

## ABSTRACT

This cross-sectional study examines risk and protective factors for older adolescents involved in child welfare systems (CWS) related to teen parenthood and transactional sex. The average IQ score for this group was 84.62, one standard deviation below the normed average of 100.

Older adolescents who had been pregnant or a father were more likely to be female and have their sexual debut before age 15. Adolescents with higher levels of social support were less likely to have experienced parenthood.

Older adolescents with substantiated abuse investigations and incomes below the federal poverty level were more likely to have engaged in transactional sex. Those who experienced a forced first sexual experience and those with higher intellectual ability scores were less likely to engage in transactional sex.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

- 25% to 40% of children involved in CWS are eligible for special education<sup>1,2,3</sup> in contrast to 13% in the general population<sup>4</sup>
- Children with intellectual disabilities have been found to be 4 times more likely to be maltreated than children without disabilities<sup>5</sup>
- Foster care alumni with a history of child sexual abuse are 4 times more likely to engage in transactional sex than alumni with no history of sexual abuse<sup>6</sup>



## METHODS

### MEASURES

#### Survey

- National Survey on Child and Adolescent Well-Being (II)-longitudinal study of children and families involved in CWS examining individual, family and community factors
- Primary sampling units were stratified based on nine geographic areas in the United States served by the designated state child welfare protection agency
- Trained surveyors interviewed youth, caregivers, case workers, teachers
- Sensitive questions about sexual activity were asked via Audio Computer-Assisted Self Interviews to increase response rate e.g. "Has anyone paid you to have sex in the past 6 months?"

#### Sample

- Complex survey design with a weighted sample of 334 older adolescents ages 18 to 19.5 years (N=5872)

## RESULTS

### Descriptives

N=334	Unweighted %	Weighted %
Female	62.0	62.9
Black, Hispanic, Other	56.3	47.8
< 100% Federal Poverty Level	38.9	44.9
1 <sup>st</sup> Sex < 15 years	41.6	39.3
1 <sup>st</sup> Sex Forced	10.6	10.6
Substantiated Investigation	51.8	25.7

### Means of Protective Factors (Weighted)

	Mean	SD	Median	Min	Max
KBIT	84.62	19.60	89.00	40.00	116.00
Social Support	3.89	.86	4.00	1.10	5.00
Community Environment	2.32	.45	2.44	1.00	3.00

### Logistic Regression: Pregnancy/Fatherhood

	B	p	OR	95% CI
Female	1.02	.001	2.78	1.26, 5.07
1 <sup>st</sup> Sex < 15 years	0.90	.017	2.46	0.93, 5.12
Social Support	0.66	.001	0.52	0.32, 0.55

References available upon request

### Logistic Regression: Paid To Have Sex

	B	p	OR	CI
Substantiated Investigation	2.61	.027	13.54	0.65, 135.97
< 100% Federal Poverty Level	3.30	.043	27.09	0.41, 656.98
1 <sup>st</sup> Sex Forced	-8.94	.001	0.01	0.00, 0.01
KBIT	-0.10	.002	0.91	0.84, 0.97



## CONCLUSIONS

Both the CWS and developmental disabilities (DD) systems use person centered planning which starts with the young person's dreams and goals. Joint transition planning to ensure appropriate supports and services is needed.

Child welfare and developmental disabilities services can work together to identify adolescents with DD and develop a Circle of Support<sup>7</sup> to build relationships, community connections, and financial stability which have been found to provide a positive effect on delaying parenthood and protection from sexual exploitation.