

GLOBAL EARLY ADOLESCENT STUDY

Global Early Adolescent Study

Influence of gender norms on the (sexual) health of young adolescents (11-14 years old)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- ① How do adolescents think men and women should behave in society (gender norms)?
- ② How do gender norms evolve during adolescence and what are the main influencing factors?
- ③ How do gender norms influence health during adolescence?

POLICY- RECOMMENDATIONS

- ① Offering comprehensive sexuality education in each school, with attention for:
 - equality and respect for sexual diversity and gender diversity
 - mutual respect and building non violent relationships
- ② Raising awareness about the fact that sexuality is part of human development and that gender diversity and sexual diversity exist, also among young adolescents, through:
 - awareness campaigns
 - offering thematic educational tools for schools
 - including these topics in the curriculum of future teachers and youth educators
- ③ Supporting research that investigates gender norms and its consequences on health.

STUDY

WORLDWIDE

11
countries

coordination by


JOHNS HOPKINS
BLOOMBERG SCHOOL
of PUBLIC HEALTH

+

 World Health
Organization

Focus on
vulnerable
adolescents
(11 to 14 years
old) in cities

BELGIUM



ICRH

International Centre for
Reproductive Health - UGent

7
Flemish cities
23
schools
first grade
2018-2019

The mother of half
of the
respondents is not
born in Belgium.

The material
welfare of the
adolescents is
limited.

https://www.jongeren-en-gezondheid.ugent.be/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/HBSC201718_Facstheet_sociodemografie.pdf

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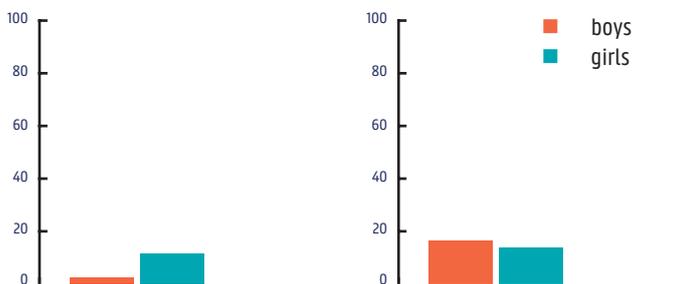
 World Health
Organization


UNIVERSITEIT
GENT

RESULTS

Gender diversity and sexual diversity

0,8% of the boys and 7,6% of the girls were ever in love with someone of the same sex.



Gender identity: 2,6% of the boys and 11,4% of the girls don't feel 100% like they are a 'typical' boy or girl.

16,7% of the boys and 14,3 % of the girls are not exclusively attracted to the other sex.

Gender norms

Adolescents often have stereotypical attitudes related to:

- male toughness versus female vulnerability
- relationship expectations
- homosexuality
- freedom to express and behave oneself (gender expression)
- freedom to express sexual feelings (sexual expression)



Boys have more stereotypical attitudes than girls.



Physical and mental health



Social media: 96% of the adolescents have their own mobile phone and an account on social media. One fifth of the respondents spend more than five hours a day on social media, online chatting with friends, playing computer games or using interactive media.



More boys (85,2%) than girls (80,5%) indicate being in good health.



32,3% of the boys and 19,7% of the girls feel good about their bodies.



Adolescents indicate being happy (average of four (max. five) on happiness scale).



Substance use is limited and is mainly related to alcohol.

| | Total | |
|----------------------|-------|--------|
| | % | amount |
| Substance use (ever) | | |
| Cigarettes | 9,3 % | 93 |
| Alcohol | 23 % | 232 |
| Marijuana | 2,7 % | 27 |
| Other drugs | 1,3 % | 13 |

Relationships



More than half of the adolescents have friends of the other sex.



Three out of five adolescents were already in a relationship. Boys have more experience with relationships than girls.



A quarter of the adolescents that were ever in a relationship, have been victim of physical partner violence.



One fifth of the adolescents that were ever in a relationship, say they were once a perpetrator of physical partner violence.

Sexuality

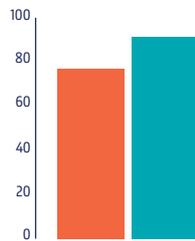
Lack of knowledge about sexuality. Adolescents mainly score less on questions related to HIV.

For girls, friends are very important to exchange information about health. Boys and girls also ask other people they trust for information, such as a teacher, trainer, youth worker and a cleric.

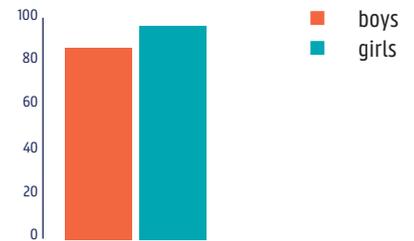
About half of the adolescents indicate that they would be ashamed to buy a condom if they would need it. Boys are less ashamed than girls.

Boys are a little bit more experienced sexually than girls but in general, the respondents have little experience.

About 40% of the adolescents have flirted on social media. Less than 5% have ever sent a sexual picture to someone and just over 30% of the adolescents have already received such a picture.



76,9% of the boys and 91,2% of the girls have never touched the genitals of someone else or have ever been touched there by someone else.



86,3% of the boys and 96,1% of the girls never had sexual intercourse.

3,2% of the girls and 8,2% of the boys have experience with oral sex and 0,4% of the girls and 3,2% of the boys have experience with anal sex.

50%

of the adolescents who were ever intimately touched (84 of 1008) indicate that their first touch was not with full consent.

40%

of the adolescents who already had sexual intercourse (37 of 1008) indicate that their first sexual experience was without full consent.