age at first sex was considered consistent if it was within one year of the adolescent’s age at the previous round.)

Thus, adolescents’ responses would be considered consistent overall under three circumstances: if they consistently reported no sexual activity; if they consistently reported experiencing first sexual intercourse before the baseline survey, with age at the time of that experience being reported consistently; or if they first experienced sexual intercourse during the study period, did not subsequently report having never had sex and reported the age at that first encounter consistently.

We coded a respondent as inconsistent overall if the following criteria were met. First, if a student was inconsistent in responses to the six questions in a single survey round, we automatically considered that student’s responses to be inconsistent overall because we were unable to fully assess consistency between rounds. We also considered respondents to be inconsistent if they reported being sexually inexperienced after having previously reported sexual activity, or if the reported age at first sex was inconsistent between two or more survey rounds.

**Multivariate Analysis**

We investigated the predictors of inconsistency in self-reporting (dependent variable) by estimating a logistic regression model. The independent variables in the analysis included gender, socioeconomic status, ever-use of alcohol, frequency of church attendance, whether the adolescent lived in a two-parent home and whether he or she attended a school in the intervention group or the comparison group. We dropped 14 of the 698 observations from the multivariate analysis because of missing data on one or more of these variables.

Adolescents’ reports of their alcohol use, socioeconomic status and household composition varied little over the study period; we used Round 3 data for these characteristics, since our measures of overall consistency include reports up through the final round. Moreover, adolescents probably reported the factors comprising the socioeconomic index more accurately at older ages. Age and marijuana use were also considered as independent variables; however, we did not include them in the final model because there was very little variance in age (since all students entered the study in seventh grade) and because only a small percentage had ever used marijuana.

**Results**

**Respondents’ Characteristics**

The 698 adolescents who completed all three surveys were 12.1 years old, on average, at Round 1; they were aged 12.8 by the time they completed Round 2 nine months later; and they were 13.8 years old by Round 3. At baseline, 42% of these students had tried alcohol, and 48% had done so by Round 3 (Table 1). Few students had ever smoked marijuana—6% at the time of the baseline survey, a proportion that had increased by four percentage points by Round 3. In all three rounds, the proportions reporting alcohol and marijuana use were consistently higher among boys than among girls. While all adolescent respondents were from families of low and lower-middle socioeconomic backgrounds, about 47% (in Round 3) lived in very low socioeconomic status households. At the time of Round 3, most adolescents lived either with both parents (35%) or with just their mother (39%).

**Within-Round Consistency**

Within each survey round, 95–100% of adolescents responded consistently to questions about their first sexual intercourse (Table 1). Most girls consistently reported that they had never had sex (86–95%), while the majority of boys consistently reported that they had done so (60–75%). The proportion of respondents who were inconsistent was highest in Round 1 (5% overall—4% of girls and 6% of boys), when the adolescents were youngest and their literacy skills were probably the least developed. The proportions inconsistent were also slightly higher among boys than girls in Round 3 (1.8% vs. 1.6%), but the seemingly reverse situation at Round 2—0.3% among boys and 0.5% among girls—reflects very small absolute numbers (just two girls and one boy).

**Overall Consistency**

We next assessed the extent of agreement over the multiple rounds of the survey (Table 2, page 82). As expected, the proportion of adolescents who were inconsistent between survey rounds was much higher than the proportion who were inconsistent within a single round (37% vs. 5% or less). Boys and girls exhibited very different patterns of overall consistency in their responses.

For example, 65% of boys reported their sexual experience inconsistently. Eight