Myths & Facts about Adolescents

Rethinking Sex, Drugs, and Rock & Roll

Prepared by The Center for Community Engagement
Arkansas State University
Overview of Presentation

- Beliefs and myths about adolescents
- Understanding adolescents
- Influences on adolescents
Common Thinking about Youth

“[There] has been a surge in divorce, cohabitation, sexual promiscuity, perversion, teen pregnancy, abortions, child abuse, drug abuse, rape, cheating, shoplifting, embezzling, bankruptcy, incivility, and violent crime”

Tomorrow’s World Magazine, July-August 2002
SEX
What People Are Saying

"The epidemic of teenage pregnancy must come to an end. Churches, schools, community organizations, and, most importantly, families must realize that the highest teen pregnancy rate in America will eventually cripple our state. ... Friends, we can no longer turn our heads and pretend that the problem does not exist."

- Gov. Phil Bryant in his inaugural address on January 10, 2012

Mississippi Economic Policy Center
What the Data are Showing

Youth Risk Behavior Survey
Arkansas & U.S. Teen Births

Total teen births (Rate per 1,000) – 1990 to 2009

Data Provided by: National KIDS COUNT Program
DRUGS
Perceptions of Drug Use

“[There is an] ever-growing trend of drug abuse among American adults, and more importantly, teenagers.”

“…teen drug abuse has been on the rise over the past decade”

FoxNews.com, May 2, 2012
http://www.foxnews.com/health/2012/05/02/teen-drug-abuse-becoming-epidemic-must-be-addressed/#ixzz24HIc4uQ7
Report:
Teen Drug Use Now An 'Epidemic'

Huffington Post, 8/29/11
Perceptions of Drug Use (continued)

“Substance abuse by teenagers is a much bigger problem in the U.S. than most parents will ever realize, or that any one study is likely able to express. However, it’s safe to say that teen drug abuse has reached epidemic levels, and that substance abuse by teenagers is one of the nation’s top health problems.”

Bayside Marin Treatment Center Website
http://baysidemarin.crchealth.com/bayside-blog/substance-abuse-teenagers/
DRUGS: 
Is there really an epidemic?
Illicit Drug Use (Other than Marijuana): Trends in Annual Prevalence for Grades 8, 10, and 12 Combined

Adapted from the Monitoring the Future National Survey Results on Drug Use 1975 - 2011
Illicit Drug Use (Other than Marijuana)  
BY GENDER:  
Trends in Annual Prevalence in Grade 12

Source. The Monitoring the Future study, the University of Michigan.
*Beginning in 2001, revised sets of questions on other hallucinogen and tranquilizer use were introduced. Data for any illicit drug other than marijuana are affected by these changes. From 2001 on, data points are based on the revised questions.
Stimulant Drugs: Trends in Annual Prevalence for Grades 8, 10, and 12 Combined

Source: The Monitoring the Future study, the University of Michigan.
Methamphetamines:
Trends in Annual Prevalence in Grades 8, 10, and 12

Adapted from the Monitoring the Future National Survey Results on Drug Use 1975 - 2011
Crystal Methamphetamine: Trends in Annual Prevalence in Grade 12

Adapted from the Monitoring the Future National Survey Results on Drug Use 1975 - 2011

*8th and 10th grades are not asked about Crystal Methamphetamine
Club Drugs:
Trends in Annual Prevalence for Grades 8, 10, and 12 Combined

from the Monitoring the Future National Survey Results on Drug Use 1975 - 2011
Opioid & Amphetamine Use: Trends in Annual Prevalence for Grade 10

Adapted from the Monitoring the Future National Survey Results on Drug Use 1975 - 2011
Alcohol & Tobacco:
Trends in 30-Day Prevalence for Grades 8, 10, and 12 Combined

from the Monitoring the Future National Survey Results on Drug Use 1975 - 2011
Marijuana Use: Trends in Annual Prevalence for Grades 8, 10, and 12 Combined

Adapted from the Monitoring the Future National Survey Results on Drug Use 1975 - 2011
Any Drug: Past 30 Day Use based on APNA Data

### Craighead County

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### Pulaski County

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<td>13.9</td>
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</table>
DRUGS:
The Reality of Drug Use
The Reality of Drug Use

• Drug use has declined
  ▫ But not ALL drug use has declined

• Important to distinguish between youth who are experimenting and youth with a problem

• Age of first use

• Drugs aren’t cool
Marijuana: Trends in Disapproval in Grades 12

from the Monitoring the Future National Survey Results on Drug Use 1975 - 2011
“Gateways” and Age of Onset

- Cigarettes: 10
- Alcohol: 12
- Marijuana: 14
- Coke: 16
- Heroin: 17
- Meth: 18
Craighead County 10th Graders (APNA Data)
Pulaski County 10 Graders (APNA Data)
ROCK AND ROLL
Rock and Roll

“Enter Sandman”
“Creeping Death”

"Razorblade Kiss”
“Bleed Well”
Rap/Hip-Hop

“Hit ‘Em Up”

“**** the World”
Teen Bedroom
REALITY

• Self Selection
• Calms Down
• Music Speaks
  ▫ To person
  ▫ To issues
• “Their music” (see next slide)
Wholesome Country Music

Right now he's probably slow dancing with a bleached-blond tramp, and she's probably getting frisky... right now, he's probably buying her some fruity little drink 'cause she can't shoot whiskey...

Right now, he's probably up behind her with a pool-stick, showing her how to shoot a combo...

And he don't know...

That I dug my key into the side of his pretty little souped up 4 wheel drive, carved my name into his leather seats... I took a Louisville slugger to both headlights, slashed a hole in all 4 tires...

From “Before He Cheats” by Carrie Underwood
GENERAL YOUTH VIOLENCE
What People are Saying...

“There is no single explanation for the overall rise in youth violence. Many different factors cause violent behavior. The more these factors are present in your life, the more likely you are to commit an act of violence.”

What Youth are Reporting...

In 2010,...

• **20.1 percent** of youths aged 12 to 17 reported that, in the past year, they had gotten into a serious fight at school or at work; this was lower than the rate in 2009 (21.1 percent), but similar to the rate in 2002 (20.6 percent).

• ...**7.1 percent** had, in at least one instance, attacked others with the intent to harm or seriously hurt them in 2010, which was similar to the rate in 2009 (7.2 percent) and lower than the rate in 2002 (7.8 percent).

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
http://www.samhsa.gov/data/NSDUH/2k10NSDUH/2k10Results.htm
## Ten-Year Arrest Trends
**Totals, 2001–2010**
[8,726 agencies; 2010 estimated population 194,771,628; 2001 estimated population 180,336,272]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offense charged</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>Percent change</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>Percent change</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>8,468,019</td>
<td>8,221,468</td>
<td>-2.9</td>
<td>1,360,895</td>
<td>1,040,453</td>
<td>-23.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Murder and nonnegligent manslaughter</td>
<td>8,071</td>
<td>7,027</td>
<td>-12.9</td>
<td>822</td>
<td>627</td>
<td>-23.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Forcible rape</td>
<td>16,745</td>
<td>12,588</td>
<td>-24.8</td>
<td>2,788</td>
<td>1,821</td>
<td>-34.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>68,293</td>
<td>71,393</td>
<td>+4.5</td>
<td>15,946</td>
<td>16,841</td>
<td>+5.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aggravated assault</td>
<td>304,692</td>
<td>268,512</td>
<td>-11.9</td>
<td>41,002</td>
<td>28,161</td>
<td>-31.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>184,076</td>
<td>190,440</td>
<td>+3.5</td>
<td>57,329</td>
<td>42,478</td>
<td>-25.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Larceny-theft</td>
<td>741,163</td>
<td>813,493</td>
<td>+9.8</td>
<td>227,017</td>
<td>184,154</td>
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<td>Motor vehicle theft</td>
<td>85,303</td>
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<td>-48.3</td>
<td>27,707</td>
<td>9,406</td>
<td>-66.1</td>
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<td>Arson</td>
<td>11,059</td>
<td>7,514</td>
<td>-32.1</td>
<td>5,902</td>
<td>3,132</td>
<td>-46.9</td>
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<td>Violent crime</td>
<td>397,801</td>
<td>359,520</td>
<td>-9.6</td>
<td>60,558</td>
<td>47,450</td>
<td>-21.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Property crime</td>
<td>1,021,601</td>
<td>1,055,572</td>
<td>+3.3</td>
<td>317,955</td>
<td>239,170</td>
<td>-24.8</td>
</tr>
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</table>

[1] Under 18 years of age

[2] Violent and property crimes

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The juvenile Violent Crime Index arrest rate reached a historic low in 2009. The arrest rate in 2009 was 11% below 1980 and 47% below the peak year of 1994.

OJJDP
What the data are saying...

School-associated Homicide & Suicides

Figure 1.1. Number of student, staff, and nonstudent school-associated violent deaths, and number of homicides and suicides of youth ages 5–18 at school: School years 1992–93 to 2009–10

National Center for Educational Statistics
GIRL VIOLENCE
What People Have Said...

"We have seen an uptick in violent behavior -- fighting -- among girls"

Seattle Post-Intelligencer (May, 2004)

“Violence among Teen Girls on the Increase”

Keys to Safer Schools http://www.keystosaferschools.com/girlviolence.htm
"We need to do a better job reaching girls at risk and teaching them how to resolve problems without resorting to violence"

~SAMHSA Administrator Pamela S. Hyde

MSNBC News
http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/34847560/ns/health-childrens_health/t/teenage-girls-involved-violent-behavior/
What People Have Said... (continued)

“Nationally, rates of violent crime have been dropping since the mid-1990s...Despite this steady national decline, the rates for violent crimes perpetrated by girls and young women rose” (page 44).

~James Garbarino, 2006, in Sugar and Spice and No Longer Nice: How We Can Stop Girls’ Violence

http://www.youthfacts.org/stith.php
About one in four female teens is involved in some sort of violent behavior at school or at work, according to a government report.

A [SAMHSA] survey of more than 33,000 girls aged 12 to 17 found that 26.7 percent had been involved in a serious fight at school or work, a group-against-group fight or had attacked someone with the intent to harm the person in the previous year.

The new survey was done between 2006 and 2008 and the results are similar to those in a SAMHSA study from 2002-2004.

MSNBC News
http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/34847560/ns/health-childrens_health/t/teenage-girls-involved-violent-behavior/
Why the Increased Concern?

Source: Steffensmeier et al., 2005. Permission was given by the American Society of Criminology to reprint this figure, which was originally published in *Criminology* (Vol. 43, No. 2).
Why the Increased Concern? (continued)

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<th>Type</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
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<td>Aggravated assault</td>
<td>−5.4%</td>
<td>−23.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple assault</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>−4.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Violent Crime Index</td>
<td>−10.2</td>
<td>−27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All crimes</td>
<td>−14.3</td>
<td>−28.7</td>
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Source: *Crime in the United States, 2005—Table 33 (FBI, 2006)*
What Current Data Show...

**Ten-Year Arrest Trends**
by Sex, 2001–2010
[8,725 agencies; 2010 estimated population 194,771,628; 2009 estimated population 180,336,272]

<table>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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<td>998,238</td>
<td>733,955</td>
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<td>1,899,440</td>
<td>2,099,055</td>
<td>+10.5</td>
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<td>6,276</td>
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<td>738</td>
<td>561</td>
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<td>84</td>
<td>66</td>
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<td>Forcible rape</td>
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<td>16,552</td>
<td>12,475</td>
<td>-24.6</td>
<td>2,748</td>
<td>1,793</td>
<td>-34.8</td>
<td>40</td>
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<td>Robbery</td>
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<td>61,315</td>
<td>62,383</td>
<td>+1.7</td>
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<td>15,091</td>
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<td>1,750</td>
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<td>243,381</td>
<td>208,367</td>
<td>-14.4</td>
<td>31,502</td>
<td>21,276</td>
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<td>6,895</td>
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<td>158,422</td>
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<td>50,286</td>
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<td>272,887</td>
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<td>22,939</td>
<td>7,840</td>
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<td>7,887</td>
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<td>2,720</td>
<td>-48.2</td>
<td>1,690</td>
<td>1,277</td>
<td>-24.4</td>
<td>648</td>
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<td>38,721</td>
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<td>69,542</td>
<td>70,019</td>
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<td>147,222</td>
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<td>314,149</td>
<td>399,205</td>
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<td>102,570</td>
<td>86,903</td>
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<td>104,814</td>
<td>226,024</td>
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Teen female arrests have **DECREASED** over the past 10 years.

POPULAR INTERVENTION PROGRAMS...

that don’t necessarily work
What is Out There...

"'Scared straight' program seeks to curb delinquent behavior"

“A new program in Southern West Virginia is giving kids a reality check. It’s called scared straight.”

West Virginia Public Broadcasting (March, 2012)
http://www.wvpubcast.org/newsarticle.aspx?id=24362
"The Scared Straight Tour teaches youth about the dangers of addiction by letting them see first hand the devastation it creates. We do this by giving the youth a **48 hour tour of Vancouver's Downtown Eastside** (located in British Columbia, Canada) which is the most infamous skid row in all of North America. **During the tour, the youth will get to see how devastating addiction can be by witnessing for themselves the lives of the people in this drug infested ghetto.** The Downtown Eastside is home to approximately 6500 drug addicts and about 2000 homeless people and when taking the tour the participants get to interact and speak to the people who call this area home and those who work there. **The youth will see homeless people living on the streets and in back alleys, they will hear, from the addicts, workers and residents, how horrible life is for them down there...**

http://www.scaredstraighttour.com/
What is Out There... (continued)

**EPISODE GUIDE**

**NEXT ON**

Jacksonville, FL (Boys)
Monday, August 27 10/9C

In Jacksonville, Florida, four at-risk teens attend a three-part "scared straight" tour. Towering over nearly everyone, KeShawn, 15, is intimidated by no one. But when KeShawn witnesses his pint-sized little brother, Kevon, suffering the terrifying consequences of trying to imitate his big bro, KeShawn breaks down, and gets a glimpse of what the future holds for both of them. Also, Johnny, a white, self-proclaimed racist, endures the wrath of the black inmate population.

**PHOTO GALLERY**

- Boston, MA, Girls
  11 photos
- Season 3 Preview
  12 photos
- Hampton Roads, VA
  20 photos
- Queen Anne's County
  12 photos

[FULL EPISODE DETAILS]
[VIEW FULL SCHEDULE]
Is This a Valid Intervention?

“Justice Department Discourages the Use of ‘Scared Straight’ Programs”

“...decades of research have shown that this approach is not only ineffective, but possibly harmful to youth.”

OJJDP News (April, 2011)
“[Scared Straight] programs generally increased crime up to 28 percent in the experimental group when compared to a no-treatment control group.” (Campbell Collaboration Study)

“youth who participate in Scared Straight and other similar deterrence programs have higher recidivism rates than youth in control groups.” (Vanderbilt Institute for Public Policy Studies)

OJJDP News (April, 2011)
Bottom Line...

“...the U.S. Congress reviewed more than 500 crime prevention evaluations and placed Scared Straight programs in the "what does not work" category.”
Boot Camps

“Dominant features of boot camps are physical exercise, military drill, and ceremony, all carried out in the context of strict discipline.”

Effects of Correctional Boot Camps on Offending; Campbell Systematic Reviews; 2008
Boot Camp Recidivism

Figure 5: Comparative Rates of Recidivism Following Release From Confinement*

- **Cleveland**: Experimental Group - 72%, Control Group - 50%
- **Denver**: Experimental Group - 39%, Control Group - 36%
- **Mobile**: Experimental Group - 28%, Control Group - 31%

*Includes new adjudicated offenses only. Technical violations are excluded.

OJJDP (https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/164258.pdf)
Boot Camps, Qualified

“Thus, the extant evidence suggests that the military component of boot camps is not effective in reducing post boot camp offending.”

We did find, however, larger positive effects for boot camp programs that incorporated counseling and, more generally, for programs that had a primary focus on therapeutic programming beyond discipline, physical training, and military drill and ceremony.
THE TEEN BRAIN’S ROLE IN BEHAVIOR
Critical Brain Regions
Brain Changes Across Adolescence

Brain Changes Across Adolescence

Brain Changes in Adolescence

Brain Regions Impacted by Alcohol

- Prefrontal cortex
- Nucleus accumbens
- Amygdala
- Hippocampus
- Ventral tegmental area
THE SUPREME COURT ENTERS...
Roper v. Simmons (March 2005)

“When a juvenile commits a heinous crime, the State can exact forfeiture of some of the most basic liberties, but the State cannot extinguish his life and his potential to attain a mature understanding of his own humanity."

ROPER V. SIMMONS (03-633) 543 U.S. 551 (2005)

http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/03-633.ZS.html
“By requiring that all children convicted of homicide receive lifetime incarceration without possibility of parole, ... the mandatory sentencing schemes before us violate ... the Eighth Amendment’s ban on cruel and unusual punishment.”

http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/11pdf/10-9646g2i8.pdf
What it Means in Daily Life

• Adolescents are not adults
• We can’t think like them
• We can’t expect them to think like us
Last Myths

- Angst
- Sturm und drang
ADOLESCENTS IN CONTEXT
How to Build a Juvenile Delinquent

• Coercion of 3 year old
  ▫ Negative reinforcement
  ▫ Authoritarian parenting
  ▫ Non-contingent consequences

• Problems in elementary school

• Junior High is the crux
How to Build a Reasonable Teen

Authoritative Parenting

- Understanding
- Firm
- Communicative
- Directive
- Positive reinforcement
Search Institute Developmental Assets

**External Assets**

- **Support**
  - Family
  - Other adults
  - School climate

- **Boundaries & Expectations**
  - Family
  - School
  - Peers
Search Institute Assets Continued

*External Assets*

- **Constructive Use of Time**
  - Creative Activities
  - Youth Programs
  - Religious Community
  - Time at Home

*Internal Assets*

- **Commitment to Learning**
  - School Engagement
  - Achievement Motivation
  - Reading for Pleasure
Search Institute Assets Continued

**Internal Assets**
- **Positive Values**
  - Honesty
  - Responsibility
  - Restraint
- **Social Competencies**
  - Planning and Decision Making
  - Conflict Resolution
  - Resistance Skills
- **Positive Identity**
  - Sense of Purpose
  - Personal Power
  - Self Esteem
What about Peer Pressure

- **Really? Who are peers?**
  - e.g., who approves of marijuana smoking
- **Selective association**
- **Risk & Positive Behaviors**
- **Decrease with age**
SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS
Main Points

• Teens are not getting worse
  ▫ I would there were no age between ten and three-and-twenty, or that youth would sleep out the rest; for there is nothing in the between but getting wenches with child, wronging the anciently, stealing, fighting. [William Shakespeare](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Shakespeare)

• Drugs and violence are still problems

• Authoritative approaches work best

• Let’s stop blaming peers and media

• Use positive approaches (e.g., PBIS)
Think from Teen’s Perspective

- Teens view matters of personal choice
- Parents view as matters of social convention
  - Curfews
  - Clothes
  - Music
Conclusion

Adolescents are not monsters. They are just people trying to learn how to make it among the adults in the world, who are probably not so sure themselves.
