A cross-sectional descriptive study was conducted from February until May 2001 on the relationship between perceived risk and risk behavior regarding HIV/AIDS infection among the first year students in Bangkok. Data was collected from 184 first year students by self-administered questionnaire in a selected institute in Bangkok. The questionnaire elicited information about socio-demographic characteristics, the major source of information, knowledge, perception and attitude towards safe sex regarding HIV/AIDS and sexual practices of the respondents.

The result of the study showed that out of a total of 184 respondents, only 70 had sexual experience. More than 80 percent knew that condoms could prevent HIV/AIDS if used properly during sexual intercourse. The level of knowledge was almost equal among male and female respondents but the female respondents had a higher level of perception and better attitude towards safe-sex practices than the male respondents. There was no statistical significant association between sexual practices and various socio-demographic factors such as gender, age and education of respondents’ parents. There was statistically significant difference between those respondents who had sexual experience and those who did not in both their attitudes towards safe sex and monthly allowance because the p-value was less than 0.050. There was no statistically significant association between knowledge, perception, attitude and risky sexual behavior. There was still misconception regarding HIV/AIDS because 15.2 percent answered that one could prevent from getting HIV/AIDS if one washed their genitals after sexual intercourse while 10.3 percent reported that it was a matter of fate if someone became infected with HIV/AIDS infection and 6.0 percent believed that one can prevent HIV/AIDS by taking antibiotics before sex. About fifty-eight (58.2) percent of the respondents knew that HIV/AIDS could be transmitted by anal intercourse. About forty-nine (48.9) percent of the respondents said that HIV/AIDS could be transmitted by oral intercourse. The result showed that the major source of information regarding HIV/AIDS was television (78.9 %). This study revealed that the role of teachers, parents and peers was minor in the dissemination of information about HIV/AIDS. Involvement of teachers, parents and peers should be stressed because it was clear from the literature review that they could play a very important role in the prevention of HIV/AIDS infection.