

# RAP\* Time



## RURAL CENTER *for* AIDS/STD PREVENTION

A JOINT PROJECT OF  
INDIANA UNIVERSITY, PURDUE UNIVERSITY,  
and TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

\*Rural AIDS/STD prevention. rap (rap) v. Slang. To talk freely and openly. Vol. 5, No. 2, February 2, 2001

## Teens perceiving good communication with parents less likely to engage in coitus

Few studies concerning the correlates of adolescent initiation of sexual intercourse have been longitudinal. Researchers are increasingly examining the level of communication between parent and child and its relationship to adolescent sexual activity.

This study examined the level of communication between parents and adolescents and correlated the findings with the onset of sexual intercourse.

### Methodology

This was a 10-year longitudinal study of 203 patients, aged 12-21 years, from a pediatrician's practice panel in Middleton, Wisconsin. Subjects were predominately white and middle-class. They completed a questionnaire at the time of each health supervision visit. Data for this report are from the enrollment and at the 5-year point.

Comparisons of adolescent-parental communication were first compared between the virginal and nonvirginal groups at the initiation of the study. The results were then confirmed by adding data from patients in the virginal group who converted over the first 5 years of

the study to the nonvirginal group. The questionnaire inquired about sexual risk-taking behaviors, grades and activities at school, and relationship with siblings and parents at home.

### Outcomes of the Study

During the initial survey, 172 patients were in the virginal group and 31 in the nonvirginal group. Of the sexually active group, 68% were males and 97% were white. The average age of coitus was 15.1 years with no difference between females and males. After the 5 years, 29 virginal patients become nonvirgins. Major findings include:

- Patient's self-rating of communication with parents and age at survey were found to be significantly different between the two groups. No differences were observed for patient's gender, race, parental marital status, number of children or position in family, grades in school, or after-school activities. The mean rating of communication was lower for the nonvirginal group, especially with the father. The difference was most pronounced in male subjects.

- Patient's increase in age and decrease in communication with parents increased the risk of engaging in sexual intercourse.
- About 60% of the virginal group had partners of the other sex and 25% felt pressure from self or others to have coitus. Forty percent of this group never used alcohol and 96% never used drugs. Fear of STDs and pregnancy, feeling not ready, and their own moral codes were the common reasons for abstaining.

### Implications for Prevention

Perception of communication with parents, particularly the mother, directly impacted the age when the adolescents initiated coitus. Educational programs should strive to increase parent-child communication and provide lessons involving both adolescents and their parents.

SOURCE: Karofsky, P.S., et al. (2000). Relationship between adolescent-parental communication and initiation of first intercourse by adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 28*, 41-45.

## STD misconceptions common among STD clinic attendees

This study assessed the prevalence of selected misconceptions about STD prevention among a sample of persons attending STD clinics in five large metropolitan areas. Whether misconceptions decreased following STD diagnosis and/or STD counseling was also assessed. Participants ( $n=3498$ , median age=25) completed an interview upon study enrollment and every subsequent three months for one year.

At baseline, 16.3% believed that washing the genitals after sex protected from STDs. Urinating after sex (38%), douching (45.7%), and use of oral contraceptive (19.9%) were believed to prevent STD.

Prevalence of misconceptions was significantly diminished at 3 month follow-up. Those persisting to have misconceptions were more likely to be 24 years or older and African American. However, those persisting to have these misconceptions did not have higher STD incidence.

Crosby, R. A., et al. (2000). Misconceptions about STD protective behaviors. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 1, 167-173.

## Non-coital sex common among young adult sample

This study examined non-coital sexual activity among youth who did and did not engage in adolescent sexual intercourse. A sample of 148 female and 57 male participants from 4 midwestern colleges and a Planned Parenthood agency completed a questionnaire.

Non-coital behavior (masturbation, masturbation to orgasm, oral sex, oral sex to orgasm) was common among virgins and non-virgins and was similar for females and males. Among virgins, total abstainers (no interactional sex) came from a lower socioeconomic status, had fewer social/dating opportunities, lacked a viable relationship, and had lower grades. Two groups of virgins, those who came close to coitus and those who did not, differed only on social/dating chances.

Compared to the came close group, the intercourse group reported greater use of alcohol, less religious involvement, fewer moral influences, and more humanistic and fewer traditional messages about sex from parents.

SOURCE: Woody, J. D., et al. (2000). Adolescent non-coital sexual activity: Comparisons of virgins and non-virgins. *The Journal of Sex Education and Therapy*, 25, 261-268.

## Chlamydia is co-factor in increasing risk of cervical cancer

Chlamydia can increase the risk of cervical cancer among women who are infected with human papillomavirus (HPV), according to a study of 181 Scandinavian cervical cancer patients. The researchers indicate that the findings suggest that cervical malignancy should be added to the complications associated with genital chlamydial infections.

SOURCE: Anttila, T. (2001). Stereotypes of *Chlamydia trachomatis* and risk of development of cervical squamous. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 285, 47-51.

## New mothers lack HIV transmission facts

Incomplete knowledge of prevention of perinatal HIV transmission and mistrust were prevalent among new mothers. However, knowledge deficits or mistrust did not appear to reduce reported prenatal test rates.

SOURCE: Walter, E. B., et al. (2001). New mother's knowledge and attitudes about perinatal human immunodeficiency virus infection. *Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 97, 70-76.

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The opinions expressed here do not necessarily represent those of the cooperating universities.

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