

Feasibility Study of Surveying Parents of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Adolescents

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Project Description: This study aims to pilot the feasibility of recruiting a linked sample of sexual minority adolescents (SMAs) and their parents into a quantitative survey study and to document the effect sizes for associations between parent variables and adolescent risk behaviors. SMAs will be recruited from local community-based organizations and will be invited to complete a self-administered questionnaire assessing their risk behaviors, along with experiences with parent acceptance and rejection for their sexual orientation. SMAs will also be invited to take a survey home for one of their parents/caregivers to complete.

The primary goal of the project will be to determine what percentage of parents we are able to recruit using this technique and to identify how that sample of parents might be biased (e.g., are parents who return surveys more accepting than parents who fail to return them?). The secondary goal of the project will be to use the data gathered to begin to estimate the sizes of the associations between parent variables and adolescent risk behaviors.

Significance: Relative to their heterosexual peers, SMAs are at increased risk for substance use, suicide, and HIV-infection. Emerging research suggests that experiences of parental acceptance and rejection are important predictors of these SMA risk behaviors. Given the importance of parents in adolescents' lives, and in the lives of SMAs in particular, understanding the relationship between parent variables and adolescent risk will be essential to developing effective interventions for SMAs.

Project Recruitment Dates: April-June 2006

Project End Date: August 30, 2006