Sexual Health Stigma

Sexual health stigma can take many forms, including:

- **Stigma surrounding STIs:** People with STIs may be perceived as "bad" or "dirty".
- **Stigma against LGBTQ+ individuals:** People who identify as LGBTQ+ may face discrimination and prejudice in accessing healthcare and other services.
- **Stigma surrounding sexual dysfunction:** Individuals who experience sexual dysfunction may feel ashamed or embarrassed to seek help.
- **Stigma surrounding abortion:** People who have abortions may face judgment and discrimination

Stigma can make it difficult for pregnant women and mothers with substance use disorder to get adequate healthcare for themselves and their infants. They may experience:

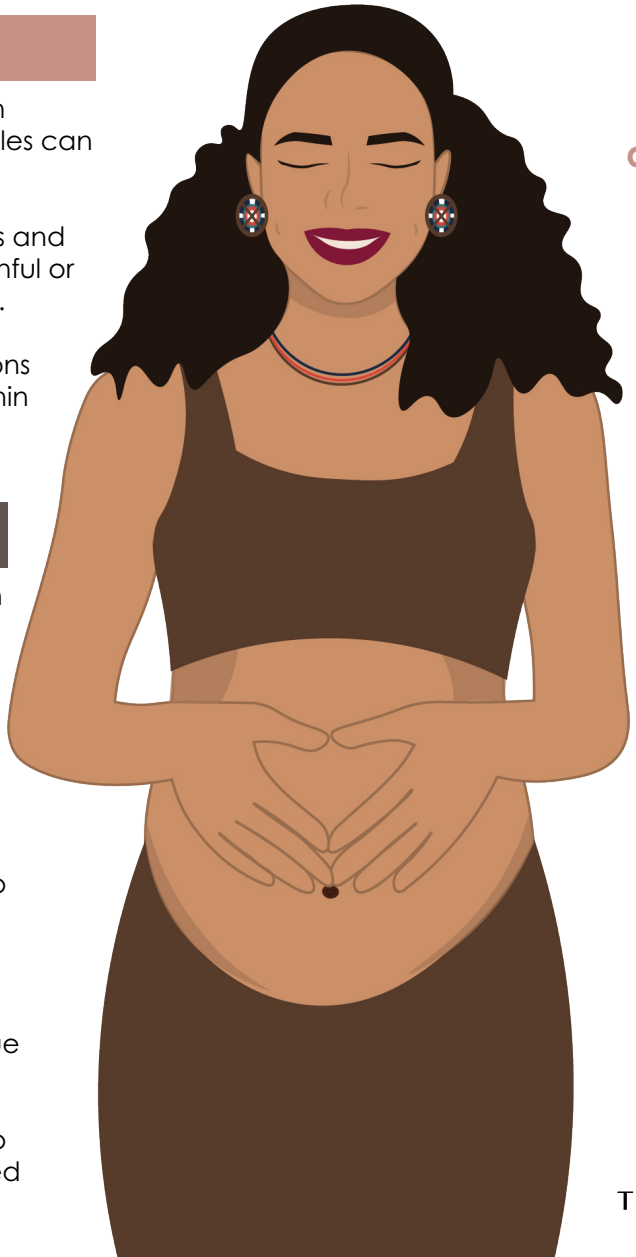
- **Isolation:** Feeling isolated and fearing for their safety or the safety of their children
- **Diminished access:** Having diminished access to resources and treatment
- **Lower quality of care:** Feeling like they receive lower quality of care
- **Lack of informatin:** Feeling like they are not provided with adequate health information
- **Discontinuing care:** Discontinueing care due to lack of time during visits

Root Causes

- **Societal Norms:** Strong societal emphasis on heteronormativity and traditional gender roles can lead to negative views of non-heterosexual orientations, behaviors, and identities.
- **Religious and Cultural Beliefs:** Some religious and cultural beliefs may view sex as inherently sinful or unclean, contributing to shame and stigma.
- **Lack of Education and Open Dialogue:** Avoidance of open and honest conversations about sexuality and sexual health, both within families and schools, can perpetuate misinformation and negative stereotypes.

Impact

- **Reduced Access to Healthcare:** Stigma can deter individuals from seeking necessary sexual health services, including STI testing, treatment, and contraception.
- **Fear of Disclosure:** Individuals may fear judgment or discrimination if they disclose their sexual orientation, gender identity, or experiences with STIs or other sexual health issues.
- **Mental Health Problems:** Stigma can lead to feelings of shame, guilt, anxiety, and depression, impacting mental health and well-being.
- **Social Isolation:** Individuals may withdraw from social interactions and relationships due to fear of judgment or discrimination.
- **Poor Health Outcomes:** Delayed or inadequate care due to stigma can lead to poorer health outcomes, including increased risk of STI transmission and complications.



All people deserve access to quality healthcare.

Stigma hurts our relatives by making them feel alone, judged, and unable to get the help they need.

You can uplift and protect our vulnerable relatives by standing up to stigma!

THE RAVEN COLLECTIVE