



**Family planning in Global South hit by UK aid cuts, research finds**



*The Telegraph | 26 January 2023*

The use of contraception is soaring around the world, but international funding to meet demand for family planning in the developing world has been hit by sharp UK aid cuts, research has found. A survey of more than 80 nations found more women were using contraception than ever before and contraceptive users had doubled in many nations over the past decade. Growth was sharpest in sub-Saharan Africa, according to the research by the FP2030 family planning alliance.

**Whooping cough cases increase rapidly, officials urge vigilance**



*Health-e News | 27 January 2023*

The number of laboratory confirmed whooping cough (pertussis) cases in South Africa has risen dramatically, with cases doubling in just a few weeks. In December the National Institute for Communicable Diseases reported a total of 408 cases countrywide, with 230 of those cases in the Western Cape. Speaking to Health-e News, Professor Cheryl Cohen, Head of the Centre for Respiratory Diseases and Meningitis at the NICD said reported cases now stand at 818, but could be higher. "These numbers are a minimum estimate as many pertussis cases don't get a specific test and are not diagnosed." 'Young infants are at highest risk' From July 2022 to date, Cohen said there's been 14 deaths, of which 12 are children under the age of 5. Maret Lesch, Western Cape Department of Health spokesperson told Health-e News this is because most cases were in infants too young to be vaccinated although it is a vaccine-preventable disease.

### **The association of self-efficacy and coping strategies with body mass index is mediated by eating behaviors and dietary intake among young females: A structural-equation modeling approach**



*Plos One* | 27 January 2023

*Aydin Aynehchi, Sevda Saleh-Ghadimi and Parvin Dehghan*

According to a 2017 report by the World Health Organization, more than 815 million people are undernourished throughout the world and around 1.9 billion adults are overweight and obese. Based on these data, a large proportion of human population is under threat, because it is generally accepted that any significant deviation from normal weight (over/underweight) has major health consequences. For instance, in a well-designed population-based cohort study in 2018, Bhaskaran et al. investigated the data of about 3.6 million adults in UK and concluded that, in most cases, there was either a "U- or J-shaped" relationship between various causes of mortality and Body Mass Index (BMI) and the lowest risks were shown in people with normal BMI.

### **Should We Accept Unvaccinated Children Dying of COVID as a "Matter of Course"?**



*Science-Based Medicine* | 27 January 2023

When it comes to infectious disease, normality means a world where they are routinely exposed to, and

overcome, viral illness. For children, getting sick and recovering is part of a natural and healthy life. The idea that vaccine-preventable diseases are healthy for children is an old anti-vaccine trope. Prior to the pandemic, anti-vaccine doctors claimed measles prevents cancer, for example. In reality, neither measles nor COVID is “healthy” for children. However, the article Dr. Prasad and Krug contained another absurd claim. They also wrote: While the death of any child is a tragedy, Covid-19 is less deadly to children than many other risks we accept as a matter of course, including drowning, vehicle accidents, and even cardiovascular disease. This is doubly false. The CDC's COVID data tracker added 800 deaths to its grim tally in the year before that article was published, and 800 children have since died of COVID. This is the same as the number of children who drown annually and larger than the number of children who die from cardiovascular disease. Overall, over 2,000 children have died of COVID since the start of the pandemic, and many more would have died had none been vaccinated. In 2020, 607 children younger than 12 years were killed in car crashes. It's clear more than that would have died of COVID had we let it rip through the pediatric population before any children were vaccinated in spring 2020. It's only because we didn't let that happen then, that Dr.

## Does self-perceived HIV risk mediate the potential association between HIV-related symbolic stigma and sexual behaviour among young adult women in Cape Town, South Africa?

# BMC Public Health

*BMC Public Health | 28 January 2023*

*Takwanisa Machemedze*

Perception of risk is a central construct of models of health behaviour change as it is assumed to be an intermediate step before adoption of the related safer behaviour. In the context of HIV/AIDS, the literature suggests that psychosocial factors such as stigmatising attitudes related to stereotyping people who contract HIV may influence how people perceive their own risk of HIV infection. However, findings on the relationships between HIV-related stigma, HIV risk perception and sexual behaviour have been inconsistent. We investigated the potential mediating role of HIV risk perception on the link between HIV-related symbolic stigma and sexual behaviour.

## Children Denied Same Access to Treatment for HIV/AIDS as Adults



*VOA News | 28 January 2023*

The U.N.'s main AIDS program says thousands of children are dying from HIV/AIDS because, unlike adults, they do not receive treatment for the deadly disease. HIV/AIDS is no longer an automatic death sentence. People infected with the disease can live a normal lifespan, provided they receive treatment

and care. Unfortunately, there is a glaring disparity between the way children and adults with HIV/AIDS are treated. UNAIDS spokeswoman Charlotte Sector says 76 percent of adults have access to treatment but only half of children living with HIV are receiving lifesaving treatment.

### **NCI awards \$3.5 million grant to eliminate cervical cancer among women with HIV in low-resource countries**



*News Medical Life Science | 30 January 2023*

Weill Cornell Medicine, Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, Fla., and the University of North Carolina have received a \$3.5 million, five-year grant from the National Cancer Institute (NCI), part of the National Institutes of Health, to improve screening and preventative treatment of cervical cancer for women living with HIV in low-resource countries. Women living with HIV are more vulnerable to cervical cancer, especially in the low- and middle-income countries. Eighty-five percent of cervical cancer deaths occur in these settings, where high quality preventative services are often lacking.

### **Oxford Study: COVID-19 Significant Cause of Death in US Children And Youth**



*Health Policy Watch | 31 January 2023*

A new study found COVID-19 has emerged as a leading cause of death in children and young people in the US, ranking eighth overall between August 2021 and July 2022. The Oxford University study determined that COVID-19 was the underlying cause of death for more than 940,000 people in the US, including over 1,300 deaths among children and young people up to 19 years of age. Until now, the study concluded, it had been unclear how the burden of deaths from COVID-19 compared with other leading causes of deaths in this age group. Using data from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

(US CDC), researchers found that infants aged less than a year were the most vulnerable with a mortality rate of four per 100,000. Deaths in children and infants were particularly high during the Delta and Omicron waves of COVID-19. Among the studied group of children and young people, COVID-19 ranked first in deaths caused by infectious or respiratory diseases. In the category of disease-related causes of death, COVID-19 ranked fifth overall. Among all causes of death, it ranked eighth. COVID-19 also was the underlying cause for 2% of deaths in children and youth in the US, putting it ahead of influenza and pneumonia as a factor in mortality.

### **Decriminalising sex work can protect sex workers – and everybody else – from GBV**



*Bhekisisa | 31 January 2023*

South Africa could see a drop in gender-based violence (GBV) if it follows through on a draft Bill to scrap all existing legal penalties on sex work. The proposed changes to the current legislation, which will make it legal for adults to buy and sell sex, was announced in December. If it's signed into law, the Bill will also clear people who were previously charged or jailed of any wrongdoing. The period for public comment on the Bill closes today.

### **African leaders commit to end AIDS among children by 2030**



*United Nations | 1 February 2023*

The first ministerial meeting of the Global Alliance to end AIDS in children marked a step up in action to ensure all boys and girls with HIV can access life-saving treatment, and that HIV-positive mothers can have babies free from the virus. Ministers and representatives laid out plans which include providing testing to more pregnant women and linking them to care, as well as finding and caring for infants and children living with HIV.

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