

# Potentially Important Risk and Protective Factors That May Affect Adolescent Sexual Behavior, Use of Condoms & Contraception, STD and Pregnancy<sup>1</sup>

## Community

### Community disadvantage and disorganization

- + High level of education
- High unemployment rate
- + High income level
- High crime rate

## Family

### Structure and economic advantage of the teenagers' families

- + Two (vs. one) parents
- Changes in parental marital status
- + High level of parents' education
- + High parental income level

### Positive family dynamics and attachment

- + Parental support and family connectedness
- + *Sufficient parental supervision and monitoring*

### Family attitudes about and modeling of sexual risk taking and early childbearing

- Mother's early age at first sex and first birth
- Single mother's dating and cohabitation behaviors
- + *Conservative parental attitudes about premarital sex or teen sex*
- + *Positive parental attitudes about contraception*
- Older sibling's early sexual behavior and age of first birth

## Peer

### Peer attitudes and behavior

- + High grades among friends
- Peers' substance use and delinquent and non-normative behavior
- *Sexually active peers (or perception thereof)*
- + *Positive peer norms or support for condom or contraceptive use*

## Partner

### Partner attitudes

- + *Partner support for condom and contraceptive use*

## Teen

### Biological antecedents

- Older age and greater physical maturity
- Higher hormone levels

### Attachment to and success in school

- + *Good school performance*
- + *Educational aspirations and plans for the future*

### Attachment to religious institutions

- + Frequent religious attendance

### Problem or risk-taking behaviors

- *Alcohol, or drug use*
- Problem behaviors or delinquency
- Other risk behaviors

### Emotional distress

- Higher level of stress
- Depression
- Suicide ideation

### Characteristics of relationship with partners

- *Early and frequent dating*
- Going steady, having a close relationship
- Greater number of romantic partners
- *Having a partner 3 or more years older*

### Sexual abuse

- History of prior sexual coercion or abuse

### Sexual beliefs, attitudes and skills

- + *Conservative attitudes toward premarital sex*
- + *Greater perceived susceptibility to pregnancy, STD/HIV*
- + *Importance of avoiding pregnancy, childbearing & STD*
- + *Greater knowledge about condoms & contraception*
- + *Positive attitudes about condoms & contraception*
- *Higher perceived costs & barriers to using condoms*
- + *Greater perceived self-efficacy in using condoms or contraception*

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<sup>1</sup> "+" denotes a protective factor; "-" denotes a risk factor. Factors in italics are factors that interventions may have a greater chance of actually changing.