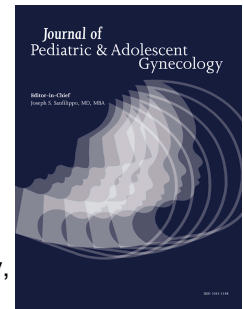


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Reproductive Coercion in High-School-Aged Girls: Associations with Reproductive Health Risk and Intimate Partner Violence

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STRUCTURED ABSTRACT

Study Objective: To determine the prevalence of reproductive coercion, a form of intimate partner violence (IPV) including contraceptive sabotage and pregnancy pressure, among urban high-school-aged girls and to examine its associations with reproductive health risks.

Design and Setting: A self-administered survey completed by high-school-aged girls living in high-poverty neighborhoods while awaiting medical care in a pediatric emergency room, inpatient service, school-based and hospital-based clinics.

Participants: 149 sexually active girls aged 14-17 years.

Main Outcome Measures: To determine the prevalence of reproductive coercion and to examine associations with unprotected sex, STIs, physical IPV, and risk factors for abusive relationships.

Results: 29/149 (19%) of girls reported reproductive coercion, most frequently that a romantic or sexual partner had ever: “told them not to use any birth control” (n=23, 79%); “took off a condom during sex so they would get pregnant” (n=12, 43%); and “said he would leave them if they didn’t get pregnant” (n=6, 21%). Girls reporting reproductive coercion were nearly three times more likely than those not coerced to have had chlamydia [OR 2.7 (1.01, 7.19)] and nearly five times more likely to report IPV [OR 4.8 (2.0, 11.8)]. In addition, girls reporting coercion were less likely to have high recognition of abusive behaviors [OR 0.10 (0.01, 0.8)] and less likely to have high comfort communicating with their sexual partners [OR 0.32 (0.1, 0.7)] than girls not reporting coercion.

Conclusions: Reproductive coercion is experienced by one in five high-school-aged girls in a high-poverty community and is associated with chlamydia infection and IPV. Awareness of the high prevalence and health risks of coercion may allow for intervention.

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