Perspectives of Urban Adolescent Black Males and Their Parents on Well Care

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Adolescents have fewer well-care visits than all other age groups. Males and ethnic minorities are seen least often. We elicited, from Black adolescent males and their parents, key drivers of teen well-care seeking. We conducted separate semi-structured interviews with Black adolescent males and their parents. We recruited parent-teen dyads from West Philadelphia. Eligible teens were age 13-18, with no complex chronic health conditions. We purposively sampled teens who had not received preventive care in at least two years, some of whom had since returned to care and some not. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded by two coders using the constant comparative method, resolving discrepancies by consensus. Interviews continued until thematic saturation. We interviewed 23 Black adolescent males (mean age 15) and 22 parents (20 mothers). Participants understood that teens should routinely receive preventive care. Four themes emerged: receiving preventive care is important to knowing teens are mentally and physically well; remembering to schedule/attend visits is challenging - participants find appointment reminders helpful; mothers noted that males of all ages are generally disengaged from health care; teens and parents felt that a "good" parent ensures teens receive preventive care. Black adolescent males and their parents value regular preventive care as an opportunity to ensure the teen is physically and mentally well, but competing priorities interfere with care receipt. Results support testing the impact of reminders on receipt of care in this population. These reminders may be most effective if directed at mothers and focused on "good parenting."

Journal:

Academic Pediatrics
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