

02 SEP 1999

AIDS-youths

18-30 AGE GROUP MOST SUSCEPTIBLE TO HIV

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 2 (Bernama) -- Those in the 18-30 age group have been identified as the most susceptible to HIV due to their active lifestyle, said Malaysian AIDS Council (MAC) President Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir today.

"There are many reasons, among them being indulging in high-risk activities such as sharing of hypodermic needle and unsafe sex," she said at a news conference in conjunction with the seminar entitled "Act Up on AIDS: Young People Making a Difference", here.

She said it was also due to their apathy as well as the belief that they would not be infected by the deadly disease.

According to the country's AIDS figures for the period from January 1986 to November 1997, 43 per cent of the 23,571 cases reported were those in the 30-39 age group and 40.6 per cent in the 20-29 age group.

"I feel that for the AIDS education programme to be effective, we must get input from these groups as programmes in the past were carried out by adults who do not understand the problems of young people," she said.

The two-day seminar which ends tomorrow is organised by students taking part in the Universiti Malaya Volunteer Aids Programme and Universiti Putra Malaysia Volunteer Aids Club with the cooperation of MAC.

The programme includes exhibition, video presentation, discussions and question-answer session on AIDS.

Marina said the programme is part of the activities organised in conjunction with the 5th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and Pacific (ICAAP) to be held in October.

--BERNAMA

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