

# Female Teens & Sexual Consent:

## How conversations on consent affect teens' sexual behaviors

Lillian Goodman<sup>1,2</sup> (c)MD/MPH, Jeanelle Sheeder MSPH PhD<sup>3,4</sup>

University of Colorado School of Public Health,<sup>1</sup>

University of Colorado School of Medicine,<sup>2</sup> Departments of Obstetrics and Gynecology<sup>3</sup>

### Background

Research and prevention education on sexual violence have focused on college-aged females largely ignoring adolescents.<sup>1</sup> However, adolescents experience a high rate of assault. Consent education is often the focus for prevention but has primarily been directed to college-aged individuals and sexual violence victims.

Research on female adolescents' exposure to consent information and its affect on sexual behaviors is needed.

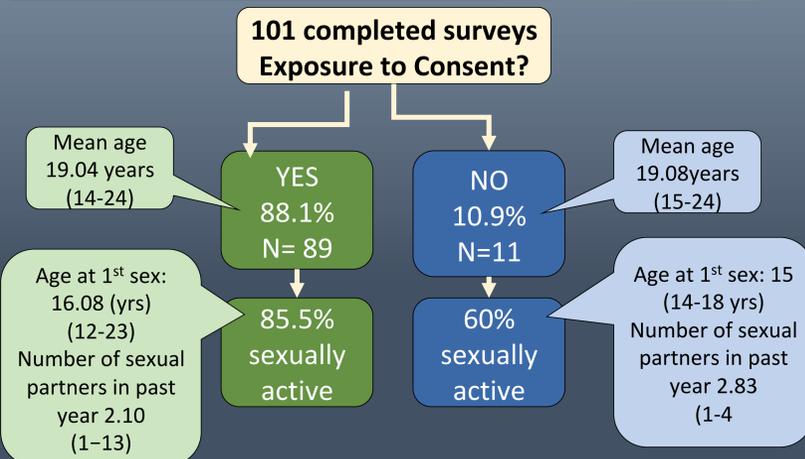
#### OBJECTIVE:

To assess how adolescents interpret and communicate consent and non-consent for sexual encounters.

### Methods

- Convenience sample of patients attending adolescent specific Title X funded or primary care clinic.
- Online, anonymous survey about communication and interpretation of sexual consent.
- We compared young women's responses using mean tests or chi-squared tests.

### Results



### Results

How has spoken to you about consent?  
Who do you wish would speak to you?

Figure 1: Source of consent information for participants

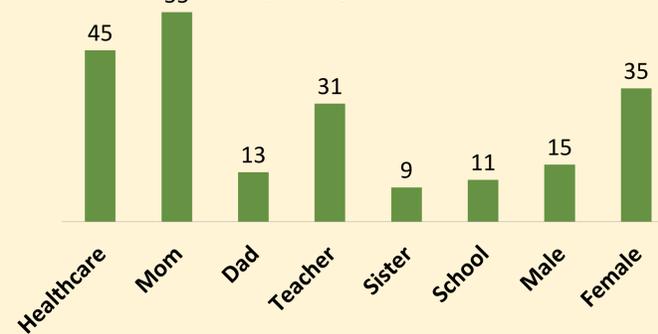
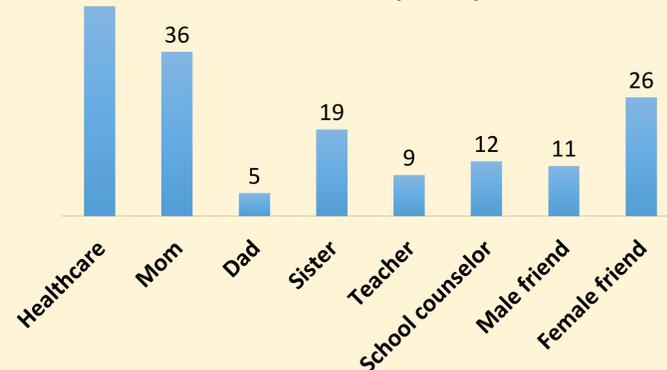


Figure 2: Preferred source of consent information for participants



**Behavioral:** 20% No consent vs. 9.9% Consent group saw pushing someone away or saying no as a girl being flirty.

**Substance use:** 30% No consent vs. 17% Consent group believed a girl was responsible for things getting out of hand if she had sex while drunk and/or high

### Results

- Most (88.1% vs 10.9%) reported someone had talked to them about sexual consent:
  - 61.8% reported their mother
  - 50.6% reported their healthcare provider
  - Few (7.8%) could report what their provider discussed with them
- 69.2% would want a **health provider** to talk about consent (73.8% Consent vs. 30% No consent, p= 0.015)

### Discussion

- Most female adolescents reported someone had talked to them about sexual consent, most often a parent or healthcare provider
- Providers need to be precise and specific in their discussions of consent
- Difference in interpretation of behaviors and non-verbal communication based on consent exposure
- Adolescent females want this information from a professional, providers should discuss sexual consent topics with adolescent patients

### References

1. Smith SG, Zhang X, Basile KC, et al. The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2015 Data Brief – Updated Release. Center for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control.

### Acknowledgements

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