

RUNNING HEAD: Men's Protective Family Size Intentions

To Sow or Not to Sow One's Oats:

How are Family Size Intentions Protective for Young Men's Risk-Taking?

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Abstract

Adolescent men's fertility intentions protect them from sexual risk-taking behavior. I examined the association between young men's expected completed family size (ECFS) and risky behaviors using nonparametric group comparisons on two waves of the National Survey of Adolescent Males (NSAM) data. Men wanting no children take fewer sexual risks and have less exposure to risks for negative outcomes. By the last wave, only 81% of voluntary childless men report sexual experience compared to 94% for other ECFS groups. Men intending small families report sexual debut 1 year younger than other groups and report 22 lifetime partners (compared to 13 for voluntary childless men). Men who downwardly shift intentions to wanting no children delay dating onset by 6 months and regular romantic relationships by 1 year. These results suggest that when young men want to avoid fatherhood, they take pains to avoid unintended pregnancies and premature fatherhood as well as STDs.

KEYWORDS: Adolescent males; family size; fertility intentions; adolescent sexual/contraceptive behavior; childlessness; risk-taking behaviors; voluntary childlessness