

# Educational Expectations, Neighborhood Disadvantage, and the Odds of Early Sexual Initiation Among Latino Adolescents

Kahlí Hedrick-Romano

*University of Texas at San Antonio*

Contact: [Kahli.hedrick-romano@utsa.edu](mailto:Kahli.hedrick-romano@utsa.edu)

## Abstract

This study uses data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health to examine the link between educational expectations, neighborhood context and early sexual initiation among Latino adolescents. Stratified analysis by gender indicate that having low educational expectations increases the odds of early sexual initiation for both male and female Latinos. In other words, low educational expectations are associated with Latino adolescents engaging in sex at an early age. Neighborhood disadvantage is also associated with early sexual initiation in this population. However, in males, once educational expectations were included in the model, the effects of the neighborhood were insignificant. Comparisons were also conducted between Latino, white and black adolescents. While low expectations were found to be significant predictors of early sex across all males, this association was only found among Latina females. Further research is needed to understand why educational expectations are associated with the sexual behaviors of Latinas.