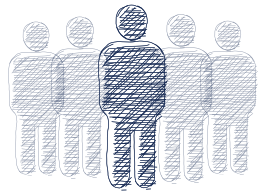


# What is going on for young people and their sexual health?

The Healthy Respect team work to improve outcomes for young people's sexual health and wellbeing. Our work is evidence-based, and the following is the current picture of young people's sexual health in Scotland, and local information within the NHS Lothian areas as of January 2024.

**1 in 5** young people have sex before their 16th birthday<sup>1</sup>

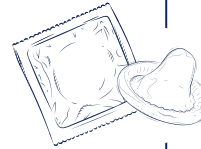


**75%** of male and **72%** of female 19-20 year-olds with a learning disability have had sexual intercourse

vs. 89% of male and 88% of female 19-20 year-olds without a learning disability<sup>2</sup>



**50%** of young people said they didn't use a condom the last time they had penetrative sex<sup>3</sup>



**34%** said they hadn't used a condom or a birth control pill<sup>4</sup>

Since 2019, gonorrhoea infections among sexually active people under 25 years of age have doubled<sup>5</sup>



Chlamydia is the most common STI in Scotland. Over 70% of people infected are aged 30 or less<sup>6</sup>

Teenage pregnancies are higher in the most deprived areas, with:

- 13 times the rate of delivery compared to the least deprived areas
- double the rate of abortion<sup>7</sup>

**50%** of women with a learning disability aged 19-20 had ever been pregnant compared to 23% of women without a learning disability aged 19-20<sup>8</sup>



Young people have missed out on RSHP education due to the pandemic

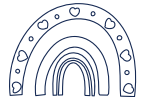


**1 in 3** of young people in schools in Scotland do not find it easy to get information on sexual health<sup>9</sup>

Only **50%** of people with learning disability say they have received sex education<sup>10</sup>

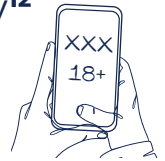


Only **20%** of the people who have received formal sex education have seen LGBTQ+ topics discussed within them<sup>11</sup>



**13** is the average age at which children first see pornography<sup>12</sup>

**79%** have encountered violent pornography before the age of 18<sup>13</sup>



**52%** of reported child sexual abuse cases involved reports of children (aged 10 to 17) offending against other children

**14** is the most common age of children committing sexual abuse offenses<sup>14</sup>

Please get in touch if you have any questions about young people's sexual health or want to work in partnership with us to improve sexual health and wellbeing outcomes for young people in Edinburgh and the Lothians.

✉ Healthy.Respect@nhs.scot  
🌐 [www.healthyrespect.co.uk](http://www.healthyrespect.co.uk)

👉 Join our network for up-to-date information:  
[www.healthyrespect.co.uk/professionals/join-our-network](http://www.healthyrespect.co.uk/professionals/join-our-network)



# References

1. J. Inchley et al, 'Findings from the HBSC 2022 survey in Scotland', Glasgow University, June 2023, [Click here to view](#), last accessed 21.02.2024
2. S. Bains, E. Emerson, J Robertson, C Hatton, 'Sexual activity and sexual health among young adults with and without mild/moderate intellectual disability', BMC, May 2018, [Click here to view](#), last accessed 21.02.2024
3. 'Health and Wellbeing Census Scotland 2021-2022' – Publication – Statistics Scottish Government Publications, [Click here to view](#), last accessed 20.02.2024
4. J. Inchley et al, 'Findings from the HBSC 2022 survey in Scotland', Glasgow University, June 2023, [Click here to view](#), last accessed 20.02.2024
5. 'Gonorrhoea infection in Scotland 2013-2022 report – News – Public Health Scotland' Public Health Scotland, March 2023, [Click here to view](#), last accessed 20.02.2024
6. 'Chlamydia infection in Scotland 2013-2022 report – News – Public Health Scotland', Public Health Scotland, June 2023, [Click here to view](#), last accessed 21.02.2024
7. 'Teenage pregnancies. Year of conception, ending 31 December 2021', Public Health Scotland 25 July 2023, [Click here to view](#), last accessed 21.02.2024
8. S. Bains, E. Emerson, J. Robertson, C. Hatton, 'Sexual activity and sexual health among young adults with and without mild / moderate intellectual disability', BMC, May 2018, [Click here to view](#), last accessed 21.02.2024
9. 'Life in Scotland', LGBT Youth Scotland, 2022, [Click here to view](#), last accessed 21.02.2024
10. S. Bains, E. Emerson, J. Robertson, C. Hatton, 'Sexual activity and sexual health among young adults with and without mild/moderate intellectual disability', BMC, May 2018, [Click here to view](#), last accessed 21.02.2024
11. 'Life in Scotland', LGBT Youth Scotland, 2022, [Click here to view](#), last accessed 21.02.2024
12. 'A lot of it is actually just abuse'– Young people and pornography, Children's Commissioner for England, January 2023, [Click here to view](#), last accessed 21.02.2024
13. 'A lot of it is actually just abuse'– Young people and pornography, Children's Commissioner for England, January 2023, [Click here to view](#), last accessed 21.02.2024
14. 'Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges', Ofsted, Jun 2021, [Click here to view](#), last accessed 21.02.2024