SEXUAL HEALTH OF ADOLESCENTS

HBSC England 2022 data: Snapshot series
CHSS, University of Kent.
https://hbscengland.org/reports/
@HBSCEngland; https://data-browser.hbsc.org/

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- Safe relationships and sexual health are vital educational and public health messages.
- Younger adolescents may be less able to negotiate consent and contraceptive use.
- Low condom use exposes adolescents to higher risk of sexually transmitted infections.

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- Little change in % of 15 yr olds who had had sex.
- Nearly 1/2 of those who were sexually active had had sex for the first time before they were 15.
- Lowest figures in recent years for condom use.
- Nearly 1/3 of sexually active 15 yr old girls did not use a condom/the pill the last time they had sex.
- Positive health outcomes & better coverage of RSE topics among those who'd not had sex.

THIS SHOWS THE URGENT NEED FOR

- Sustainable investments in evidence-based, comprehensive sexual health education in schools.
- Reproductive health services that are youth-friendly, accessible and tailored, aimed at protecting sexual health, future fertility and wellbeing of adolescents.

KEY MESSAGES

Between 2018 and 2022, the proportion of those who reported:

= HAVING HAD SEXUAL INTERCOURSE was about the same
↓ SEXUAL INITIATION UNDER 15 years old decreased
↓ USING A CONDOM at last intercourse decreased

GIRLS who were sexually active were MORE LIKELY to report…

not using a CONDOM NOR CONTRACEPTIVE PILLS at last sexual intercourse (32%) compared with boys (22%)
[A focus on adolescent sexual health in Europe, central Asia and Canada]

BOYS who were sexually active were MORE LIKELY to report…

having had sexual intercourse before they were 15 years old: 45% of boys compared with 37% of girls.

Those reporting they HAD NOT ever had sex reported…

SYSTEMATICALLY BETTER health outcomes on these variables:

- Body image
- Self-rated health
- Mental well-being
- Life satisfaction
- School liking
- Family support

BETTER coverage of these school RSE lesson topics:

- Relationship safety
- Respectful relationships
- Online and media rights

Young people we spoke with were surprised by the falling rates of condom use.

*I'm not surprised about the number of people having sex, but **I am very surprised about those having sex without a condom**. They have free condom schemes. I think this number might be because condoms are expensive and people don't always know how to get them for free.* Eleri, 19.

*Only just over half of all young people who had sexual intercourse using a condom is **shocking to me**.* Thomas

KEY DATA. *NB: data collected from 15 year old respondents only*

Around **2** in **10** 15 year olds reported HAVING HAD SEXUAL INTERCOURSE (21%)

The proportion reporting having had sexual intercourse slightly increased for girls (18% to 22%) and decreased for boys (23% to 21%) since 2018.

Nearly **5** in **10** of 15 year olds who had had sex reported their FIRST SEXUAL INTERCOURSE BEFORE THEY WERE 15 YEARS OLD (47%)

This marked a slight fall (4 percentage points) from 2018 (51%).
A small proportion reported having sex for the first time at 12 yrs old or younger (13% of sexually experienced boys; 6% girls), up from 2018.

Just over **5** in **10** of 15 year olds who were sexually active USED A CONDOM AT LAST INTERCOURSE (51%)

Condom use decreased between 2018 and 2022 (57% to 51%) – from 68% to 61% for boys and 46% to 40% for girls – to the lowest ever proportions.

Reported use of contraceptive birth-control pills at last intercourse increased since 2018: 35% to 43% for girls, and 26% to 36% for boys.

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