

**\*\* This is a very in depth review, for a quicker review, pay attention to the comments\*\***

## **Chapter 11: Sexual Behaviors**

- **The onset of puberty is accompanied by an increasing interest in sex**
  - o First, the interest is self-centered, focusing on physical changes happening to the adolescent's body. This early concern is centered on developing an acceptable body image rather than on erotic sensations or expression
  - o Young adolescents then become interested in the development of others as well as their own. Boys and girls slowly become aware of their own developing sexual feelings and drives and how these are aroused and expressed. Crude behavior, language, and personal sexual experimentation are motivated by a desire to understand human sexuality and their own sexual feelings
  - o Eventually adolescents become interested in sexual experimentation with others. This interest is motivated part by curiosity, part by a desire for sexual stimulation and release, and part by a need for love, affection intimacy, and acceptance from another person
  
- **Premarital Sexual Behavior**
  - o Reasons for first intercourse
    - Most teens have sex with other teens or with very young adults
    - 43% of high school males report losing their virginity due to opportunity, whereas only 23% reported they were in love
    - 54% of high school females report losing their virginity because they were in love, while only 11% reported that they had the opportunity
    - Growing incidence of unwanted first intercourse
  - o General sense of:
    - How many adolescents have had sex?
      - Most Americans lose their virginity at age 18
      - 7% of teens have experienced sexual intercourse by age 13
      - 30% of teens aged 15-17 report having engaged in sexual intercourse
      - 66-70% of teens aged 18-19 report having lost their virginity
    - Who they are having sex with (age of partner, relationship type)?
      - African Americans are more likely to have experienced intercourse as high schoolers, to have become sexually active at a young age, to have had a relatively large number of partners and to report they are currently sexually active-as compared to Caucasians
      - Latinos fall between whites and blacks on the matter, and Asian American adolescents are less likely to be sexually active than teens from other racial and ethnic groups
      - Teens prefer *serial monogamy*, in which one dates and has intercourse with only one partner at a time

- **Sexual pluralism**
  - o **Pluralistic Society:** a society in which there are many different competing standards of behavior
  - o Pluralistic standards include abstinence until marriage; Sex with affection, commitment, and responsibility; sex with affection and commitment but without responsibility; sex with affection but without commitment; or sex without affection
  - o Sexuality is often driven by needs that have nothing to do with sex
    - Emotional needs include curiosity, the desire to receive affection, loneliness, need to gain status, confirmation of masculinity/femininity, bolstering self-esteem, or escape from boredom
  - o Abstinence, commitment, friends with benefits, ulterior motives for sex
    - The definition of abstinence differs from individual to individual; some adolescents only allow kissing, while others engage in mutual masturbation but stop short of intercourse
    - Some adolescents will have intercourse only if engaged, others only if they are living together, and others only if committed to exclusive dating
    - Friends with Benefits: friends with whom one has sex (oral sex or intercourse); there is no implied commitment and no intent to move the relationship into a romantic partnering
    - Ulterior motives for sex include
      - To punish: "She made me mad so just for spite I did it"
      - To win or return favors: "I spent money on you tonight, so what do I get?"
      - To control behavior: "If I sleep with you, will you stay with me?"
      - To build up the ego: "I bet you twenty dollars I can score"
- **Sexual aggression and saying no to unwanted sex**
  - o 9% of high school students reported having been hit or physically hurt by their boyfriend or girlfriend during the previous year; the rates were highest for black and twelfth grade students
  - o 7.5% reported being forced to have sexual intercourse; forcible rape was more commonly experienced by females than males
  - o Rates are much higher when coercive, as well as forcible, rape is counted because in many cases physical violence is not used
  - o Rates are even higher when unwanted sexual activity is counted; this occurs when someone consents to sex even though the individual would rather not
  - o Females use a variety of rejection strategies to avoid unwanted sexual activity, and females reported they were more likely than males to believe they could say no to unwanted sex
- **Contraceptives and STDs**
  - o What kinds of contraceptives are adolescents most likely to use?
    - More than  $\frac{3}{4}$  of teenage couples use some form of birth control, mostly condoms, when they last had intercourse
    - 96% of adolescent girls use contraception at least sporadically

- The most common contraceptive method used by US adolescents is the condom, followed by the birth control pill, withdrawal, etc.
- Many health officials believe the condom is the best type of contraceptive because it greatly reduces the risk of pregnancy as well as the probability of contracting an STD.
- o What are the most common STDs among adolescents?
  - 50% of new cases of STDs contracted by individuals 15-24 years of age
  - HPV (human papilloma-virus) is the most commonly contracted STD with more than 4.5 million new cases each year
  - Trichomoniasis is the 2<sup>nd</sup> most likely STD for an individual to contract
  - Chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis, and hepatitis B are among the 10 most frequently reported infections in the US
  - Adolescent girls are more at risk for STDs than boys
- o Why contraceptives are not used
  - Users have to be willing to admit that they are sexually active and must be willing and able to obtain contraceptives as needed
  - Some students are misinformed about safe times to have sex and the likelihood of pregnancy and some hesitate because of fear of parental disapproval
- o Access to contraceptives – can adolescents get contraceptives? What impact does this availability have on sexual activity among teens?
  - The Supreme Court ruled that no state could legally restrict the distribution of contraceptives to minors and that nonprescription devices could be dispensed by those other than registered pharmacies
  - Most adults agree that contraceptives should be made available to everyone, including adolescents
  - Evidence indicates that contraceptive knowledge has no affect on sexual behavior; what really influences behavior are the values and morals accepted by individuals and by the groups to which they belong
- **Teen pregnancy**
  - o Outcomes for mothers and fathers
    - Four possible outcomes to an adolescent pregnancy:
      - The adolescent can choose to have and keep her baby; the adolescent can elect to have an abortion; the adolescent might miscarry; and the adolescent can have the baby and then give it up for adoption
    - 97% of adolescent mothers decide to keep their babies
    - Most teen mothers are unlikely to go on to college after high school, unlikely to get good jobs, and are likely to require public assistance
    - Teen motherhood is a symptom of their distress, rather than the cause of their problems; most teen mothers are more likely to have used drugs, been abused, been delinquent, etc.
    - Adolescent fathers are more likely to be poor, live in low-income neighborhoods, and have done poorly in school.