

Module 14: Sexual Risk Behavior, Part I

Stephanie L. Marhefka, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Community and Family Health
College of Public Health

Overview

- Define Sexual Risk Behavior
- Primary and Secondary Prevention
- Combination Prevention
- Adolescents and Sexual Risk
- Determinants of Sexual Risk
- Interventions to Reduce Sexual Risk

Sexual Risk Behavior

- Any sexual behavior that puts people at risk for
 - Sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV
 - Pregnancy, especially unplanned

Primary and Secondary HIV Prevention

- Primary
 - Designed to prevent the onset of HIV (as well as STIs and unplanned pregnancy)
- Secondary
 - Preventing disease progression in those living with HIV/ STIs



Combination Prevention

- New “buzz word”
- Critical to address primary and secondary prevention together



Sexual Risk in HIV+ vs. HIV-

People living with HIV have been found to engage in less risky sexual behavior than people who have not been diagnosed with HIV.



Adolescents and Sexual Risk

- Pubertal onset \Rightarrow sexual awareness, desire
- Increased risky behavior in general
- Contextually dependent
 - Marriage
 - Poverty
 - Knowledge
 - Condom availability

Determinants of Sexual Risk Common to HIV+ and HIV-

- Societal
- Community
- Organizational
- Interpersonal
- Intrapersonal

Societal Determinants of Sexual

- Poverty
- Education
- Sexual mores
- Market forces (re: condoms)
- Gender roles/ norms
- Marriage law/ enforcement
- Property law
- Domestic violence allowed

Community Level Determinants

- Substance use
- Presence of commercial sex workers
- Community norms
 - Sexual behavior
 - Reproductive healthcare



Organizational Determinants

- Availability of AIDS service organizations to address HIV prevention in youth
- Availability of free condoms
- Availability of staff to provide sexual health education at school or in health clinics



Interpersonal Determinants

- Family norms re: marriage/ dating/ child-bearing
- Family norms re: gender roles
- Family norms re: sex education
- Willingness of partners to discuss condoms/ safer sex
- Desire of partners for condoms/ safer sex
- Power dynamics derived from sociocultural norms



Intrapersonal Determinants

- Cognitive/ Emotional
 - Knowledge*
 - Attitudes
 - Beliefs
- Behavior
 - Past behavior predicts future
 - Condom use at first sex
 - Skills
 - Concomitant alcohol and drug use



Determinants Specific to Living with HIV

- Knowledge and beliefs
 - HIV transmission
- Fear of stigma/ abandonment/ isolation
 - Condom Use
 - Disclosure of HIV status


