Latino Adolescents:
Sexual Decision Making and Reproductive Health

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Overview
- Talk about current trends in US and in Latino youth populations
  - Teen Pregnancy
  - STDs
  - HIV/AIDS
- Why this is important
- What can we do
- Resources

Latina Teens Speak Out

“We’re not all just another statistic. Help us reach our goals.”

Quotes From “Bridging Two Worlds” by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

Many teenagers experience pregnancy and STDs
- More than 800,000 women younger than 20 become pregnant each year
- 80% of these pregnancies are unintended
- Nine million teenagers and young adults acquire an STD each year
- Two young people every hour become infected with HIV

Adolescent Risk Behavior

In 2005 in the United States...
- 46.8% of high school students report having had sexual intercourse
- 14.3% of high school students reported having 4 or more sexual partners
- 37.2% of sexually active high school students reported they did not use a condom during their last sexual intercourse

Adolescent Pregnancy

In 2004 in the United States...
- The birth rate for adolescents 15-19 years old was 41.1 births per 1,000 females

In 2004 in Missouri...
- The birth rate for adolescents 15-19 years old was 43.4 births per 1,000 females
Adolescent STDs

In 2005 in the United States...

- 15- to 24-year olds acquire **nearly one-half** of all new STDs
- 15- to 19-year-old women had the **highest rate** of gonorrhea (624.7 per 100,000 population) compared to women in all other age categories

Adolescent HIV/AIDS

In 2004 in the United States...

- An estimated **4,883** youth, ages 13-24, received a diagnosis of HIV infection or AIDS, representing about **13%** of the persons given a diagnosis during that year
- **232** young people with AIDS died

Latina Teens Speak Out

"**Telling us not to have sex is not enough. We need to know why and how sex changes things and we need to know more about how to protect ourselves.**"

Quotes From "Bridging Two Worlds" by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

Latina Adolescent Risk Behavior

- In 2005, 51% of Latino high school students reported having had sex
- Latino youth have the lowest rate of condom use among all major racial/ethnic groups
- 25.6% of Latino high school students had drank alcohol or used drugs before last sexual intercourse


Latina Teens Speak Out

"**If it happens, it happens. Lots of people we know have kids.**"

Quotes From "Bridging Two Worlds" by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

Latino Adolescent Risk Behavior

- Latina adolescents are more likely than other racial/ethnic groups to have older partners
- Sexual risk-taking increases with greater acculturation
Latina Adolescent Pregnancy

- Latina adolescents have the highest birth rate among all major racial/ethnic groups
- Among Latinas, birth rates are highest for Mexican adolescents (95.5 per 1,000), followed by Puerto Rican adolescents (62.6 per 1,000)

2004 Birth Rates for ages 15-19 years in the United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Births per 1,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>82.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>63.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>26.7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2005 Missouri Latina Births by Age

- 32% 10 to 14
- 28% 15 to 17
- 9% 16 to 19
- 5% 18 to 24
- 5% 20 to 24
- 26% 25 to 29
- 0% 30 and up

Latina Adolescent Pregnancy

- Latina adolescents are more likely to report their pregnancy as intended than other racial/ethnic groups
- Latino male adolescents are more likely to report that they would be “a little pleased” or “very pleased” if they got a partner pregnant now

Latina Teens Speak Out

“Contraception is more the guy’s responsibility.”

Quote from “Bridging Two Worlds” by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy

AIDS in Hispanics

- Of the 918,286 AIDS cases reported to CDC through 2004, Hispanics accounted for:
  - 19% of total
  - 19% of women
  - 22% of high risk heterosexuals
  - 23% of children age <13 years

- Of AIDS cases reported in 2004, 21% were among Hispanic adults and adolescents.
Racial and Ethnic Disparities Persist in Adolescents and Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Adult/Adolescent AIDS Annual Rates per 100,000 Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>74</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Adult/Adolescent AIDS Annual Rates per 100,000 Population, by Race/Ethnicity, Reported in 2003, United States, CDC

Effects on Youth
- STDs and HIV/AIDS can have major negative physical, mental, and emotional ramifications

  Giving birth as a teen is associated with:
  - Increased poverty
  - Increased high school drop-out rates
  - Decreased educational attainment

Possible Explanations
- Lack of knowledge about sex and consequences
- Misinformed about sex and contraceptives
- Pressured to engage in sexual acts
- Afraid to ask questions or be tested
- Lack to access of quality health care and/or health insurance

Possible Explanations
- Culture promotes chastity among female youth, but looks somewhat approvingly on sexual activity among male youth
- Culture places high importance on motherhood
- Youth may have less support for academic and career achievement

Latina Teens Speak Out
“We want to talk to our parents, but they just don’t understand.”

Quotes From “Bridging Two Worlds” by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
What We Can Do: Parents
- Educate yourself
- Talk early and often
- Show interest in your children and practice active listening
- Encourage teens to excel in academics and to be involved in extracurricular activities
- Praise them for their achievements

What We Can Do: Community
- Encourage faith based organizations to be involved in educating the community about the consequences of adolescent risky behaviors
- Encourage and educate the family unit and supporting adults, not just the teen
- Be careful not to glorify teen pregnancy or view it as a norm
- Peer education

What We Can Do: Professionals
- View Latino culture as an asset
- Be personal
- Take acculturation into consideration
- Don’t use the teen as a translator
- Involve and educate parents on their level

Latina Teens Speak Out
“If you don’t want us to have babies, why do you shower us with attention only when there is a baby involved?”

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Latina Teens Speak Out
“Let me be me.”
“We need to talk with adults who aren’t scared to hear the truth and who understand what our life is really like.”

Latina Teens Speak Out
“If you don’t want us to have babies, why do you shower us with attention only when there is a baby involved?”

Latina Teens Speak Out
“What We Can Do: Professionals
- Include teens in program development
- Incorporate goal setting and educational attainment in program design
- Empower teens by providing training and information
- Recognize youth for their efforts, offering incentives and awards

From “Bridging Two Worlds” by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
Quotes From “Bridging Two Worlds” by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
Helpful Resources

- "Bridging Two Worlds" from the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. PDF version can be found at www.teenpregnancy.org
- The Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences can be found online at http://hjb.sagepub.com
- The Youth Risk Behavior Survey by the Center for Disease Control can be found online at http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth

www.teenpregnancy.org

National Day to Prevent Teen Pregnancy
May 2, 2007

The goal of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy is to reduce the rate of teen pregnancy by one-third between 2006 and 2015.
Silence Poster

A locker-sized poster (11 in. x 14 in.) featuring the following message:

- Spanish:
  Tu silencio puede cambiar la vida de una quinceañera. Más de 3 de cada 5 adolescentes latinas quedan embarazadas, por lo menos una vez, antes de los 20 años. No permitas que las ideas anticuadas y la timidez te impidan hablar con tus hijos, chicas y chicos por igual. Ellos necesitan escuchar tus consejos acerca de las relaciones, el amor y el sexo. No evites estos temas, mejor ayúdale a evitar el embarazo juvenil.

- English translation:
  Your silence can change your teenager's life. More than 3 out of 5 Latino girls become pregnant, at least once, by age 20. Don’t allow old-fashioned ideas and shyness/timidly to keep you from talking to your kids, girls and boys equally. They need to listen to your advice on relationships, love and sex. Don’t avoid these topics, better help them prevent teen pregnancy.

Thank You

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