectors that are difficult to deal with.

*Current incidence/prevalence data and trends (getting better or worse).*

The prevalence of HIV/AIDS in South Africa is the highest of any country in the world, with just under 12% of the 48 million inhabitants diagnosed according to a 2007 UNAIDS report. The group most likely to be infected with HIV, those aged 15-20, has actually seen a decline in incidence rates from 2002 to 2008: (Figure 1). For example, 20-year olds went from a 2.2% incidence rate in 2005, to a 1.7% incidence rate in 2008.

*How did AIDS come to South Africa?*

AIDS was first diagnosed in two patients in South Africa in 1983. The first reported death caused by AIDS was caused in the same year. The number of patients diagnosed with AIDS stepped up to 46 in 1986. [ADD MORE]

*How severe is the HIV/AIDS crisis compared to other countries?*

*Who is infected - and how?*

*Social/political/cultural/religious barriers unique to that country that are helping or hindering the problem.*

Denial

Thabo Mbeki, the president of South Africa from 1999 to 2008 would seek advice of AIDS deniers when making policy decisions. He even went as far as to appoint a number of such people to his Presidential AIDS advisory panel. Both Mbeki and his health minister, Manto Tshabalala-Msimang questioned the effectiveness of antiretroviral therapies, and called for the consumption of beetroot and garlic as a way of fighting HIV infection.

*Programs in place to tackle the problem, and are they working. (Who's helping, who isn't).*

*Outlook.*