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Awareness of Diagnosis and Knowledge of HPV in Women Patients: Data from a Multi-site Study

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Background: Persistent infection with high-risk types of human papillomavirus (HPV) is associated with cervical and other anogenital cancers. Purpose: This paper reports results of awareness of an HPV diagnosis and HPV knowledge from a multi-site study of HPV knowledge, attitudes and behavior, and the impact of an HPV diagnosis on women and their partners. Methods: During September 2003 - November 2005, a survey containing shared and site-specific items was administered to 736 women who had received HPV DNA testing in conjunction with cytology for cervical cancer screening. Results: Overall, there was low knowledge about HPV transmissibility, curability and the effects of an HPV diagnosis across all sites regardless of a woman's racial/ethnic and/or socio-demographic background. Further, only about 50% of the women were aware of their HPV diagnosis even after receiving their results and counseling from a health care professional. Discussion: There is need for consistent and clear information about HPV and HPV DNA testing as part of cervical cancer screening. Research concerning methods or best practices for improving communication between practitioner and patient about testing, diagnosis, counseling, behavioral consequences and follow-up care may be warranted. Translation to Health Education Practice: General messages as well as population-specific messages need to be developed and disseminated to reduce confusion emanating from HPV diagnosis. Modes for delivering messages may need to vary. Further research should address message content and delivery.

Knowledge of Sexually Transmitted Infections among High School Students

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Background: It has not been determined conclusively whether greater knowledge of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) is associated with lower rates of STIs. Purpose: This study sought to determine STI knowledge among high school students and factors associated with such knowledge, and to determine whether poor STI knowledge is associated with chlamydia or gonorrhea infection. Methods: Students in an urban United States school district serving a predominantly African American student population participated in a urine-based chlamydia and gonorrhea screening. Participants (N=3563) were surveyed about their knowledge of selected basic facts concerning STIs. Point-scores were assigned to knowledge items. Results: The mean knowledge score was 3.65 (range: 0 to 6; median: 4.00). In a multiple regression analysis, knowledge score was significantly associated with female gender ($P<0.001$), upper grade level ($P<0.001$) and a past infection with chlamydia or gonorrhea ($P=0.001$). In logistic regressions, knowledge score was not significantly associated with current infections with chlamydia ($P=0.22$) or gonorrhea ($P=0.74$). Discussion: There was an insufficient basic knowledge of STIs among students and a lack of association between knowledge and current infections with chlamydia and gonorrhea. Translation to Health Education Practice: Health education curricula taught throughout the high school years should incorporate basic facts concerning STIs.

Nsuami MJ, Sanders LS, Taylor SN. Knowledge of Sexually Transmitted Infections among high school students. *Am J Health Educ.* 2010;41(4):206-217. This paper was submitted to the Journal on July 11, 2009, revised and accepted for publication on September 10, 2009.

The Language of Love?—Verbal versus Implied Consent at First Heterosexual Intercourse: Implications for Contraceptive Use

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Background: Little is known about how young people communicate about initiating intercourse.

Purpose: This study was designed to gauge the prevalence of implied versus verbal consent at first intercourse in a U.S. college population, assess effects of consent type on contraceptive use, and explore the influences of gender, race and other factors. Methods: We conducted and analyzed a cross-sectional survey of non-Hispanic white and black students from four universities, exploring associations between verbal and nonverbal consent, contraceptive use and covariates. Results: Among those with consensual first intercourse experiences (N=1883), half (49%) provided nonverbal consent. Black men were the most likely to provide nonverbal consent (61%), followed by white men (55%), black women (51%), and white women (43%).

Respondents who used condoms at first intercourse were more likely to provide verbal consent, suggesting that condoms may prompt sexual discussions (or vice versa). In contrast, even when controlling for covariates, those who provided nonverbal consent were less likely to have used contraception (significantly so for women). Discussion: These findings confirm the hypothesis that young people who do not discuss whether to engage in vaginal intercourse for the first time are less likely to use contraception. These results add an important layer to our current conceptual model of sexual development, in particular, how young people adopt, or fail to adopt, behaviors that will keep them healthy once they decide to become sexually active. Translation to Health Education Practice: Enhanced sexual communication skills are greatly needed. Public health practitioners should investigate type of consent in future research and programming, with sensitivity to gender and racial influences.

Recent Alcohol Use and Episodic Heavy Drinking among Hispanic Youth

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Background: A sizeable percentage of Hispanic youth are affected by alcohol use. Research is needed to identify specific factors placing Hispanic youth at elevated risk. Purpose: This study examined whether recent alcohol use (past 30 days) and frequent episodic heavy drinking among 7th - 12th grade Hispanic students (N = 946) in Greater Cincinnati schools differed based on perceived harm of use, ease of access and parent/peer disapproval of use. Methods: The PRIDE national survey for grades 6-12 was administered to youth in their school classrooms. Results: One-in-four (24.5%) recently used alcohol and one-in-seven (15.2%) frequently (often/a lot) engaged in episodic heavy drinking. Students at highest risk for recent alcohol use and frequent episodic heavy drinking were those who felt use was not harmful/somewhat harmful, felt alcohol access was fairly easy/very easy and had parents/peers who did not disapprove of use.

Discussion: These results should be considered when developing and implementing alcohol prevention efforts for Hispanic youth. Ongoing parent-child communication, rule-setting and rule enforcement should be encouraged. Translation to Health Education Practice: Findings can assist health educators to more thoroughly understand how perceived harm, ease of access and

parent/peer disapproval affect recent alcohol use and episodic heavy drinking among Hispanic youth.

Integrating Formative Assessment and Participatory Research: Building Healthier Communities in the CHILE Project

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Background: The need to conduct formative assessment to inform the development of interventional studies has been increasingly recognized in community-based health research. While this purpose alone may provide sufficient justification to conduct formative assessment, researchers are also recognizing the importance of such efforts with regard to partnership building. Purpose: This article reports a formative assessment process in a large-scale randomized controlled trial in New Mexico aimed at preventing obesity in rural American Indian and Hispanic children in Head Start programs. Methods: We interviewed Head Start staff and conducted observations to understand the context of food service and physical activity in these sites. We also collected data from other community partners, including grocery store managers and primary care providers, to assess appropriate strategies regarding their engagement in the study. Results: Formative assessment findings helped modify the planned intervention while allowing for variation relevant to cultural and Head Start organizational conditions in each community. Rather than view formative assessment only as a planning phase of the research, our experience illustrates the need to conceptualize these activities more broadly. Discussion: Integrating formative assessment and participatory research raises the need to address the challenge of ensuring standardization and consistency across varied community settings, the evolving nature of initial formative relationships and the need to build trust in academic/community partnerships. Translation to Health Education Practice: In our work with American Indian and Hispanic communities in New Mexico, formative assessment represents a partnership building opportunity.

Conducting Program Evaluation with Hispanics in Rural Settings: Ethical Issues and Evaluation Challenges

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Conducting evaluations that are both valid and ethical is imperative for the support and sustainability of programs that address underserved and vulnerable populations. A key component is to have evaluators who are knowledgeable about relevant cultural issues and sensitive to population needs. Hispanics in rural settings are vulnerable for many reasons but especially because of language issues, differences in cultural beliefs and socioeconomic barriers. Additional factors, such as cultural proclivity to be deferential to authority figures and the possibility of having an undocumented alien status also are important issues for Hispanics living and working in rural communities. Because migrant farm workers comprise a large part of Hispanics living in rural areas, attention to the sensitive issues surrounding this population is paramount during program evaluations. This paper highlights ethical issues pertinent to program evaluations involving Hispanics residing in rural settings.