

# Findings from a National Survey about Abstinence Knowledge and Attitudes

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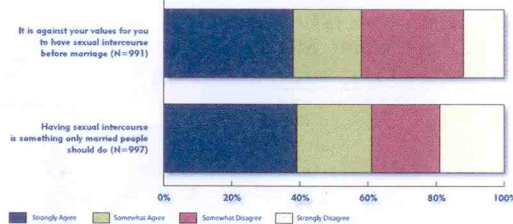
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## Background

- Nationally representative sample of 1,000 adolescents and their "most knowledgeable parent" conducted in 2008
- Key research question: What factors are independently associated with differences in adolescent attitudes about sex and abstinence?
- Key outcomes:
  - Adolescent attitudes about sex and abstinence
- Three main pathways of influence tested:
  - Parent attitudes and communication
  - Peer attitudes and communication
  - Exposure to information about abstinence or sex in a class or program

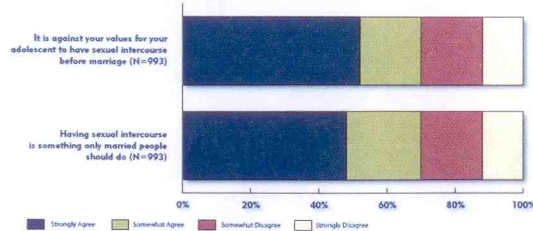
## Key Adolescent Outcomes:

### General Attitudes about Sexual Intercourse



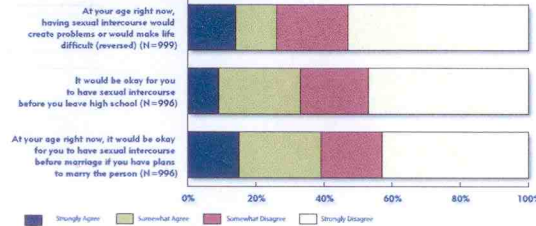
## Parallel Parent Reports:

### General Attitudes about Sexual Intercourse



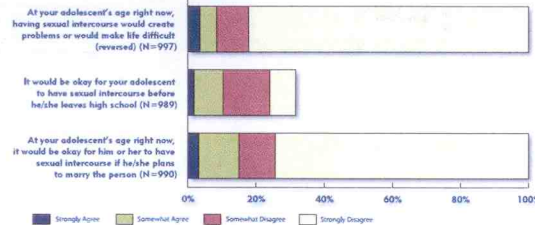
## Key Adolescent Outcomes:

### Attitudes about Having Sex



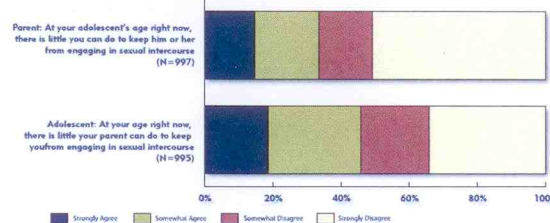
## Parallel Parent Reports:

### Attitudes about Their Adolescent Having Sexual Intercourse

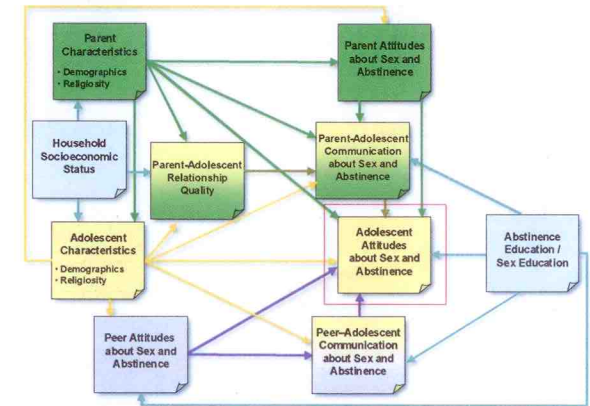


## Key Outcomes:

### Parent and Adolescent Perceptions of Parental Control over Adolescent Engagement in Sexual Behavior



## Conceptual Model



## Analytic Methods: Testing Conceptual Model

- Employed nested logistic regression specifications to test associations
- Direction of causation is assumed in conceptual model, but can only test correlations
- Built model sequentially
  - Direct associations
  - Indirect associations
- Seemingly Unrelated Regression (SUR) techniques used for joint hypothesis testing for groups of outcome measures

## Key Findings

- Demographics**
  - Males and black/Hispanic adolescents expressed less restrictive views about sex.
  - Older adolescents were more conservative about sex in general, but had less restrictive attitudes about their own behavior.
- Parents**
  - Conservative parent attitudes were strongly associated with conservative adolescent attitudes.
  - However, higher levels of parent-adolescent communication about sex were not associated with any differences in adolescent attitudes.
- Peers**
  - Adolescents with more conservative peers reported more conservative views.
  - Higher levels of peer-adolescent communication about sexual values were associated with less conservative adolescent attitudes.
  - Peers were more influential for male adolescents than for females.
- Classes/Programs**
  - Though adolescent participation in classes/programs where messages about waiting to have sex until marriage were delivered increased parent-adolescent communication levels, it had no influence on adolescent attitudes.

**Acknowledgements:**  
This research was supported by the Family and Youth Services Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services, Project 60005. The authors also wish to acknowledge the technical and substantive contributions of William Rhodes and Meredith Kelsey.