Data were collected as part of a large-scale, two-wave community study of stress, psychiatric well-being and substance use disorders conducted between 1998 and 2000 among young adults in the Miami-Dade area of South Florida. We recruited participants from a previous, three-wave investigation, which administered questionnaires to youth in all of the county’s public and alternative middle schools and high schools.32

Our sample included 1,800 respondents aged 18–23, all of whom had lived in South Florida since at least the sixth or seventh grade. Thus, all foreign-born respondents had spent their entire adolescence living and attending school in the United States and could be considered a part of the 1.5 generation (i.e., those who immigrated as very young children)33. The sample was purposefully drawn to include Cubans, other Hispanics, blacks and non-Hispanic whites in approximately equal proportions. This distribution roughly corresponded to the racial and ethnic distribution of young people growing up in the region; analysis suggests that the sample is reasonably representative of that population in terms of social and demographic characteristics.26 The sample and field procedures have been described in detail previously.34,35

Most respondents were interviewed in person, either in their home or in the research team’s office, according to their choice; telephone interviews were used for the roughly 30% of respondents who had moved away from the Miami-Dade area since the earlier investigation. The overall response rate was 76%; we found no interviewing mode effects.36 We analyzed data from the 709 never-married participants who identified themselves as Hispanic. Because preliminary analyses revealed a significant imbalance in the socioeconomic status distribution by gender and ethnicity, we applied appropriate weights to all analyses, to adjust for the use of our subsample.

Measures

- **Risky sexual behavior.** We assessed whether respondents had ever engaged in three specific sexual activities—vaginal, oral and anal intercourse—and their total number of partners. Information about lifetime participation in the three behaviors was combined to create a dichotomous variable, any sexual experience. Lifetime number of partners was measured both continuously and with a series of four dummy variables (zero, one, two, and three or more). For sexually experienced respondents, we examined sexual behavior in the 12 months prior to the survey, including three dummy variables indicating engagement in vaginal, anal and oral sex, and number of partners, measured both continuously and with the same dummy variables used for the lifetime number.

- **Nativity and age at immigration.** We classified respondents according to their country of birth (United States or other) and, for those born outside of the United States, their age at immigration (before age six or age six or older). We believe that age six is a theoretically important cutoff point, as this marks the age at which education laws compel most U.S. residents to begin their formal schooling. Children who immigrated before age six are likely to have completed all of their education within the U.S. context, whereas those who immigrated later are likely to have been schooled (and socialized) in both their home country and the United States. In addition, this cutoff point is important because it is associated with significant differences in the emotional well-being and risk-taking behaviors of youth.26,27 We recognize that individuals who immigrate as children may differ from those who immigrate as adolescents or young adults, but we are unable to explore this issue because our sample contained only respondents living in the United States prior to sixth or seventh grade.

- **Social and demographic characteristics.** Gender was assessed from respondents’ self-identification as either male or female. Ethnicity was assessed from respondents’

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**TABLE 1. Percentage distribution of Hispanic young adults aged 18–23, by social and demographic characteristics, according to nativity and age at immigration, South Florida, 1998–2000**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>All (N=709)</th>
<th>U.S.-born (N=401)</th>
<th>Foreign-born</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Age &lt;6 (N=148)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>55.4%</td>
<td>54.2%</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>44.6%</td>
<td>45.8%</td>
<td>47.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18–19</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
<td>54.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21–23</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuban</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
<td>60.9%</td>
<td>37.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaraguan</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
<td>37.1%</td>
<td>36.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Socioeconomic status</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>20.7%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Differences by nativity and age at immigration are significant at p<.05. Notes: All data are weighted. Percentages may not add to 100.0 because of rounding.