**Terminology: Gay & Bisexual Male Adolescents**

- Male adolescents and young adults represented in major U.S. HIV seroprevalence studies*: 86%-95% self-identify as gay or bisexual.

- Non-gay/bisexual identified male adolescents who have sex with other males:
  - Are exposed to pervasive negative societal messages regarding gay and bisexual men.
  - Likely realize that their same-gender sexual activity is in opposition to cultural sexual norms.
  - May still experience some level of interpersonal and intrapsychic consequences.

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HIV Prevention Interventions for Gay/Bisexual Male Adolescents/Young Adults are Needed!

- Literature review through searches using PsychInfo and PubMed databases

- Articles selected needed to meet ALL of the following criteria:
  - Published between 1993 – 2008
  - Primary prevention interventions
  - Quasi-experimental, Experimental, or Single Group Pre/Post-Test Designs
  - Focus on adolescents between the ages of 12-25
  - Study conducted in the United States

- Of the 58 Interventions in the sample, 12 mention or include participants reporting same-gender sexual activity or gay/bisexual sexual orientation

- Of those 12, only 5 (8.6% of total) specifically focus their interventions on same-gender sexual activity and/or gay/bi sexual orientation
HIV Prevention Interventions for Gay/Bisexual Male Adolescents and Young Adults Should Be Culturally and Developmentally Appropriate
Primary Developmental Issues
During Adolescence

- Biological Changes
- Cognitive Changes
- Social Changes
- Identity
- Intimacy
- Autonomy
- Sexuality
Adolescent Sexuality

Sexuality is related to accomplishing important developmental tasks:

- Becoming independent of parents (autonomy)
- Establishing one’s own moral system (moral development)
- Establishing an identity—especially a sexual identity (identity development)
- Developing the capacity for an intimate relationship

First same-gender sexual contact for adolescents is between 13-14 years of age*.

D’Augelli & Hershberger, 1993; Herdt & Boxer, 1993; Rosario et al., 1996; Savin-Williams & Diamond, 2000
Gay Culture: Influences on Sexual Behavior

- Aspects of Gay Culture:
  - Gay Sexual Culture: include sexual and gender norms, emotions, beliefs, rules, and symbolic meanings attached to the nature and meaning of sexualized social interactions (Herdt, 1997).
  - Gay Social Culture: Geographic living areas, economic and social organizations, cultural traditions and rituals, norms and expectations around ways of being, acting and knowing (Pope, 1995; Gee, 1990).

- Influences on Sexual Risk/Protection:
  - Development of individualized sense of sexuality within the larger gay sexual culture.
  - Gay cultural norms and expectations regarding dyadic interactions with potential dating/romantic and sexual partners.
Societal and Individual Level Factors Impacting Sexual Behavior

- Societal-level Factors
  - Heterosexism
  - Masculinity ideology

- Individual-level Factors
  - Sexual identity
  - Ethnic identity

HIV Prevention for Gay/Bisexual Male Adolescents and Young Adults Should Include a Focus on Same-Gender Attraction, Dating, and Sexuality

What makes me the most sad is that well, well I’ve found the person that means the world to me and intend on being with and he has provided me with the most incredible thing that I didn’t know I’d ever have, which is love and which is like this crazy healthy gender sexuality regardless relationship except for the fact that he was positive and now I’m positive because of him. (HIV+, White, Gay, 19)
Limited Literature on Dating/Romantic Relationships for Gay/Bi Male Adolescents

- PSYCHINFO Literature Search:
  - “Dating”+“Adolescent”= 873 vs. “Dating”+“Adolescent”+“Gay”= 14

- Sexual minority adolescents who date members of their own sex are less anxious & depressed than youth who do not date at all or who are involved in opposite-sex relationships (Russell & Consolacion, 2003).

- Multidimensional approaches to understanding sexual identity among sexual minority youth should include behaviors such as having a crush, going steady, saying “I love you”, engaging in affectionate behaviors, petting, and sexual intercourse (Glover, Galliher, & Lamere, 2009).

- Among gay adolescent males, love relationships begin around the age of 17.2 years and last less than a year (Savin-Williams, 1990).

- Four varieties of adolescent relationships among gay/bisexual males (Diamond, Savin-Williams, & Dube, 1999):
  - a) sexual, b) dating, c) romantic relationships, d) passionate friendships
The Role of Multiple Identities in HIV Sexual and Substance Use Risk among Gay, Bisexual, and Questioning Male Adolescents (PI’s: Harper & Fernandez; ATN 020)

Quantitative Phase (N = 200):
- Recruitment Venues: LGBT youth serving community agencies and social venues where GBQ young men socialize and congregate in Chicago and Miami
- HIV negative or of unknown status
- Quantitative Survey Sample: Chicago N = 97; Miami N = 103

Qualitative Phase (N = 63):
- Stratification Factors: Age, Ethnicity, Gay Identity
- Qualitative Interview Sample: Ages 15-23
  - African American (N=19)
  - Latino/Hispanic (n=22)
  - White (N=22)
Psychosocial Needs of HIV+ Young Men Who Have Sex with Men (ATN 070)

**Phase I: Qualitative Data**
- 54 in-depth interviews @ 4 ATN sites
- Stratification of Sample
  - Age: adolescents (16 - 19), young adults (20 - 24)
  - Ethnicity: Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino, Other
  - ATN Sites: Chicago, Memphis, Baltimore, San Francisco

**Phase II: Quantitative Data**
- 200 ACASI surveys @ 15 ATN sites
- Mixed Methods analysis to explore all study objectives
Guided by a psychological phenomenological framework.

Analysis conducted by a team of qualitative analysts.

Initial *a priori* codes were created to capture primary concepts.

Emergent codes were created as new concepts emerged from data.

Pattern codes were created to connect subsequent concepts under larger headings within each transcript.

Cross-case analysis identified consistent patterns in meaning, concepts, and themes across all interviews.

Meta-matrices, node-trees, & other visual data displays were created.
Non-Romantic and Romantic Relationships (ATN 020 & ATN 070)

Non-Romantic Relationships/Friends
- Inability to Relate to Gay Men in a Non-Sexual Way
- Challenges in Building Non-Sexual Friendships with Gay Males

Dating/Romantic Relationships
- Desire for One Romantic Partner
- Challenges in Finding Dating Partners (small selection pool)
- Doubts Regarding Long-Term Gay Romantic Relationship

I think it’s more difficult to build relationships … and when I mean relationships, non-sexual or non-romantic, relationships with other gay males. (HIV+, Latino, Gay, 23)

The only way I felt like I could relate to other gay men was sexually...it’s very hard for me to be friends with other gay men. (HIV+, Black, Gay, 24)

It's, because the selection is so few, you're probably not gonna like the person that you, that you're dating, or most of them. (HIV-, Latino, Gay, 19)

when you are like dating multiple people and having sexual relations with multiple people, then you feel kind of scandalous and you'd rather have that just one person to come home to every night (HIV-, White, Gay, 22)
Sexual Encounters and Romantic Relationship (ATN 020 & 070)

**Sexual Encounters**
- View of Gay Sexual Encounters as “Easy”
- Use of Sex to Combat Negative Emotional States
- Participation in Multiple Sexual Encounters as a Form of Self Hatred
- Lack of Emotional Connection during Sexual Encounters

**Role of Sex in Romantic Relationships**
- Fear of Sexual Contact Ruining Chances of a Romantic Relationship
- Fear of Losing Boyfriend if Wait for Sexual Contact

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You just hate yourself so much because you're gay. Like I would just sleep around with people for no reason ... and it was really unhealthy. And it was like I did it because I, I don't know, I just didn't feel like I deserved to be with someone doing a healthy manner. (HIV-, Latino, Gay, 17)

I felt really empty & really isolated and then the only time that I didn’t feel really lonely or really isolated was when I was having sex (HIV+, Black, Gay, 24)

Because I wanted him, I wanted to keep him as a boyfriend, so this is something you have to do [have sex], but I told him, you know what...I can't do this now. I want to wait. (HIV-, White, Gay, 16)

I mean, because like especially with guys, I mean, like once you have sex with someone and there's no like hard-core, solid foundation of a relationship, I mean, there's nothing more for them to really try and explore. (HIV-, White, Gay, 22)
## Learning about Attraction, Dating, & Sexuality (ATN 020 & ATN 070)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lack of Resources for Learning about Dating &amp; Sex</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Education Regarding Same-Gender Sexuality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of People to Talk with About Gay Dating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of Developmental Milestones for Gay Youth</td>
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### Confusion Regarding Attraction & Relationships

- Confusion Regarding First Same-Gender Attraction
- Confusion over Same-Gender Sexual/Romantic Relationship Status

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The parents don’t have a birds and the bee conversation about that [gay sex]. That is not any-thing that is instructed in sex ed, where they sit there and do go over the vagina and the penis and how that all happens. They do not do that with the anus or anything like that (HIV+, White, Gay, 21)

...with heterosexuals there just seems to be a lot of milestones within their lives, just kind of like there's dating throughout high school and then college and then you might get engaged and married and have kids...I'm not gonna have these things to tell me I'm successful now & that life’s going in the right direction. (HIV-, Black, Gay, 19)

It's really confusing because I'm not really out with him but like, I don't know, it's really confusing. But like we went shopping and then we had oral sex in his car (HIV-, White, Gay, 15)
Where Do We Go From Here?

- Conduct developmental research on the diversity of relationships (romantic, friendship, sexual) of gay/bisexual male adolescents/young adults that may influence healthy sexuality.
  - Role of culture (ethnic/racial, gay, etc.)
  - Role of identity
  - Role of attraction, meeting other gay/bi males, & dating
  - Use of mixed-methods research
  - Use of research methods focused on friendships/couples

- Develop interventions to support healthy sexual development
  - CBPR & PAR
  - Creative implementation strategies (retreats, couples, etc.)
  - Use of technology (internet, tablets, etc.)