Relationship Abuse Among Adolescents and Young Adults:
Clinic-based Prevention and Intervention

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Adolescent Relationship Abuse and Health

- Clustering of vulnerabilities and risk behaviors
- ARA is highly associated with substance use, unhealthy weight control, sexual risk behavior, pregnancy, and suicidality
Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and Pregnancy

- Studies estimate about 4-8% of pregnancies affected by abuse, correlates with poor physical and mental health outcomes
- Pregnant adolescents 2-3 times more likely to have experienced violence during and after pregnancy than older pregnant women
Sexual Risk and ARA

• Partner violence among teen girls linked with:
  (Silverman et al. 2004) [YRBS data]
  – early sexual intercourse (before age 15)
  – condom non-use at last sex
  – multiple partnering (3+) in past 3 months
  – Pregnancy

• Girls reporting IPV 3 times more likely to have been tested for STD/HIV and 2.6 times more likely to report STD diagnosis (Decker et al. 2005)

• Coercive sexual experiences linked to HPV infection and cervical dysplasia (Kahn et al. 2005)
Clinic-based Survey

- 5 confidential teen clinics in low-income neighborhoods Greater Boston area
- ACASI
- Anonymous cross-sectional survey
- Female teen clinic users ages 14-20 (N=448)
- 76% response rate
### Clinic-based Survey
### IPV Prevalence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adolescent Females Utilizing Teen Clinics</th>
<th>N=448</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexual violence in intimate relationship (insisted, threatened, physical force to have sex)</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical violence in intimate relationship (includes hit, choked, used knife or gun against)</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical and/or sexual violence ever in relationship</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
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Like the first couple of times, the condom seems to break every time. You know what I mean, and it was just kind of funny, like, the first 6 times the condom broke. Six condoms, that's kind of rare I could understand 1 but 6 times, and then after that when I got on the birth control, he was just like always saying, like you should have my baby, you should have my daughter, you should have my kid.”

— 17 yr. old female who started Depo-Provera without partner’s knowledge
I was on the birth control, and I was still taking it, and he ended up getting mad and flushing it down the toilet, so I ended up getting pregnant. I found out that [before this] he talked to my friends and he told them that we were starting a family. I didn't know that. I didn't want to start a family. I wanted to finish school.

— 18 yr. old female with 2 year old son

Miller, et al. 2007
Reproductive Coercion Defined:

- **BIRTH CONTROL SABOTAGE**
  - Active interference with contraceptive methods (flushing pills; poking holes in condoms; refusing to wear condom)

- **PREGNANCY COERCION:**
  - Threats or pressure to promote pregnancy
A Community-Based Family Planning Intervention to Reduce Partner Violence

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IPV Intervention: How is this different from standard practice?

**Intervention Components**

- Enhanced IPV/SA Assessment
- Harm Reduction Counseling
- Supported Referral

**Hypothesized Outcomes**

- Increased awareness and recognition of abusive behaviors
- Increased harm reduction behaviors
- Increased awareness and utilization of IPV/SA victimization services

**Decreased IPV/SA victimization and Improved reproductive health outcomes**
Intervention RCT

2-armed randomized-controlled trial (T1: N=1200, T2: ~900)
- 4 large, urban, family planning clinics in the Western United States
- Young adult women, 16-29 years old
- T1 (pre-intervention), exit survey (immediately post-intervention), T2 (3 months later)

Funding: NICHD1 R21 HD057814-01
Baseline Cross-Sectional Sample of Sexually Active Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>% Sample</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-19</td>
<td>42.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Race/Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>% Sample</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>29.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-racial/More than one race</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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N=1299 sexually active women
Physical and Sexual IPV

- 53% of women reported a lifetime experience of physical or sexual violence by a partner
- 17.6% reported violence in the past three months.

N=1278 sexually active women (16-29)
Reproductive Coercion – Pregnancy Coercion and Birth Control Sabotage

- 25.7% of women reported a lifetime experience of reproductive coercion by a partner
- 19.1% reported pregnancy coercion from a partner
- 15.0% of women experienced birth control sabotage

N=1278 sexually active women (16-29)
IPV, Reproductive Coercion and Unintended Pregnancy

Among women reporting reproductive coercion (pregnancy coercion and birth control sabotage):

- **IPV increases risk for unintended pregnancy two-fold**

- IPV appears to be a necessary condition for reproductive coercion to increase risk for unintended pregnancy

Intervention Results

Among women in the intervention who experienced recent IPV:

• Approximately 70% reduction in pregnancy coercion

• Women receiving the intervention were more likely to end a relationship because it felt unhealthy or unsafe.
Summary of Research on Adolescent Relationship Abuse and Health

Adolescent Relationship Abuse

- is COMMON
- is associated with multiple risk behaviors and poor health indicators
- has SIGNIFICANT CONSEQUENCES for health
- is highly prevalent in clinical settings
Teen Clinic Based Intervention to Reduce Dating Abuse and Sexual Risk

adaptation of family planning intervention for teen-specific clinics:

* developmentally appropriate
* mandated reporting requirements
* feasibility in teen clinic setting
Teen Clinic Intervention

The Healthcare Education, Assessment & Response Tool for Teen Relationships (H.E.A.R.T.) Primer and Training Project:

1) Linking education about IPV and adolescent health concerns to assessment
2) Discuss harm reduction behaviors
3) Raise awareness of IPV services relevant for youth

Funding: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Programs
Primary Prevention

Coaching Boys into Men Training Program

- shifting gender norms
- redefining masculinity and athletics
- stopping disrespectful and harmful behaviors towards women and girls

Funding: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Waitt Institute for Violence Prevention; Nike Foundation
Primary Prevention
Cluster-randomized trial

16 high schools in Sacramento region
8 receive intervention ‘09-10 year
8 control schools
baseline and follow up surveys after each sports season (winter, spring, fall)
12 month follow up survey
THANK YOU!!