Childhood maltreatment, bullying seem to up teen pregnancy risk

March 12 2018

(HealthDay)—Higher teen pregnancy among sexual minorities is

partially explained by childhood maltreatment and bullying, according to a study published online March 12 in *Pediatrics*.

Brittany M. Charlton, Sc.D., from Boston Children's Hospital, and colleagues analyzed data from the Growing Up Today Study (7,120 young women) to examine potential teen pregnancy risk factors, including childhood maltreatment, bullying victimization and perpetration, and gender nonconformity, as well as sexual minority developmental milestones, sexual orientation-related stress, sexual minority outness, and lesbian, gay, and bisexual social activity involvement among sexual minorities.

The researchers found that childhood maltreatment and bullying were significant teen pregnancy risk factors among all participants. Sexual orientation-related teen pregnancy disparities were attenuated after adjusting for childhood maltreatment and bullying, which explained 45 percent of the disparity. Reaching sexual minority developmental milestones earlier was also associated with an increased teen pregnancy risk among sexual minorities.

"Teen pregnancy prevention efforts that are focused on risk factors more common among young women who are sexual minorities (e.g., childhood maltreatment, bullying) can help to reduce the existing sexual orientation-related teen pregnancy disparity," the authors write.

More information: Abstract/Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)

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