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## Examining the relationship between psychotropic medication use and testing positive for chlamydia and gonorrhea among detained adolescents

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**Objective:** Youth with juvenile detention histories have higher rates of psychological problems, especially externalizing symptoms, relative to their peers with no such histories. This study examine whether psychotropic medication (PTM) use was related to testing positive for laboratory confirmed chlamydia and gonorrhea among detained adolescents.

**Methods:** A convenience sample of 550 detained adolescents ages 14–18 years were recruited from eight youth detention centers in Georgia. Using A-CASI technology, data were collected on demographic factors such as age, gender, socioeconomic status, use of PTM, and sexual risk behaviors. Chlamydia and gonorrhea diagnoses were assessed by laboratory testing.

**Results:** Thirteen percent (13.1%) of adolescents not using PTMs tested positive for STIs compared to only 4.9% of those reporting PTM use. PTM users had a 62% smaller odds ratio for testing positive for Chlamydia or Gonorrhea.

**Conclusion:** Findings suggest that use of psychotropic medication, if deemed useful by detained youth, may be a protective factor against engaging in behaviors which may culminate in contracting some sexually transmitted infections. These findings have important practice and psychiatric treatment implications for this population.

### Biography

Dexter R Voisin is a Professor in the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago and and a Faculty Affiliate at the Center for the Study of Race, Culture, and Politics and the Center for Health and the Social Sciences. His fields of special interest include community violence exposure, adolescent sexual risk behaviors, the role of gender in adapting to risks, international HIV prevention, and social work practice. Professor Voisin received his B.A. (psychology, cum laude) from St. Andrews College, M.S.W. (practice) from the University of Michigan, and Ph.D. (advanced practice) from Columbia University School of Social Work.

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