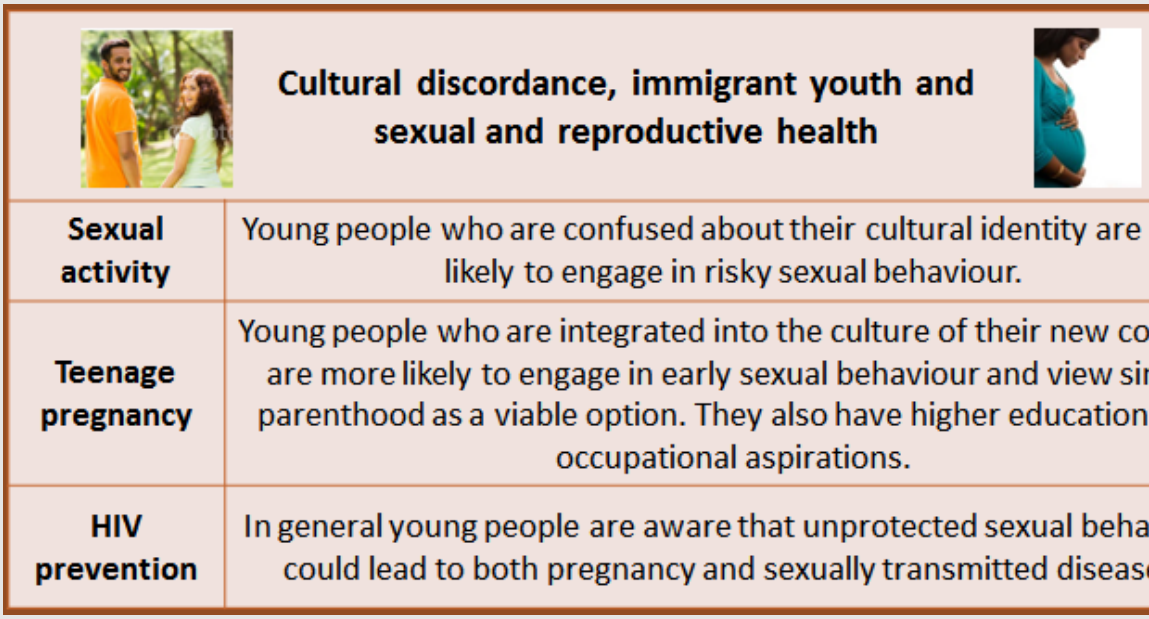
4.3.1 Sexual and Reproductive Health



Sources: Goodenow C, Espin OM. Identity choices in immigrant adolescent females. Adolescence 1993;28:173-84.; Blake SM, Ledsky R, Goodenow C, O'Donnell L. Recency of immigration, substance use, and sexual behavior among Massachusetts adolescents. American journal of public health 2001;91:794-8.; DeSantis L, Thomas JT, Sinnett K. Intergenerational concepts of adolescent sexuality: Implications for community-based reproductive health care with Haitian immigrants. Public Health Nurs 1999;16:102-13. Graphic created by CICH using an images from Shutterstock and fotolia..

The findings depicted in this infographic indicate that immigrant youth who were living with their biological parents had lower rates of suicide attempts and ideation than native-born or second- and third generation youth. In addition, studies showed that in most cases, a supportive, cohesive family – where all members live together – is associated with less suicide ideation. Conversely, immigrant youth who are not living together with their biological parents experience higher levels of life stress and resultant suicidal thoughts than those living with intact families.

Implications

In spite of the stress of adjusting to a new culture and cultural dissonance within families, immigrant youth appear to benefit from cohesive families. It also appears that uncommonly high rates of family violence may contribute to higher suicidal thoughts and attempts. Despite risks, the likelihood of suicide appears to be low. Researchers have suggested that this is due to cultural values and supportive families.

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