

Week 11: Sexuality

Sex During Adolescence: STDs and Teen Pregnancy

- 70% have had sex by age 19
- This generation more likely to have sex than previous generations
- Decline in sexual activity among teens
- Less likely to have sex before 13
- Less likely to have 4 or more partners
- Less likely to be currently sexually active
 - Compared to adolescents in the early 90s
- Contraceptive use
 - 90% will become pregnant within 1 year if they're not using contraceptives
 - Usage Rate has been increasing
 - But teens aren't using it consistently (more sporadic than adults)
 - Still at risk for STDs and pregnancy
 - Condoms are the most used form (94%)
 - The pill is the 2nd most common choice, withdrawal is the 3rd
 - Condoms a good choice for teens since they protect against pregnancy and STDs
 - Birth control varies depending on race/ethnicity, age and sexual orientation
 - Black teens most likely to use condoms
 - Whites - birth control
 - Older teens more likely to use the pill
 - Gay teens less likely to use condoms than straight teens (no risk of pregnancy)
 - Easier to get - no prescription
 - Why aren't condoms used more often
 - Negative experiences with them
 - A generalized disregard for risk
 - Lower ability to interpret risk (cognitive development)
 - Personal fable - they know STDs and pregnancy can happen but they don't think it will happen to them (invincibility)
 - A lack of self-efficacy
 - Cant advocate for safe sex with their partner
 - Partner might think they have STD/don't trust them
 - An unwillingness to take responsibility for oneself and the perception that condoms are ineffective (97% effective)
 - Users have to be knowledgeable of the method and be willing to admit they are sexually active to obtain contraceptives
 - Do not believe pregnancy will happen to them (personal fable)
 - Misinformed about when they're likely to get pregnant
 - Availability of contraceptives is controversial
 - Should they have contraceptives?

- In 1977 the supreme court ruled it should be available to all people regardless of age and Dr's do not have to contact a parent if they are prescribing contraceptives to a minor
 - Availability has minimal effect on sexual activity (doesn't increase # who is having sex))
 - Use greatly decreases chances of pregnancy and STDs
- STDs
 - o 50% of all new STD causes each year are persons < 25 years old
 - o Chlamydia and gonorrhea are especially common in teens
 - o Girls are at a greater risk than boys
 - More likely to be asymptomatic
 - More likely to contract if partner is infected
- Unintended pregnancy
 - o US has the 2nd highest teen pregnancy rates in the industrialized world
 - o Rates are declining though
 - 15% fewer than in 70s or 80s
 - o About 20% of sexually active American teenage girls get pregnant each year
 - 80% are unplanned
- Causation Theories (to higher teen preg)
 - o American teens are no more likely to be sexually active
 - o American teens are less likely to use contraceptives
 - o Less likely to use the most effective methods/methods consistently
 - o The poverty rate is higher in the US (greater preg)
 - o US govt. provides fewer health care services to middle-class citizens
 - o Primary-care physicians are less likely to concern themselves with birth control (teens have to bring it up with their Doc)
 - o Youths in other countries are more likely to receive assistance from outside source which decreases poverty and pregnancy
 - o Parental leave policies in the other nations provide incentives to postpone childbearing
 - o Attitudes toward teen sexual behavior are more accepting in many European nations
 - More likely to admit when they are sexually active
 - o American society is more tolerant of teen childbearing than other nations
 - o Comprehensive sex education is favored in other nations
 - Abstinence only programs doesn't decrease the number of teens having sex only decreases the knowledge about pregnancy and contraception
 - Comprehensive programs do not increase the number of teens having sex
- Pregnancy outcomes
 - o ½ will give birth 57%
 - o 29% will get an abortion
 - o 14% will miscarry
 - o Of those who carry their baby to full term will end up keeping their baby
 - o Motherhood: 97% of adolescent mothers decide to keep their babies

- More likely to be poor/engage in risky behaviors/have poor relationships with their parents (already at risk for pregnancy)
 - Fatherhood: contact usually steadily decreases after the child's birth
 - The mother acts as a gatekeeper
 - Teen mother's say it's a result of a lack of their interest
 - Abortion: rate lowered
 - Less teens getting abortion
 - Morning after pill (emergency contraceptive) more readily available
 - Adoption: those who place their babies for adoption generally feel quite comfortable with this decision
 - Have better outcomes than those who decide to keep their babies or abort them
- Teen Parents are at risk for
 - Dropping out of school
 - Living in poverty (lack of education/employment)
 - Likely to have subsequent children while still an adolescent
 - Their kids are also more likely to be teen parents themselves

Gay and Lesbian Youth

- Working through their sexual identity
- Discrimination/stereotypes
- Many homosexual men are stereotypically masculine in appearance and actions; some are outstanding athletes
- Many lesbians are stereotypically feminine in appearance and behavior (the media has done a better job portraying this than manly gay men)
- The majority of gay men recognized their homosexual orientation early in life
- Less typical for lesbians to be aware of their sexuality during adolescents
- 2-5% males exclusively homosexual
- 1-2% of females exclusively homosexual
- 3x those rates have reported having a homosexual experience
- Sexuality is a continuous characteristic - most people fall somewhere in between
- Determinants of sexual orientation
 - Biological theories (have the most empirical evidence)
 - Suggest orientation is tied to genes, prenatal exposure to hormones and brain anatomy
 - Twin studies have shown a genetic component
 - If you have a gay twin, you are more likely to be gay
 - Sexuality more heritable than handedness (some consider to be innate)
 - Prenatal exposure to testosterone (hypothalamus)
 - Hypothalamus is enlarged among gay men
 - Psychoanalytic Theories/Parenting Theories (outdated)
 - Thought homosexuality resulted from poor relationships with family
 - Having trouble being attracted to opposite sex