

Catholic Church Gets Credit for Wider User of Condom in Brazil

Contributed by Cristina Índio do Brasil
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Recent research has revealed a greater willingness on the part of the Brazilian population to use condoms during sexual intercourse. And the Catholic Church seems to have contributed to this new behavior.

The director of the National Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD)/AIDS Program, Pedro Chequer, attributes some of this progress to a more flexible attitude on the part of the Catholic Church in relation to the use of condoms, unlike its outright opposition in the decade of the '80's.

In a National Radio interview, Chequer observed that 25 years ago, the church tried to interfere with messages and government policies in favor of prevention.

At the time, the Ministry of Health sought to avoid religious and philosophical issues and place priority on scientific evidence favoring better health. "Nowadays, the Catholic population is adopting the use of condoms more and more," Chequer said.

He went on to point out that on various occasions the church has been a partner in the national effort on behalf of people's lives and welfare. Along these lines, the Brazilian National Bishops' Council (CNBB) created the AIDS Pastoral Commission in 1997.

Last year, however, in reprisal for her participation in campaigns promoting the use of condoms, the Brazilian singer, Daniela Mercury, had her invitation to participate in the Vatican's Christmas Concert cancelled. a decision that was criticized by various Brazilian ministers and health specialists.

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