

# RAP\* Time



## RURAL CENTER *for* AIDS/STD PREVENTION

A JOINT PROJECT OF  
INDIANA UNIVERSITY & PURDUE UNIVERSITY

\*Rural AIDS/STD prevention. rap (rap) v. Slang. To talk freely and openly.

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## Adolescents Anticipating Sex During Next Year Report Greater Risk Factors

Even though the proportion of adolescents who delay sexual onset and who use condoms have increased, many adolescents continue to practice risky sexual behavior. As a result, unwanted pregnancy and STD, including HIV infection, are serious health problems among various groups of our young people.

Our understanding of teen sexuality is limited, and many studies dichotomize their behavior: adolescents have had sex or they have not. This view limits our ability to provide effective prevention programs. This study examined the social, psychological and behavioral differences across an expanded typology of adolescent sexual experience.

### Methodology

Four groups of teenagers were compared: those who did not anticipate initiating sex in the next year (delayers), those who anticipated initiating sex in the next year (anticipators), those who had had one sexual partner (singles) and those who had had two or more partners (multiples). Interview data from 907 high school students in Alabama, New York and Puerto Rico were

analyzed with an overrepresentation of black or Puerto Rican adolescents.

### Outcomes of the Study

In all, 37% of the sample had never had sexual intercourse and rated their expectation for having intercourse in the next year as less than 50% (delayers). Another 22% had never had intercourse but rated their expectation for doing so in the next years as 50% or more (anticipators). Some 13% of participants had had intercourse with only one partner (singles), while 27% had had sex with more than one partner (multiples)

Major findings include:

- Compared to delayers, anticipators reported more alcohol use and marijuana use; poorer psychological health; riskier peer behaviors; and looser ties to the family, school and church.
- Multiples reported more alcohol and marijuana use, riskier peer behaviors and looser ties to family and school than singles.
- Risk behaviors, peer behaviors, family variables, and school and church involvement showed a linear trend across the four categories of sexual behavior.

- Family structure was not related to sexual experience in this study, although other studies have shown a relationship.
- No clear trend emerged for the psychological variables.

### Implications for Prevention

This study supports the contention that a broader conceptualization of adolescent sexual experience is necessary to fully understand teenagers' sexual behavior and to prevent risky behavior. The findings reveal social, psychological and behavioral differences between groups of adolescents whom researchers and program planners typically group together.

Prevent efforts must be tailored to the specific needs of teenagers with differing sexual experiences and expectations. The interventions must address the social and psychological context in which sexual experiences occur.

SOURCE: Whitaker, D. J., et al. (2000). Reconceptualizing adolescent sexual behavior: Beyond did they or didn't they? *Family Planning Perspectives*, 32, 111-117.

### Some Women at Risk of STDs Will Use Female Condom

The female condom is the best female-controlled prophylactic to come onto the market. This study examined the suitability of the female condom for HIV/STD prevention. STD clinic patients were interviewed during an initial visit, exposed to an intervention on female condoms, given a physical examination and instructed to keep a sexual diary.

Among 895 women reporting coitus during the study period, 731 reported using the female condom at least once during the follow-up period. By the end of the follow-up period, 8% had used the female condom exclusively, 73% had used both the female and male condom, and 3% had used no condoms.

The study concluded that women at risk of STDs find the female condom acceptable and will try it, and some use it consistently. Mixing use of female and male condoms may facilitate consistent condom use.

SOURCE: Female condom use among women at high risk of sexually transmitted diseases. (2000). *Family Planning Perspectives*, 32, 138-144.

### National Studies Show Slight Decrease in Teen Coital Experience

An analysis of three recent national surveys of adolescent health practices revealed that teens' overall involvement in risk-taking has declined during the past decade (except for Hispanic), with fewer teens engaging in multiple risk behaviors.

The Urban Institute examined data from the Youth Risk Behavior Surveys, the National Survey of Adolescent Males, and the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health.

The percent of sexually experienced teens declined from 54 percent in 1991 to 47 percent in 1997.

The overall prevalence of a specific risk behavior among teens was due primarily to the behavior of multiple-risk students, since the majority of students involved in any given behavior also were engaging in other risk behaviors. However, nearly all teens, including multiple risk-takers, also engaged in positive behaviors.

Health education and services should be expanded, especially where teens can be reached.

SOURCE: Lindberg, D. D., et al. (2000). *Teen Risk-Taking: A Statistical Portrait*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute. (www.urban.org)

### Many HIV-infected Persons Adopt Safer Sex After Diagnosis

Persons recently infected were interviewed within 12 months of diagnosis. Of those changing their behavior (90%), 60% reported more condom use, 49% did not have sex as often, 36% had not had sex, 16% had sex only with HIV-infected persons, and 5% had only oral sex.

SOURCE: CDC. (2000). Adoption of protective behaviors among persons with recent HIV infection and diagnosis -- Alabama, New Jersey, and Tennessee, 1997 -- 1998. *MMWR*, 49, 512-515.

### One-quarter Had Used Alcohol During Coitus

Results of the 1999 Youth Risk Behavior Survey from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows that among currently sexually active students, 25% had used alcohol or drugs at last sexual intercourse. Males (31.2%) were significantly more likely than females (18.5%) to have used alcohol or drugs at last coitus.

SOURCE: CDC. (2000). Youth Risk Behavior Survey -- United States, 1999. *MMWR*, 49 (SS05), 1-96. ○



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