

Responding to the Unique Needs of Women: How relevant are partners in family planning counseling?

APHA 2007

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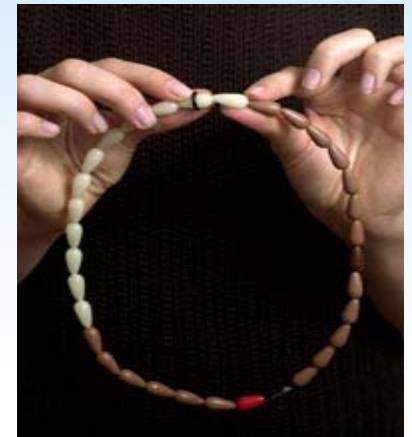
Study Purpose

Determine whether integrating the SDM within the context of a couple-focused approach is feasible and beneficial.



Standard Days Method

- Identifies days 8-19 of the cycle as fertile
- Is appropriate for women with menstrual cycles between 26 and 32 days long
- Helps a couple avoid unplanned pregnancy by knowing which days to avoid unprotected sex
- Is used with CycleBeads



Research Questions

1. Does training providers to apply a couple approach, including the SDM, result in improved provider counseling practices?




Does incorporating a couple approach into family planning services...

2. improve satisfaction and utilization of clinic services?
3. increase couple communication and participation in family planning use and decision-making?
4. improve family planning use, satisfaction and continuation?



Methods

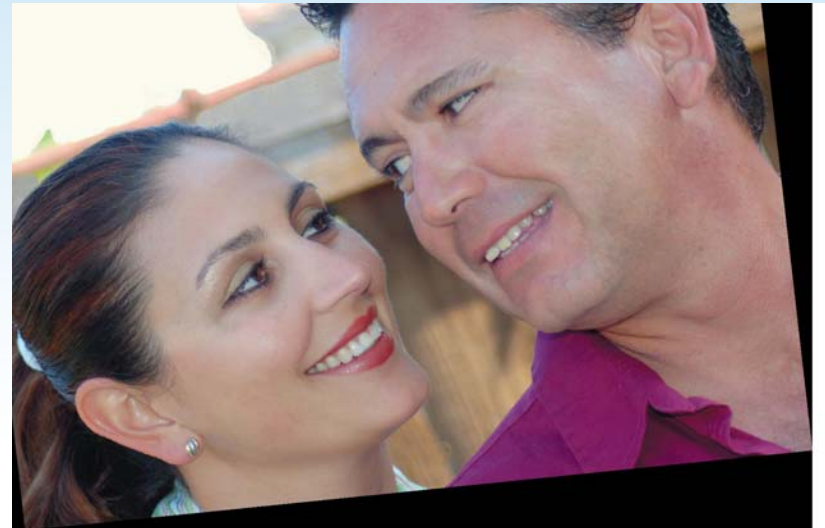
	Formative research	Baseline		Midline	Endline	
In-depth interviews with managers and providers	O		Intervention at selected clinics			
Brief questionnaires for clients and partners	O					
Simulated client visits		O ₁			O ₂	
Structured interviews with providers		O ₁				O ₂
Structured interviews with clients and partners		O ₁				O ₂
Service statistics						



What is a couple-focused approach?

Helping women gain partner support::

- Recognizing the influence of the couple relationship on FP use
- Acknowledging that FP use may influence the relationship
- Providing information and counseling to partners, if desired

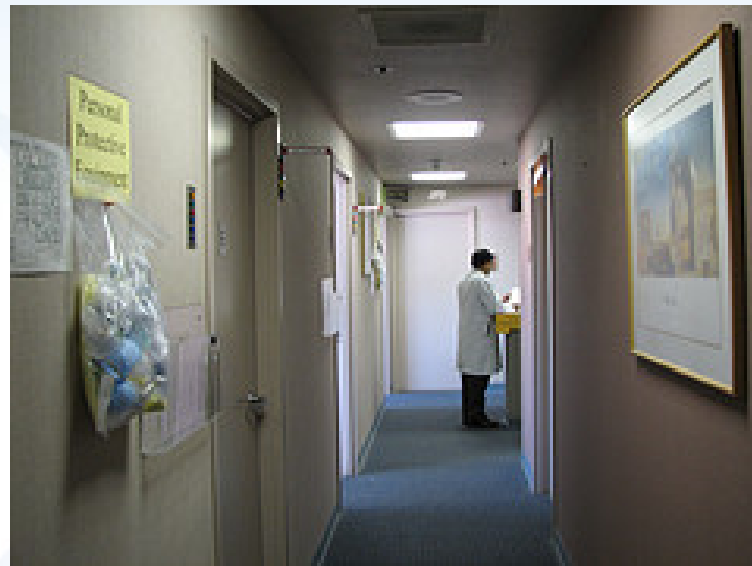


Couple-Focused Approach

- Discuss with clients the role of their partners in birth control
- Offer women the choice of including their partners in counseling
- Give clients take-home materials for their partners
- Include SDM in method choices
- Other (referrals, welcoming men)



Baseline Data: Provider Interviews



Providers value male involvement

- 71% of providers (n=55) feel that increasing male support would help women use their family planning correctly (27% believe it “maybe” would)
- 62% stated that addressing couple issues during counseling would help women use their method correctly (31% responded “maybe”)

“I think it’s fantastic. The more involved everybody is – even with the relationship itself – it could help the relationship just because they’re talking more about it.”

...but don't feel it is a priority for their clients

How many of their clients would like their partners to be more involved in family planning:

All (7%), most (31%), some (38%), a few (20%), none (4%)

*“Patients don't really talk about their partner... They just come for **their** needs, not for their partner's needs.”*

Concerns about a Couple Perspective

- Detracting from efforts to meet women's needs
- Protecting autonomy and confidentiality

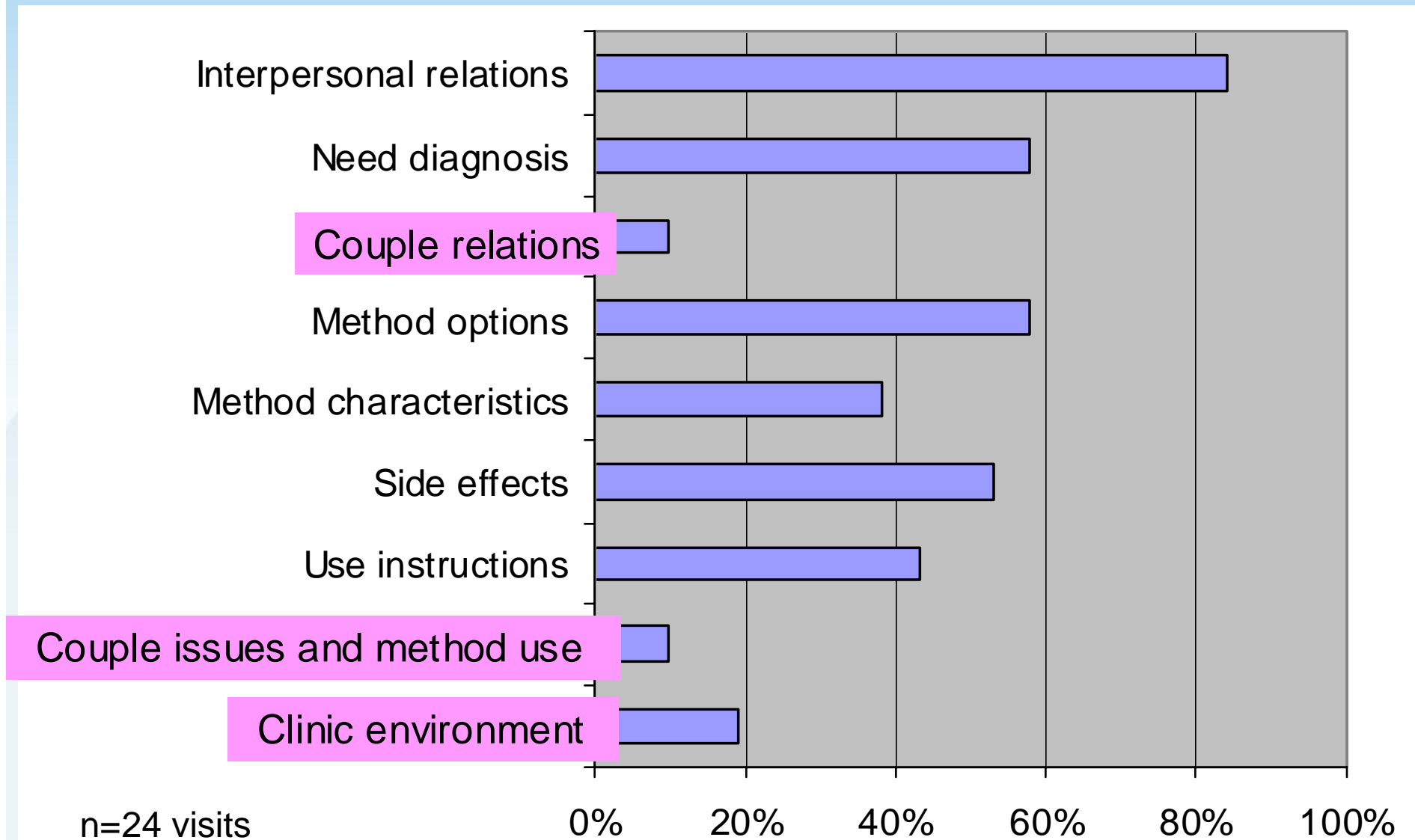
“We want to make sure that the patient is OK with the partner being involved...it's always been engraved in our minds that it's a woman's decision.”

“We want to make sure she's not being coerced or influenced in any manner ...”

Provider Practices (n=55)

Practice	Often/ sometimes	Rarely/ never
Counsel couples on family planning	6%	94%
Ask women if their partners support their use of family planning	60%	40%
Ask women if they would like information to take to their partner	46%	54%
Discuss family planning with men	56%	44%

Baseline Data: Simulated Client Results



Baseline Data: Client Interviews



Client Characteristics (n=195)

Age	Mean: 24; Median: 22 (Range: 18-51)
Education	41% University 48% High school 11% Elementary or middle school
Language	51% English 34% Spanish 14% Both
Marital status	22% married 27% cohabiting (unmarried) 46% dating exclusively 5% dating multiple partners
Time in union	31% <1 year 69% 1+ years

Quality of Care – Client Perspective

(n=195)

Received method she wanted	94%
Knew which method she wanted prior to visit	83%
Had opportunity to ask questions	99%
Felt all questions were answered	99%
Patient chose the method	71%
Provider asked what partner thinks about using birth control	29%
Provider asked if she would like information to share with partner	36%

Couple Communication about Birth Control – Client Perspective (n=195)

<i>She talked to her partner about...</i>	
Going to the clinic to get birth control	91%
What happened at the clinic	95%
How he feels about birth control*	88%
Risk of HIV or other STIs**	82%
Having sex only with each other**	91%
What they would do if their method failed and she got pregnant**	81%

* = in the last year

** = ever

Role of Men in Birth Control Decision-Making – Client Perspective (n=195)

Who made the decision...	She	Both	He	Provider
...to start using birth control	47%	49%	3%	1%
...to use a particular method	70%	23%	3%	4%

Method Selection and Use – Client Perspective (n=195)

Making birth control decisions jointly with partner is very important	71%
Partner helped with method use	75%
Partner helped her learn about methods	31%
Partner came with her to clinic	25%

**Women who report partner
involvement are more likely to
be...**

Women who report partner involvement are more likely to be...

- Spanish-speaking
- Less educated (high school or lower)
- Condom users
- Cohabiting (unmarried)

Spanish-speaking women more likely to report partner involvement

	Spanish (n = 67)	English/ Both (n = 127)
Partner helped learn about methods**	46%	23%
Partner helped decide which method to use*	54%	30%
Consider joint decision-making very important*	84%	63%

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Less-educated women more likely to report partner involvement

	High school and below	University
Consider joint decision-making very important*	78% (n = 115)	59% (n = 79)
Partner influenced woman's decision to use their current method*	51% (n = 76)	33% (n = 52)

* $p < .05$

Condom-users more likely to report partner involvement

Partner helps/ helped:	Condom users (n = 69)	Hormonal method users (n = 126)
Use the method**	87%	69%
Make the decision to start using birth control*	62%	45%
Make the decision to use that method**	46%	14%

* p < .05

** p < .01

Cohabiting (unmarried) women more likely to report partner involvement

Partner helped...	Married (n = 42)	Cohabiting (n = 52)	Dating (n = 90)
Learn about birth control methods*	40%	43%	22%
Make an appointment or get to clinic**	17%	51%	35%
Pay for services**	35%	49%	18%
Make decision to start using birth control*	59%	67%	44%

* p < .05

** p < .01

Conclusion

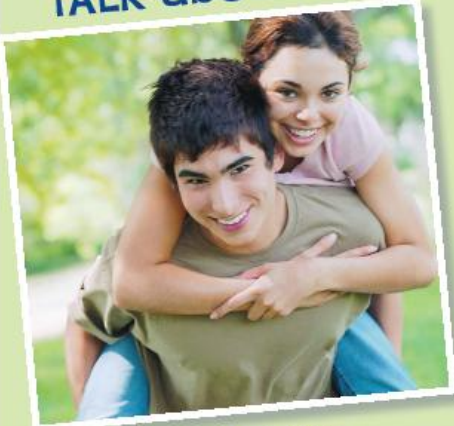
These findings can encourage providers to tailor family planning counseling to the unique needs of each client, rather than assuming that male involvement is irrelevant to women.

What's new?



Adapting Couple Approach for Use in Teen Clinic

Do you
and your partner
TALK about SEX?



★ Having sex affects both of you.

★ Talking with your partner can help you:

- Protect your health
- Avoid pregnancy

It Takes Two!



For more information call:

Teen City Clinic ★
39500 Liberty St.
Fremont, CA 94538

510-770-8131
www.tricityhealth.org

**Sex and Birth Control...
It Takes Two!**

Talk with your partner
about sex and birth control.

★ **Questions to ask each other:**

- Do we both want sex?
- Do we want a child now?
- Which birth control method is right for us?
- Will we have sex only with each other?
- How will we protect ourselves from HIV/AIDS and other diseases you can get from having sex?

★ **For guys:**

- Learn about birth control and use it correctly.
- Support your partner. Go to the clinic with her, or just ask what you can do.
- Protect yourself and your partner from diseases people get from having sex.
- Get tested and use condoms.

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Teen Quizzes

SHE SAYS

Directions:
Cut the page in half. Give the HE SAYS side to your guy while you fill out the SHE SAYS side. Don't peek as you both answer each question twice — once for yourself and once for what you THINK your guy would say. Then, compare your answers. If an answer is the same, check the box on the left side. You get one point for each answer you both get right.

- 1 What is your favorite thing to do together?
 SHE SAYS: _____
 HE SAYS: _____
- 2 On your dream date you would:
 SHE SAYS: _____
 HE SAYS: _____
- 3 What do the two of you talk about most?
 SHE SAYS: _____
 HE SAYS: _____
- 4 Do you ever TALK about sex?
 SHE SAYS: _____
 HE SAYS: _____
- 5 How do you like to be touched?
 SHE SAYS: _____
 HE SAYS: _____
- 6 What do you think is the best way to protect against pregnancy?
 SHE SAYS: _____
 HE SAYS: _____
- 7 What do you think is the best way to protect against infections you can get from having sex?
 SHE SAYS: _____
 HE SAYS: _____
- 8 What do you hope to be doing in five years?
 SHE SAYS: _____
 HE SAYS: _____

HE SAYS

How well do we know each other?

- 1 What is your favorite thing to do together?
SHE SAYS: _____
HE SAYS: _____
- 2 On your dream date you would:
SHE SAYS: _____
HE SAYS: _____
- 3 What do the two of you talk about most?
SHE SAYS: _____
HE SAYS: _____
- 4 Do you ever TALK about sex?
SHE SAYS: _____
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- 7 What do you think is the best way to protect against infections you can get from having sex?
SHE SAYS: _____
HE SAYS: _____
- 8 What do you hope to be doing in five years?
SHE SAYS: _____
HE SAYS: _____

0-5 points

EXPLORING

Sometimes it's hard to bring things up. But it can be great to share your thoughts and feelings. You'll be amazed at the cool stuff you'll find out if you just ask!

6-11 points


ON THE WAY

You're on your way to knowing each other well. But there are still lots of details you can share. Keep talking!

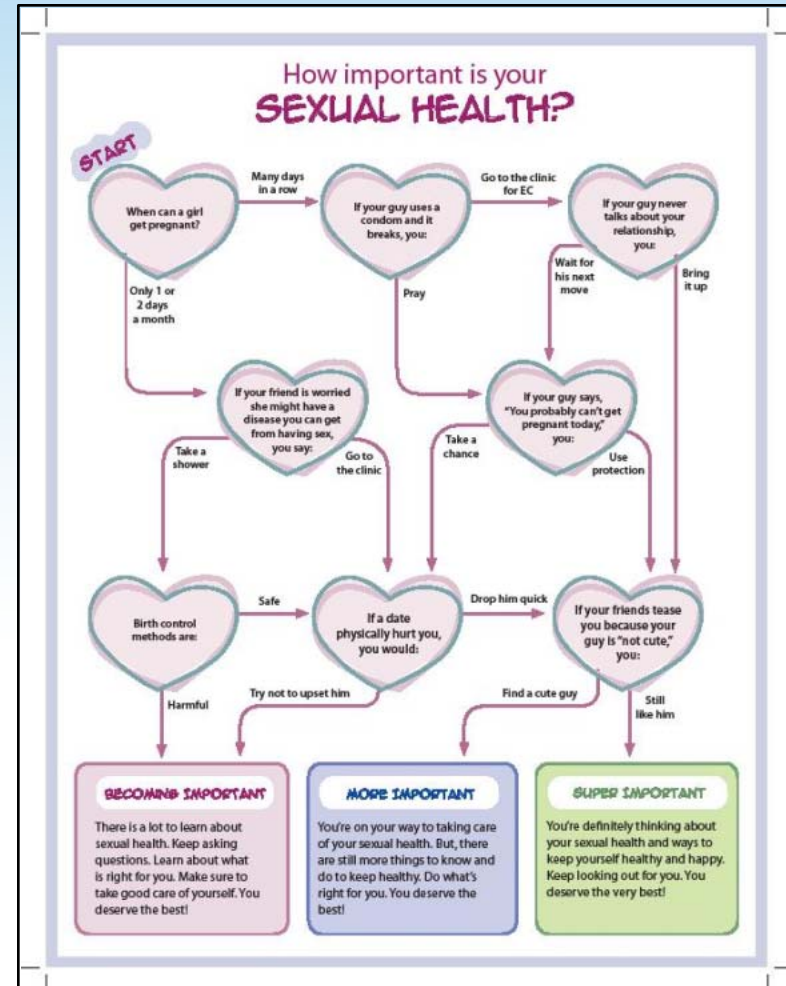
12-16 points

SHARING SHOWS!

You know each other very well. Good communication helps build a great relationship. What more can you share?



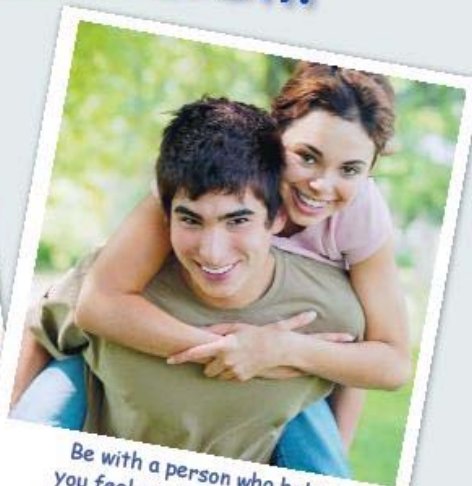
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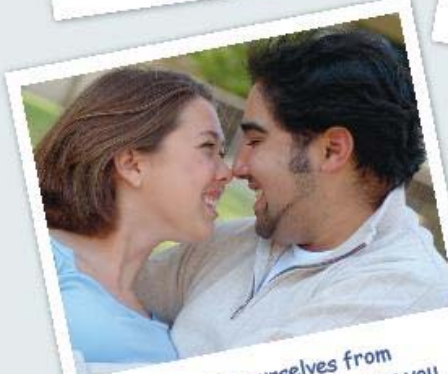
TIPS FOR SEXUAL HEALTH



Learn about your body
and how to stay healthy.



Be with a person who helps
you feel good about yourself.
Talk about what's best for you.



Protect yourselves from
pregnancy and from diseases you
can get if you have sex.



Tell someone you trust if you feel
pressured in a relationship.
You deserve the best!

If you have any questions, or for more information call:



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Thank you!