

**Adolescent Family Life Research Awards**  
FY 1982 - 2002

**Adolescent Sexual Behavior**

**Intrafamilial Sexual Socialization Patterns and Outcomes**

Principal Investigator:  
Greer Litton Fox, Ph.D.  
University of Tennessee  
Dept. of Child and Family Studies  
115 Home Economics Bldg.  
Knoxville, TN 37996-1900

Project Period: 10/1/82 - 8/31/85

Summary: The primary objective of the research was to describe and account for patterns of parental involvement and non-involvement in the socialization and social control of their teenaged children's sexual values and behavior. The second objective was to explore the effect and pattern of parental involvement on the teen's sexual attitudes and behavior. The design involved open-format interviews with 120 families in Detroit. Selection criteria include race, headship type, gender of the teen. A conceptual model was tested, and summary profiles of models of intergenerational sexual socialization were developed.

**Sex and Pregnancy Among Mexican-American Adolescents**

Principal Investigator:  
Rosina M. Becerra, Ph.D.  
School of Social Welfare  
University of California at Los Angeles  
405 Hilgard Ave.  
Los Angeles, CA 90024

Project Period: 10/1/82 - 9/30/85

Summary: Factors were examined related to teenage sexuality and pregnancy among Mexican-American and white females, aged 13-19. An intensive case study of 45 young females in Los Angeles precedes a survey of 1000 teenage girls drawn from a household, community-based sample that is established after initial screening. An extensive range of sociodemographic, psychological, attitudinal, cultural and situational factors were examined to assess relationships with sexual behavior, contraceptive knowledge and practice, and pregnancy.

**Familial Communication and Adolescent Sexual Behavior**

Principal Investigator:  
Janet R. Kahn  
Associate Research Scientist  
American Institutes for Research  
Cambridge, MA

Project Period: 10/1/82 - 9/30/84

Summary: This study was designed to increase our understanding of the impact of home environment, particularly quality of parent-child communication, on adolescent sexual activity and contraceptive practices. The investigators re-interviewed families originally surveyed as part of the 1976 Cleveland Parent Study. The specific research questions were 1) what are the most important factors affecting adolescent sexual behavior, and 2) how have parents' roles as sex educators of their children evolved over the seven year period?

### **Role of the Family in Deterring Unwed Parenting**

Principal Investigator:  
Peter A. Morrison, Ph.D.  
Senior Social Scientist  
The Rand Corporation  
1700 Main St.  
Santa Monica, CA 90406

Project Period: 1/1/83 - 12/31/85

Summary: This study examined families' involvement with their teenage children and the extent to which it deters early childbearing and single-parenting. The role of the adolescent's peers, the school milieu, religious participation, sexual knowledge, and the young person's developing values, attitudes and aspirations were also studied. Existing data were utilized from a national panel of nearly 30,000 women 16 to 18 years old who were previously surveyed initially in 1980 and again in 1982.

### **Family and Institutional Factors in Adolescent Sexuality**

Principal Investigator:  
Arland D. Thorton, Ph.D.  
Associate Research Scientist  
Institute for Social Research  
University of Michigan  
426 Thompson St.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106

Project Period: 2/1/83 - 1/31/86

Summary: This research examined the contribution of a wide range of family, religion, school and peer influences on adolescent sexual behavior, contraceptive use and experience with premarital pregnancy. The research used an intergenerational panel study of mothers and their children over an 18 year period from 1962 to 1980. The analysis involved a variety of multivariate techniques.

### **Parent, Peer, and Media Influence on Adolescent Sexual Behavior**

Principal Investigator:  
Jane D. Brown, Ph.D.  
Carolina Population Center  
University of North Carolina  
University Square 300-A  
Chapel Hill, NC 27514-3997

Project Period: 10/1/83 - 9/30/84

Summary: This study used data, previously collected by interview, from a sample of about 1100 adolescents in one school district. The study investigates three factors, parents, peers, and TV viewing, which might explain why some adolescents initiated sexual activity and some did not.

### **Starting Early: The Antecedents of Early Premarital Intercourse**

Principal Investigator:  
James L. Peterson, Ph.D.  
Child Trends, Inc.  
1990 M Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Project Period: 10/1/83 - 6/30/85

Summary: This project used data from the National Survey of Children, for which a sample of children was interviewed in 1976 and again in 1981. The study investigated 6 factors which might explain why some adolescents initiated sexual activity and some did not. It included information on the characteristics of family, peers, schools, neighborhoods, media, and religion.

### **Short-Term Consequences of Adolescent Sexual Behavior**

Principal Investigator:  
John O. G. Billy, Ph.D.  
Health and Population Study Center  
Battelle Memorial Institute  
4000 N.E. 41st St.

P.O. Box C-5395  
Seattle, WA 98105

Project Period: 10/1/84 - 9/30/85

This research project examined the short-term effects of sexual behavior on selected behavioral and attitudinal changes in the adolescent, an area where very little research had been done even though the adolescent years are a time when changes in values, beliefs, attachments, and behaviors have far-reaching consequences. The researchers found that early sexual activity had important consequences for adolescents' social and psychological characteristics because by assuming an adult behavior prior to adulthood and marriage, adolescents are out of step with peers, family, and school.

### **Concurrent and Later Correlates of Early Premarital Sex**

Principal Investigator:  
Ora Simcha-Fagan, Ph.D.  
Center for the Social Sciences  
420 West 118th St.  
New York, NY 10027

Project Period: 10/1/84 - 9/30/85

Summary: This study examined the extent to which premarital sexual activity is associated with other behaviors to form a relatively distinct pattern of adjustment. The researchers also examined the relationships between the early initiation of sexual activity and later social and behavioral developmental patterns.

### **Media Sexual Content and Adolescent Use and Perceptions**

Principal Investigator:  
Bradley S. Greenberg, Ph.D.  
Department of Communications  
409 Communications Arts and Sciences Bldg.  
Michigan State University  
East Lansing, MI 48824-1212

Project Period: 10/1/84 - 9/30/86

Summary: This project identified patterns of media viewing, including daytime and prime-time television and movies at commercial theaters, among samples of female high school students and pregnant teens. Those movies and television series found most popular with adolescents were content analyzed. A final phase of this project assessed adolescent perceptions and attitudes toward this material.

### **Premarital Sexual Relations Among Puerto Rican Youth**

Principal Investigator:  
Manuel J. Gutierrez, Ph.D.  
ASPIRA, Inc. of PA  
526 West Girard Ave.  
Philadelphia, PA 19123

Project Period: 10/1/84 - 9/30/86

Summary: In this project, researchers analyzed a sample of Puerto-Rican teenagers to determine the health and social consequences of adolescent premarital sexual relations on personal factors, familial and peer relationships, and socio-cultural behaviors of the teenagers as they enter early adulthood. This study expands the literature on male and female Hispanic youth, a group about which little information currently exists.

### **Sexual Behavior Among Mexican Adolescents: A Follow-Up**

Principal Investigator:  
Rosina Becerra, Ph.D.

Project Period: 10/1/85 - 9/30/88

Summary: This was a longitudinal, cross-cultural investigation to assess changes in the respondent's sexual attitudes and behaviors over time. The sample included Mexican-American and Anglo-American adolescents, a cohort from a previous cross-sectional study entitled "Sex and Pregnancy Among Mexican American Adolescents" which was re-interviewed. This was supplemented by 50 in-depth case studies of selected respondents in order to gain a richer understanding of changes in attitudes and behavior since the initial cross-sectional study was undertaken.

### **Adolescent Sexual Risk-taking: Antecedents and Sequelae**

Principal Investigator:  
Betty A. Chewing, Ph.D.  
University of Wisconsin - Madison  
1300 University Ave., Room 232  
Madison, WI 53706

Project Period: 10/31/86 - 10/29/87

Summary: The proposed study aimed to (1) identify and compare antecedents and sequelae of sexual risk-taking for adolescents who begin their sexual activity at different ages; and (2) study the onset of health-related behaviors (e.g. alcohol and tobacco usage) in relation to the onset of sex as possible predictive markers of adolescent sexual risk-taking behavior. The research examined what happens to the adolescent after onset of sexual activity with particular interest in how sequelae may vary for adolescents whose sexual activity begins at different ages.

## **Contextual Effects on Adolescent Sexual Behavior**

Principal Investigator:  
John O.G. Billy, Ph.D.  
Battelle Memorial Institute  
Human Affairs Research Centers  
Seattle, WA

Project Period: 9/30/87 - 9/29/89

Summary: The study investigated the effects of contextual or macro-level factors on four aspects of adolescent premarital sexual behavior: the likelihood of ever having intercourse; age at first intercourse; consistency of intercourse; and frequency of intercourse. The primary goal of the study was to better understand the processes by which macro or contextual factors, such as the community in which one lives, affects adolescent sexual behavior. It is believed that the general pattern of community norms may give rise to sexually permissive or restrictive attitudes which in turn may affect the behavior of adolescents.

## **Antecedents and Consequences of Teen Sexual Behavior**

Principal Investigator:  
Howard L. Barnes, Ph.D.  
Dept. of Human Development and Family Studies  
Kansas State University  
Justin Hall  
Manhattan, KS 66506

Project Period: 9/30/87 - 9/29/90

Summary: This study attempted to identify those factors or characteristics which distinguish between teens who are abstinent and teens who are sexually active. Subjects were drawn from three different rural school districts in Kansas with the sample consisting of adolescents from grades 7 through 12, parents of those adolescents, and parents of students in grades K through 6. Changes in the attitude and behavior of students and parents and the impact of these changes on other key variables such as self-esteem, parent-adolescent communication, family satisfaction, school success, among others were assessed. The longitudinal design also provided data on the impact of early sexual behavior on the individual teen and his/her relationship with peers and parents.

## **Preventing Teen Pregnancy: Attacking the Personal Fable**

Principal Investigator:  
Eli Saltz, Ph.D.  
Merrill-Palmer Institute  
Wayne State University

71-A East Ferry Ave.  
Detroit, MI 48202

Project Period: 10/1/88 - 9/30/89

Summary: The purpose of the study was to test the hypothesis that male and female adolescents who enact the roles of teens involved in pregnancy dilemmas will be more likely to acknowledge their own pregnancy risk and their personal responsibility for avoidance of pregnancy and less likely to endorse casual premarital sexual activity. Four hundred and eighty male and female 10th and 11th grade high school students participated in a short-term video-making intervention, being involved in one of four groups: (1) role players, (2) active observers, (3) Passive observers, and (4) no intervention. A pre- and post-test of attitudes about sex was administered.

### **Premarital Sexual Activity in a Rural Black Community**

Principal Investigator:  
Anne L. Dean, Ph.D.  
University of New Orleans  
Psychology Department  
Lakefront  
New Orleans, LA

Project Period: 6/1/89 - 5/31/92

Summary: The objectives of the study were to collect and analyze qualitative data pertaining to the social context of a low-income, rural black community and to compare black and white samples of pregnant and never-pregnant black and white adolescent girls on their patterns of relationships with their parents and their attitudes about premarital sexual activity. An ethnographic approach was used, i.e., a method of research which attempts to understand behavior patterns from the point of view of the participants themselves. This involved the use of the methods of participant observation, formal and informal interviews, collaboration with key informants, and the gathering of demographic and census materials.

### **The Consequences of Early Childbearing**

Principal Investigator:  
Debra Kalmuss, Ph.D.  
Center for Population and Family Health  
Columbia University  
New York, NY

Project Period: 9/30/90 - 9/29/93

Summary: The aim of this research project was to examine the consequences of teenage childbearing for young mothers and children. The consequences of interest are educational attainment, subsequent fertility, and child health and development. The data used in this study was from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth Cohort (NLSY), a longitudinal survey of youth who were between the ages of 14 and 21 when they were first interviewed in 1979, and who were annually through 1986.

### **Influences on Adolescent Male Premarital Sexual Behavior**

Principal Investigator:  
Freya L. Sonenstein, Ph.D.  
Urban Institute  
Washington, DC

Project Period: 7/1/90 - 6/30/91

Summary: The overall objective of this study was to increase our knowledge and understanding and identifying the demographic, economic and social psychological antecedents of the initiation of sexual activity. The analyses were based on the National Survey of Adolescent Males, a representative survey of 1880 never-married males. Its specific aims were to (1) provide national estimates of patterns of sexual activity among U.S. males ages 15-19; (2) identify factors affecting the initiation of sexual activity and the timing of first intercourse among young men, ages 15-19; (3) examine the predictors of likely intercourse in the next year among young men 15-19 who have not yet initiated sexual activity; and (4) analyze the correlates of differential patterns of sexual behavior among young men ages 15-19.

### **Antecedents of Adolescent Sexual Attitudes and Behavior**

Principal Investigator:  
Kristin Moore, Ph.D.  
Child Trends, Inc.  
Washington, DC 20037

Project Period: 3/1/92 - 2/28/95

Summary: The aim of this research was to examine the socio-cultural, peer, family, psychosocial, and biological factors that influence attitudes regarding sexual behavior and the initiation of sexual intercourse during the teen years. Analyses involved data from the National Survey of Children, a nationally representative survey with longitudinal data on a sample of 1150 youth aged 18-22 in 1987.

### **Adolescents at Risk: Predictors of Problem Behavior**

Principal Investigator:  
Frank Most, Ph.D.

Ohio State University  
Center for Human Resource Research  
Columbus, OH

Project Period: 7/1/92 - 6/30/95

Summary: Using data from the NLSY longitudinal child and mother data bases, this project investigated the linkages between longer and shorter term maternal and family circumstances and a full range of child delinquent and trouble-related behaviors during adolescence. This included dimensions of school problem behaviors, early substance use, inferior intellectual development, and precocious heterosexual behaviors. The data were drawn from the annual 1979-1990 interviews with NLSY women aged 14-21 in 1979 (25-32 in 1990) and the three biennial assessments of their children conducted in 1986, 1988, and 1990.

### **Communication about Health Between Adults and Teens**

Principal Investigator:  
Marilyn J. Hoppe, Ph.D.  
School of Social Work  
University of Washington  
927 N. Northlake Way, Suite 210  
Seattle, WA 98103-8871

Project Period: 4/01/98 - 3/31/01

Summary: The goal of this project is to develop and pilot test a prevention-oriented sexuality curriculum for children in sixth through ninth grades. The proposed pilot project will be known as CHAT (Communication about Health Among Adults and Teens), which is an outgrowth of the Children's Health Awareness Project (CHAP), a longitudinal study of adolescent attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors about health and illness, including AIDS, funded by the National Institutes of Drug Abuse. In addition to having a knowledge-based curriculum, it will incorporate the social and cultural contexts of adolescents lives as well. Consequently, a major consideration in conducting this effort will be to actively involve children in the target populations, their parents and community leaders by eliciting their input and evaluative feedback throughout the process.

For this study, parent and student focus groups will be sampled from families whose children are in middle school (sixth, seventh, and eighth grades) and in the first year of high school (ninth grade). The researchers will recruit approximately 45 students and parents per grade for a total of 180 families, 72 of which will be Southeast Asian. Students will be chosen randomly (after stratification of Southeast Asian students) from lists provided by the Seattle School District. While using a diverse sample, the investigators intend to concentrate efforts on the Southeast Asian American students and parents to develop a model for incorporating culturally relevant aspects of sexuality education into the curriculum.

## **Reducing the Risk Curriculum: Replication and Evaluation**

Principal Investigator:  
Lynn M. Pike, Ph.D.  
College of Environmental Sciences  
University of Missouri  
Columbia, MO 65211

Project Period: 4/01/98 -3/31/01

Summary: The goal of this study is to build on the previous evaluation of Reducing the Risk (RTR) curriculum in a study conducted by Kirby and others (1991) with the following modifications: a) involving a larger sample and larger numbers of African Americans, b) involving both rural and urban adolescents, (c) updating the instrumentation to track adolescents' use of current reproductive technology for three years, d) extending the follow-up from 18 to 36 months, and e) including two different comparison groups to control threats to internal validity. These objectives will be addressed through a quasi- experimental study conducted in 16 schools in Missouri. The initial treatment sample will be 1400 never-married students in grades 8 through 11. Eighth graders were included in order to involve a significant number of participants who had not initiated sexual activity. Two different comparison groups will be selected from the student bodies of both treatment and non-treatment schools. Information will be collected on the amount and type of school-based education the comparison Students receive, other than through exposure to RTR.

## **Teen Sexual Behavior: Demographic Risk and Trajectories**

Principal Investigator:  
Frank L. Mott, Ph.D.  
Center for Human Resource Research  
Ohio State University  
921 Chatham Lane, Suite 100  
Columbus, OH 43221-2418

Project Period: 9/01/98 - 8/31/01

Summary: Using the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, this project will follow a large sample of male and female adolescents who are at higher than average risk of engaging in sexual activities that increase their likelihood of pregnancy and/or contracting sexually transmitted diseases. The aim of the study is to investigate the association between a variety of factors related to the child's background and his/her family and the subsequent pattern of adolescent relationships. The study will also attempt to differentiate between those youth who progress through adolescence at little or no risk of pregnancy or contracting a sexually transmitted disease from their peers who follow riskier paths.

[Return to Research Listings](#)

## **Adoption**

### **Orientation of Pregnancy Counselors Toward Adoption**

Principal Investigator:  
Edmund Mech, Ph.D.  
School of Social Work  
University of Illinois  
1207 West Oregon  
Urbana, IL 61801

Project Period: 10/1/82 - 9/30/83

Summary: This study investigated the orientations of pregnancy counselors toward adoption and to determine the extent to which adoption is presented to pregnant adolescents as a plausible alternative. A random sample of 100 counselors on the staffs of social programs and health facilities in Illinois are studied with regard to 1) beliefs/values about adoption, 2) factual information about adoption, and 3) perceived counselor influence on decisions made by pregnant adolescents.

### **Adoption and Parenting Decision-Making Among Adolescent Females**

Principal Investigator:  
Jane D. Bose  
Program Director  
Children's Home Society of Minnesota  
D136 Mayo Memorial Bldg.  
420 Delaware St. S.E.  
St. Paul, Minnesota

Project Period: 1/1/83 - 12/31/84

Summary: This research on decision-making about adoption or parenting posed five research topics the relationship between psychological development and adoption-parenting decisions; family, peer, and male partner influence on decisions to place or keep a child; socio-demographic attributes correlated with parenting-adoption decisions; critical incidents in the adolescent's past that impact on parenting-adoption decision; and how agency or institutional policy influences parenting adoption decisions.

### **Adoption Decision-Making in Pregnant Minority Youth**

Principal Investigator:  
Byron R. Egeland, Ph.D.  
Department of Educational Psychology

University of Minnesota  
7548 Elliott Hall  
75 E. River Rd.  
Minneapolis, MN 55455

Project Period: 10/1/83 - 3/31/85

Summary: For this study, interviews were conducted with a sample of recently delivered black adolescent mothers. Information was obtained about the factors which influenced the mother's decision to care for the child herself in an independent household or put the child in the care of relatives or friends.

### **Adoption Behavior and the Propensity to Adopt in the U.S.**

Principal Investigator:  
Dudley L. Poston, Jr., Ph.D.  
The University of Texas at Austin  
Population Research Center  
Austin, TX 78712

Project Period: 10/1/83 - 6/30/86

Summary: Data from national fertility studies conducted in 1955, 1973, 1976 and 1982 were used to describe trends in the characteristics of women who adopted children, or indicated a desire to adopt children. The study also investigated the relationship between having adopted a child and the later fertility of women.

### **Adoption Decisions: Personal and Social Context**

Principal Investigator:  
David J. Kallen, Ph.D.  
Department of Pediatrics and Human Development  
3240 Life Science Bldg.  
Michigan State University  
East Lansing, MI 48824

Project Period: 1/1/84 - 6/30/87

Summary: This was a study of the process by which adolescent mothers decide to keep their child or place it for adoption. Data were collected by means of interviews and questionnaires from a sample of adolescent mothers, their parents, the fathers of the children, and professional care providers who serve adolescent mothers. An assessment was made of the extent and nature of the influence exerted by each of these major factors in the decision-making process.

### **The Consequences of the Adoption Decision**

Principal Investigator:  
Steven D. McLaughlin, Ph.D.  
Battelle Human Affairs Research Center  
Health and Population Study Center  
4000 N.E. 41st St.  
Seattle, WA 98105

Project Period: 10/1/84 - 9/30/86

Summary: This research project examined the consequences for teen mothers who chose an adoption plan and adolescents who decided to raise their infants. The two groups were compared on a series of outcomes including educational attainment, marriage, subsequent fertility, earned income and public sector support.

### **Consequences of the Relinquish Versus Parent Decision**

Principal Investigator:  
Steven D. McLaughlin, Ph.D.  
Battelle Human Affairs Research Center  
Health and Population Study Center  
4000 N.E. 41st St.  
Seattle, WA 98105

Project Period: 10/1/86 - 9/30/89

Summary: The objective of the proposed study was to determine the consequences of an adolescent's decision either to relinquish a first birth for adoption or parent the child herself. The consequences which were examined included subsequent educational attainment, marriage, subsequent pregnancies and fertility, labor force participation, earned income, welfare dependency, and global life satisfaction. Panel data was collected from all adolescents who received pregnancy counseling services from the Options for Pregnancy Program of the Adoption Services of the Western Association of Concerned Adoptive Parents (WACAP) and who resolved the pregnancy with a live birth.

### **Openness in Adoption: Outcomes for the Adoption Triad**

Principal Investigator:  
Ruth G. McRoy, Ph.D.  
University of Texas at Austin  
School of Social Work  
2609 University Ave.  
Austin, TX 78712

Project Period: 6/1/87 - 5/31/90

Summary: The goal of this study was to assess the consequences of the varying degrees of openness in adoption for the members of the adoption triad: the birth mother, adopted child, and adoptive parents. Three degrees of openness were examined: traditional adoption, in which little information is shared at placement and no contact of any kind is permitted between adoptive and birth parents; semi-open adoption, in which some non-identified communication between parties may exist but is typically mediated by the adoption agency; and fully disclosed open adoption, in which the adoptive family and birth mother have ongoing face-to-face contact.

### **Decision-Making Regarding Adoption and Parenting**

Principal Investigator:  
Pearila B. Namerow, Ph.D.  
Center for Population and Family Health  
Columbia University  
60 Haven Ave.  
New York, NY 10032

Project Period: 10/1/87 - 9/30/90

Summary: The specific aims of this study were (1) to describe young women's values and attitudes toward both parenting and adoption; (2) to test the utility of an expectancy-value model in predicting pregnancy resolution decision-making; (3) to identify the determinants of women's pregnancy resolution decisions; (4) to investigate why a sizeable minority of young women who actively consider the adoption option eventually choose instead to parent their babies; and (5) to assess the consequences of parenting and adoption for pregnant young women.

### **Evaluating the Adoption Components of AFL Care Projects**

Principal Investigator:  
Steven D. McLaughlin, Ph.D.  
Battelle Memorial Institute  
Human Affairs Research Centers  
Seattle, WA

Project Period: 9/15/87 - 9/14/90

Summary: The primary objective of this study was to investigate whether the characteristics and practices of Adolescent Family Life pregnancy counseling programs influence the likelihood that pregnant adolescent clients place their child for adoption after controlling for the characteristics of the clients and the communities within which they live.

### **To Parent or Relinquish: Consequences Two Years Later**

Principal Investigator:  
Steven D. McLaughlin, Ph.D.  
Battelle Memorial Institute  
Human Affairs Research Centers  
4000 N.E. 41st St.  
Seattle, WA 98105

Project Period: 7/1/88 - 6/30/91

Summary: This study investigated the long-term consequences of the adolescent mother's decision to either parent the child herself or relinquish the child for adoption. It examined the impact of the parent versus relinquish decision on subsequent educational attainment, marriage subsequent pregnancies and fertility, labor force participation, household income, and social and psychological well-being 26-month after the birth of the child.

### **Openness in Adoption: Birth Mother Adjustment Patterns**

Principal Investigator:  
Ruth G. McRoy, Ph.D.  
University of Texas at Austin  
School of Social Work  
2609 University Ave.  
Austin, TX 78712

Project Period: 8/1/90 - 7/31/92

Summary: The goal of this project was to conduct four studies on developmental patterns of birth mothers participating in confidential, semi-open, and fully-disclosed adoptions. Study one tested predicted outcomes in both the self-concept and relational domains for birth mothers who have placed their children in varying degrees of open adoptions. Study two was designed to develop a predictive model of birth mother adjustment by examining personal and social background factors that influence post-placement adjustment. Study three compared teen birth mothers and adult birth mothers on the factors which led to their choice of openness, satisfaction with their choice and adjustment factors as measured by identity and intimacy development, subsequent fertility and health problems. Study four intensively explored the links between birth mothers' close relationships with peers and with the adoptive family.

### **Consequences of the Adoption Decision: 5-Year Follow-up**

Principal Investigator:  
Steven D. McLaughlin, Ph.D.  
Battelle Memorial Institute  
Human Affairs Research Centers  
4000 N.E. 41st St.  
Seattle, WA 98105

Project Period: 5/1/91 - 4/30/94

Summary: The objective of this study was to examine the consequences of the decision to either parent or relinquish a child through adoption for the well-being of the adolescent mother five years after the birth. The specific outcomes that were examined included: educational attainment; subsequent pregnancies and their resolution; marriage and living arrangements; marital dissolution; and economic and social-psychological well-being.

### **Adoption Versus Parenting: Consequences for Young Women**

Principal Investigator:  
Pearila B. Namerow, Ph.D.  
Center for Population and Family Health  
Columbia University  
60 Haven Ave.  
New York, NY 10032

Project Period: 3/1/92 - 2/28/95

Summary: This study compared young women who parent with those who relinquish their children four years after they made their decision. It examined the consequences of parenting versus placing a child for adoption. Parenting and placing mothers were compared on a series of outcomes related to education, occupation, fertility, marital and economic status, and on a series of social psychological and psychological outcomes including comfort with the pregnancy resolution decision, life satisfaction, future outlook, self-esteem and other measures of psychological well-being.

### **Adoption Openness: Longitudinal Birth Mother Outcomes**

Principal Investigator:  
Ruth G. McRoy, Ph.D.  
University of Texas at Austin  
Austin, TX

Project Period: 11/1/97 - 10/31/00

Summary: The aim of this project is to investigate the long-term adjustment outcomes for birth mothers participating in four types of adoption options: confidential adoptions, in which no information is shared between birth and adoptive parents after 6 months post-placement; time-limited mediated adoptions in which information exchange is mediated by the adoption agency for a specified period of time; or indefinite sharing, ongoing mediated adoptions; and fully disclosed adoptions, in which direct sharing of information occurs between adoptive and birth family member(s) and is usually accompanied by face-to-face meetings. This research is a longitudinal follow-up of McRoy's study of 169 birth mothers who placed children for adoption four to twelve years earlier. At the time of

placement, the birth mothers ranged in age from 14 to 36 years and approximately two-thirds were adolescents.