

## **Australian Adolescent sexual health information-seeking types**

### **Authors:**

Fisher CM<sup>1</sup>, Kauer S<sup>1</sup>, Singleton A<sup>2</sup>, Walsh-Buhi E<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University, <sup>2</sup> Sociology and Social Research, Deakin University, <sup>3</sup> School of Public Health, Indiana University Bloomington

### **Background:**

Adolescent sexual health continues to be a challenge in Australia and internationally with continuing disparities in sexually transmissible infections and a lack of substantial change in knowledge and behaviours over the last 25 years. Little is understood about the diversity of sexual health information channels young people use.

### **Methods:**

Data from the 6<sup>th</sup> National Survey of Secondary Students and Sexual Health were used to document the types of information seekers based on number of sources used and how they differed. Participants (N=8,251) selected from 13 typical sources (e.g., GP, teacher) which they had ever used to get advice about sexual health. Fifty-one items assessed their factual knowledge on sexual health ( $\alpha = 0.86$ ) and additional items measured sexual activity, condom and contraceptive use. Latent class analysis identified 4 unique classes and multinomial logistic regression models estimated class outcomes for knowledge and behaviour-related measures.

### **Results:**

Classes of information-seeker types included: Non-seekers (13.9% of the sample) were more likely to be younger and not yet had sex; Everyday seekers (41.9%) who sought information from the internet, mother, friends and school programs were more likely than non-seekers to be older, have medium sexual health knowledge, and used condoms and/or the pill; Peer seekers (34.1%) who used the internet and friends were no more likely than non-seekers have good sexual health knowledge or use condoms and/or the pill; Variety seekers (10.1%) who used all or most sources were more likely than non-seekers to have medium sexual health knowledge and have used the pill.

### **Conclusion:**

Everyday and Variety seekers of sexual health information had greater odds of better sexual health knowledge and behavioural outcomes. Findings can provide guidance for sexual health advocates in designing targeted and effective new information campaigns that address the barriers and facilitators to sexual health information-seeking.

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