

## **Abstract**

This paper uses two waves of longitudinal data from the *Welfare Children, and Families Study: A Three-City Study* to assess the relationships amongst the familial demographics of family structure, maternal education, welfare receipt, and income with rates of adolescent sexual intercourse (N=998). Gender, race and gender\*race interactions were also explored. First, more boys were engaging in sexual intercourse than girls; race differences were also found with African American adolescents having the highest rates of sexual intercourse. For the total sample, adolescents living in stably disrupted families had higher rates of sexual intercourse compared to adolescents living in stably single families; adolescents having a mother with a technical degree or higher had lower rates of sexual intercourse compared to adolescents whose mother had less than a high school degree. Results for girls revealed only a trend in maternal education remained; African American race remained a significant risk factor as well. For boys, only race was a significant predictor with African Americans having higher rates than Whites and Hispanic males. The pattern of significant correlates also varied by race of the adolescent. Gender remained significant only for African Americans and Whites; no significant associations were found for Hispanics. Among African American boys, only transitioning onto welfare was significantly associated with higher rates of intercourse; among black girls, however, having a mother with a technical degree or higher was the only factor associated with lower rates of intercourse. Finally, among Hispanic girls, living in a stably separated home was associated with higher rates of intercourse. No significant associations between familial demographics and sexual intercourse were found for Hispanic boys, White girls, and White boys.