



# US and Scottish teens reflections on sexual risk reduction: Common healthcare intervention challenges across continents

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It is hoped that the information provided in this overview will be helpful to attendees in familiarizing themselves with the research topic. This overview is not intended to be comprehensive nor does it involve sales of a product. Subjects covered in this presentation represent my views and not those of the any university.



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- NIH/NINR *HIV risk appraisal in single urban women* R15NR04059
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# Background

## Impact of sexual risk behaviors in adolescent girls across the globe

- 16 million girls aged 15-19 and 1 million girls < 15 give birth every year
- Yearly >300 million new cases of curable STIs occur worldwide with the highest rates in 15-24 years old
- Globally, > 90% of HIV is transmitted heterosexually, majority in females
- Impacts: high school dropout, welfare, healthcare costs, lower wages



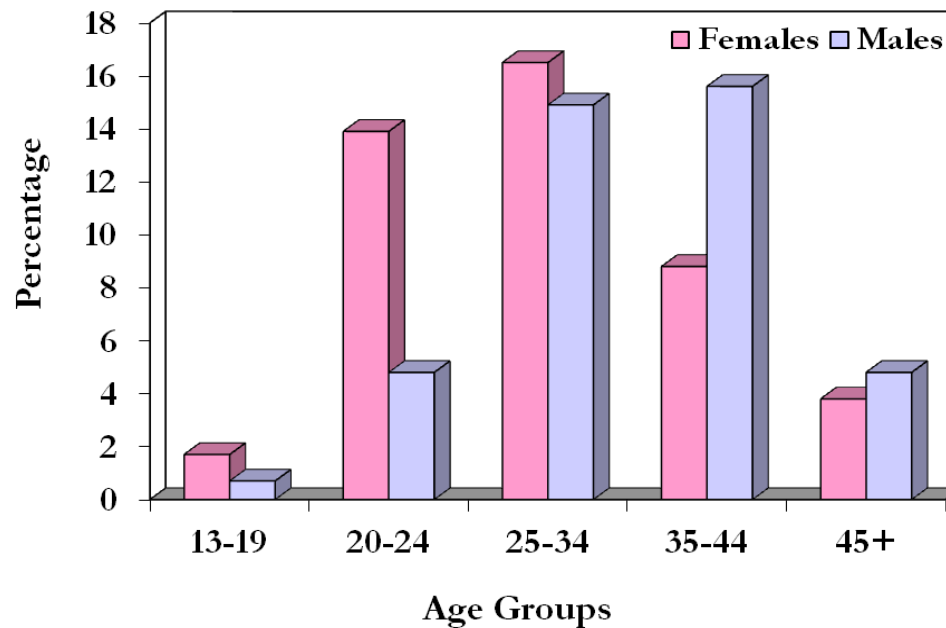
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# Adolescent Females: The Disproportionate Impact of HIV

Percentage of AIDS cases world wide



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# Components of Successful Interventions

**Theoretically-driven**

Tailored to specific population, culturally relevant

**Focus beyond knowledge to skill enhancement and motivation**

**Intervention implemented in accessible points in communities**

**Optimizing uptake :Reproducibility, accessibility**



# *HIPTeens Step by Step*

**Step 1. Identify population's existing level of HIV-prevention IMB**

**Step 2. Design population-specific intervention strategies**

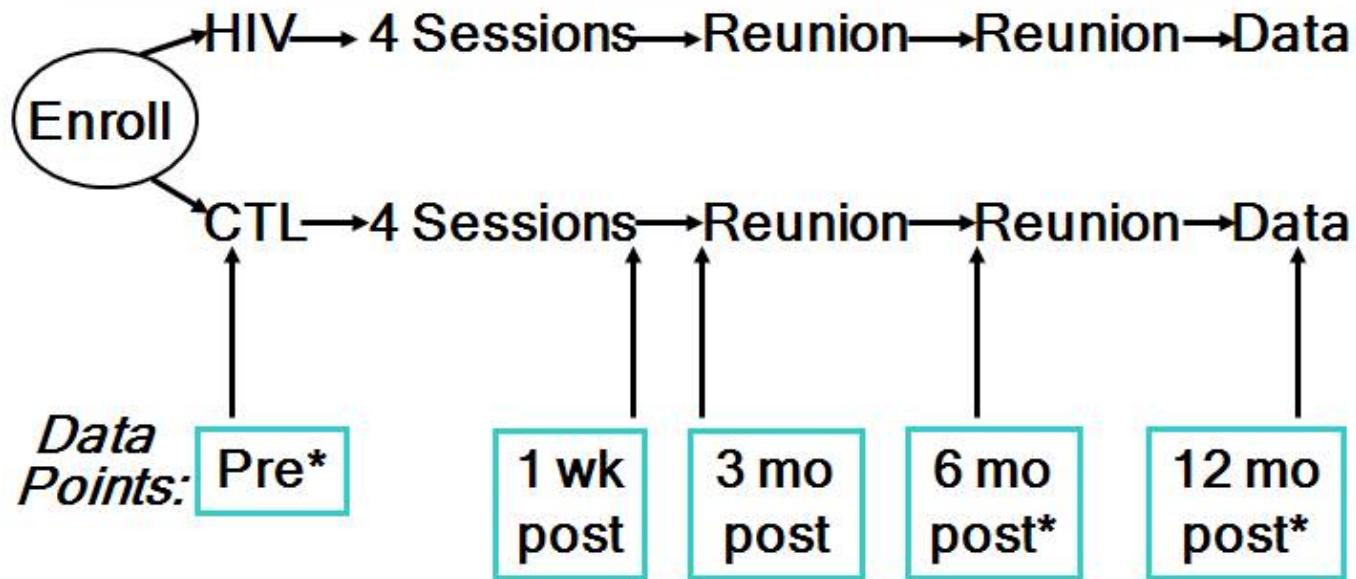
**Step 3. Methodologically rigorous evaluation research**



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# HIPTeens RCT



\* STI Test



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Participants reported fewer episodes of vaginal sex



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A photograph of a young man and a young woman in formal attire. The man is on the left, wearing a gold patterned blazer over a black shirt and a gold cross necklace. He has a small earring and is smiling. The woman is on the right, wearing a black dress and a large, ornate necklace. She is laughing and has her hand near her face. The background is blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting.

Participants reported fewer  
sexual partners



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A photograph of a woman with long, dark, wavy hair, wearing a black top, standing in front of a brick wall. The wall is made of reddish-brown bricks with some mortar missing, giving it a textured, aged appearance. The woman is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. A white text box is overlaid on the upper right portion of the image.

Participants reported fewer episodes  
of unprotected vaginal sex



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Participants reported fewer  
unintended pregnancies



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Participants reported higher rates of secondary abstinence



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# National Recognition of *HIPTeens*


## CDC

- Has been identified by the CDC as meeting ***PRS criteria for good evidence of efficacy HIV & STI prevention***
  - disseminated through the CDC
  - <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/prevention/research/compendium/rr/complete.html>

## HHS

- Recognized by U.S. Health and Human Services as meeting intervention effectiveness criteria based on the **Teen Pregnancy Prevention (TPP) Evidence Review**
- [www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah-initiatives/teen\\_pregnancy/db/programs/hip\\_teenens.pdf](http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah-initiatives/teen_pregnancy/db/programs/hip_teenens.pdf)






**Purpose:** To analyze an integrated data set from multiple studies conducted in the formative work for this intervention with sexually-active and abstinent teens of both genders in two countries.

**Goal:** To identify common themes and threads addressing risk-taking and protective behaviors.



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# Participants and Recruitment

- Three studies: 72 adolescents ages 14-19 years
- Enrolled both sexually active and abstinent participants of both genders the majority of whom were economically-disadvantaged young people of color (64%)
- Majority female (85%) and sexually-active (58%)
- Recruited from after-school programs, community teen-based clinics and social agencies, an urban community “cafe” and by word-of-mouth





## **Methods:** Formative research using focus groups

Followed standard methodological protocols:

- trained moderator
- focus group script
- sessions taped and transcribed verbatim

**Analysis:** We conducted within- and between-group content analysis, identifying and confirming predominant codes and themes.



# Findings

Knowing the facts is different than knowing how



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# Findings

Communication and negotiation skills  
are critical gaps

*Let's talk about sex, baby  
Let's talk about you and me  
Let's talk about all the good things  
And the bad things that may be  
Let's talk about sex  
Let's talk about sex*

**Salt-N-Pepa**



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# Findings



Risky sex often occurs in public or unfamiliar places and with concurrent use of substances



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# Findings

Teens have significant stress over remaining abstinent or practicing safe sex.



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# Findings specific to girls

**There is always some risk to self and health with sex**

In discussions regarding the use of gender-specific interventions, girls clearly indicated they wanted all-girl interventions so they could feel safe and heard



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# Findings specific to boys

**You're always willing to take the chance if you can get the sex**

Males said “boys will be boys” in all-male groups but would interact more positively in mixed-gender groups.



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# Conclusions

Findings provide evidence of continued risk behaviors in teens

- Unique social-behavioral challenges
- Must be integrated into intervention strategy modification



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# Conclusions

- A continued focus on communication and negotiation skill-building is important for sexual risk reduction interventions.
- Concurrent substance use remains a critical influence on sexual risk taking behaviors and intervention strategies must integrate both behavioral challenges.



# Future Work

Understanding the impact of stress, anxiety and depression in teens on evidence-based intervention outcomes, particularly as they impact sexual risk-taking behaviors, is a gap that remains in both intervention and dissemination/implementation science.



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# Future Work

Consider whether gender-specific interventions benefit one gender more than the other.

Determine best ways to tailor and refine sexual risk reduction interventions for teens



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# Thank You

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