

How Does Trauma contribute to Substance Abuse and HIV Infection Among Ethnic Women

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Drug Abuse and Risky Behaviors: The Evolving Dynamics of HIV/AIDS

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Thank You!

Definitions

African Descended Women:

Women of African ancestry (along with others) who currently reside in the US and who self-identify as African American but who could have been born and socialized in other parts of the world

Definitions

Historical Context

Past events that influence women's family structure, resources, cultural beliefs and practices and healthcare availability and utilization.

HIV & African American Women

Non-consensual & consensual sexual behavior

Influences

- Self efficacy
- Intent to use condom consistently
- Consistent medical care
- Vulnerability to be abused or battered (revictimization)
- Substance abuse

1. HIV-positive women, regardless of ethnicity, are 2½ times more likely to report child sexual abuse than HIV⁻ women with comparable demographics (Wyatt et al, 2002)
2. 1 in 3 HIV negative women reports CSA
3. 1 in 4 HIV positive African American and Latino men report CSA (Williams, Wyatt et al., 2007)

HIV & African American Women

There are 7 factors that distinguish African American women from other ethnic/cultural groups with regard to HIV & risks:

1. Structure of Relationships

- Fewer men to women than any other group (sexual networks are small)

2. Cumulative Trauma (PTSD) and stress over time

3. Generational Poverty

4. Under education

- Poorer quality schools

HIV & African American Women

5. Health Disparities

- Access
- Treatment
- Acceptability of services (paranoia)

6. Lack of Cultural Congruence

- Relevance—the right messenger & the right message
- Most PIs don't know what cultural values are related to sexual risks, substance abuse, gender or ethnic issues (Longshore & Grills)

7. Perceived Worth

HIV & African American Women

- **Women, who were married/living with partner had a lower rate of alcohol use (13%) than women living alone (29%)**
- **Women who lived alone had fewer children than those without current use/problem drinking**
- **Women with histories of crack use reported more severe CSA than women with no crack use (Liu et al., 2006)**

The Challenges Are:


- 1. Incarceration rates for drug use/abuse**
 - a. Arrest rates
 - b. Stop/search rates

- 2. Availability of Inexpensive Drugs and Highly Addictive Drugs**

The Challenges Are:

To develop interventions that have authenticity in the community –

- 1. The community needs to define the specific environmental risks**
- 2. Investigators need to include research designs that allow for ethnicity, gender issues and cultural values to be congruent or embedded in the program**

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- 3. The etiology of substance abuse and incarceration patterns needs to be addressed. The behavior is symptomatic of other significant factors.**
 - 4. When the face of certain patterns of drug abuse is similar the chances are that what you see is correlated with factors that are less apparent.**

In Conclusion

- **There are several factors that mimic consensual HIV risk taking behaviors – cultural beliefs and abuse are included**
- **The integration of substance abuse and trauma related HIV prevention needs to be tested with vulnerable African American women**

In Conclusion Continued

- **Interventions to prepare women for consistent behavior and drug related change need to be reviewed and supported by NIDA, NIMH, and the review committee process**
- **Cultural beliefs and experiences as ethnic people should be incorporated because they provide congruence and authenticity as women resume their lives**