Sexual Health Week
12 – 18 September 2016

fpa
talking sense about sex

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) survey

This year, Sexual Health Week is all about sexually transmitted infections and condom use. We carried out a survey of more than 2,000 people* to find out what they know and think about safer sex and STI testing.

Nearly one-third (31%) said they thought it is easier to have sex than to talk about it.

STIs and testing

- More than two-thirds (68%) told us they had never had a test for STIs.
- More than half (52%) did not know that you can get an STI from oral sex.
- 56% did not know that more than 18,000 people in the UK are thought to have HIV but not know they have it.

Condom use

- Just over one-quarter (27%) said they used a male condom the last time they had sex.
- 71% said they did not use a male or female condom or a dam the last time they had sex.
- Nearly one in five (18%) said they thought it can be embarrassing to buy condoms.
- Nearly one-quarter (24%) said men should take more responsibility for buying and carrying condoms than women.
- Nearly one in 10 (9%) said they thought it is still taboo for women to buy and carry condoms.
- 14% said that on at least one occasion they had not used a condom during sex because they don't like how it feels.
- More than one in five (21%) said that on at least one occasion they had not used a condom during sex because they don't enjoy it as much.
- 11% said that on at least one occasion they had not used a condom during sex because their partner didn't want to use one.
- Around one in five (19%) said they had not used a condom during sex because they just got carried away in the moment.

- 8% said they had not used a condom during sex because they had been drinking alcohol or using drugs.

- Almost one in 10 (9%) said they had not used a condom during sex because they thought using a condom would ruin the mood.

Education

We asked participants what they'd learned at school about condoms and STIs.

- Less than one in 10 (9%) learned how to confidently talk to a partner about using condoms.

- Just 8% learned about dealing with situations where a partner puts pressure on you to have sex without a condom.

- One in 10 learned about the risk of STIs being passed on during oral sex.

- Only 12% learned about the biology of STIs and how they affect the body.

- Just over one in 10 (11%) learned about using condoms in the context of enjoying sex and not just to avoid something bad happening.

- Less than one in 10 (9%) learned how to find and ask for what they need from sexual health services.

- Over one-quarter (27%) said their lessons were too biological and not enough about what it is actually like to have sex and be in a relationship.

- Almost one in 10 (9%) said their sex and relationships education was based on the personal views of the teacher or stance of the school, rather than evidence-based information.

Young people (16-24-year-olds)

- Across all age groups, 8% said they had experienced not getting tested for STIs because they were too embarrassed to go for a test or were embarrassed about the possibility of other people finding out. Among 16-24-year-olds this rose to more than one-quarter (26%).

- One-fifth of 16-24-year-olds said they had experienced not getting tested for STIs because they were too scared to find out the result.

- One in 10 16-24-year-olds said their lessons at school about STIs came too late as they were already sexually active.

Notes

*Survey of 2,079 people in the UK aged 16+ who have ever been sexually active. All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from Atomik Research. Fieldwork was undertaken between 27 July and 1 August 2016. The survey was carried out online. The survey was representative of all UK people aged 16 and over.

We have results for males and females, for each UK government region, and for the age groups 16-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54 and 55+. Email press@fpa.org.uk for this data.

www.fpa.org.uk/SHW16