

Monaghan



Comhairle na nÓg

Young Voices. Local Issues.

Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg

Presents the Results of its survey:

**An Understanding of Romantic Relationships
for young people in Co. Monaghan
2019**



Youth Work Ireland
Cavan Monaghan

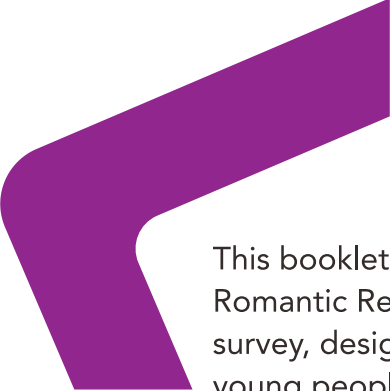


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ABOUT THIS BOOKLET



This booklet presents the results from its survey “An Understanding of Romantic Relationships for young people in Co. Monaghan”. The survey, designed through Survey Monkey, was completed by over 500 young people from Co. Monaghan. Developed by Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg, this summary of results is one that aims to share its survey findings in a concise and easy-to-read format.

For young people building positive and romantic relationships is an fundamental component of growing up. All children grow and thrive in the context of close and dependable relationships that provide love and nurturance, security, and both responsive and health interactions. A positive relationship built on trust, understanding, and caring will foster young people’s cooperation and motivation and increase their positive outcomes in all aspects of their lives. In order to support young people in this area, this survey sought to understand more about the challenges and issues young people face in relation to relationships, consent and their understanding of it, who they want to learn about relationships from and the way they would like to receive information.

This booklet sets out the main points raised by young people in the survey. It also includes the recommendations being put forward by Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg and a list of helpful resources. We hope that it will be a useful and relatable source of information for young people, parents and youth practitioners which will support broader discussions on this topic.






INTRODUCTION

Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg is a youth council, which gives children and young people the opportunity to be involved in the development of local services and policies. The core methodology of this social action based youth participation model centres on young people identifying, prioritising and working to progress topics which they identify as being important to them. Our members then try to influence local decision-makers to achieve their desired outcome, impact or change. The members of the committee are elected through their Secondary Schools and Youth Organisations and sit for a 2-year term of office on the committee.

Comhairle na nÓg gets young people's voices heard in two ways: working on young people's topics; and acting as a consultative forum.

Key Topic 2019

Each year the Comhairle works on a "Key Topic" to prioritise their workload on. This year "Relationships" was selected as the key topic. This topic was selected through the following steps:

-  Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg are required to hold a yearly Annual General Meeting. Up to 100 young people attended the event in 2018 and at it they got the opportunity to suggest topics for the Comhairle to work on for the coming year. This was done through large blank sheets displayed throughout the venue. Topics such as Mental Health, Irish Language, Relationships and Climate change were some of the topics that were suggested by a large amount of young people.
-  These suggestions were then brought back to a Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg meeting. At the meeting, Comhairle members discussed the different topics suggested and possible ideas for each topic.
-  To ensure that all members of the Comhairle had a say in the key topic for the year, a poll was created on the Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg closed facebook page with the topics suggested at the AGM and spoken about at the meeting. The topic selected by the majority of people was "Promoting Positive Relationships".

The Comhairle are also required to hold quarterly steering group meetings with members of other organisations, which are linked with the key topic for the year. At the first quarterly meeting various ideas were suggested around what the Comhairle could do for their key topic this year. One of the ideas suggested and discussed in depth was the idea of developing a survey around the relationships young people in Co. Monaghan experience, the Comhairle members in attendance at the meeting offered valuable insight into this idea and how they felt it would work best. This idea was brought to the Comhairle members at their next meeting. The members of the Comhairle agreed that this would be a good piece of work. They also brainstormed other ideas to promote positive relationships and came up with the following:

- A poster campaign
- Short videos
- A survey on relationships.
- A chalk/art piece in the main towns or secondary schools in Monaghan with the results of the survey
- Presenting the findings to County Council or possibly to a TD/Minister.

DEVELOPING A SURVEY



Due to the sensitive topics and questions that would be asked in relation to relationships it was suggested that the coordinators of Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg meet with a staff member from the ISPCC to discuss what questions could be included and how more personal questions could be phrased. This was all taken on board when developing the survey.

The Comhairle discussed:

1. Target age group:

Comhairle members felt that the survey should be open to all young people from the age of twelve up. The decision was also made to allow over eighteens to complete the survey and have no age limit to see how the views of young people differ from adults.

2. The questions that would be asked:

The facilitators of the Comhairle developed a draft survey based on the feedback from the ISPCC. This draft was brought forward to members of Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg who made adjustments such as changing questions, changing the wording and essentially ensuring that the survey was youth friendly and got enough information to make it a worthwhile piece of work. The survey consisted of open and closed questions, multiple choice questions and rating scales.

3. How the survey would be distributed:

The Comhairle discussed what would be the best approach to get young people to answer the survey and to answer it honestly. Comhairle members felt the best way for young people to answer it would be through their phones. They could gain access to the survey through links on social media platforms like Facebook, Whatsapp and Snapchat. Comhairle members felt that if young people were asked to answer the survey in large groups they would be less inclined to answer it honestly.

RAISING AWARENESS AND COLLECTING FINDINGS:

The survey went live on the website "Survey Monkey" at the beginning of May 2019, with the aim of being open for a month. Comhairle members, Youth organisations and other local services all shared the link to the survey across their social media platform with great success early on, large number completing the survey.

The facilitators of the survey could keep up to date with the number of people completing the survey and also the gender and age breakdown. Early indications indicated that more females were doing the survey and surprisingly large amounts of 18s were doing it. To try and balance this out a number of Comhairle members approached their school principal and asked would it be possible for them to set up a stand at lunch time in their school and get younger people to complete the survey. This was done in the Patrician High School Carrickmacross, Our Lady's Secondary School Castleblayney and in Beech Hill College Monaghan town.

Youth Work Ireland Cavan Monaghan was also hosting a cross border mental health conference in Monaghan town while the survey was open. Staff members of the organisation went around the crowd who attended the event and got young people to complete the survey on tablets provided. One of the schools who attended the event was St. Macartans Secondary School from Monaghan Town. This is an all-boys school which helped with increasing the numbers of young males who completed the survey.

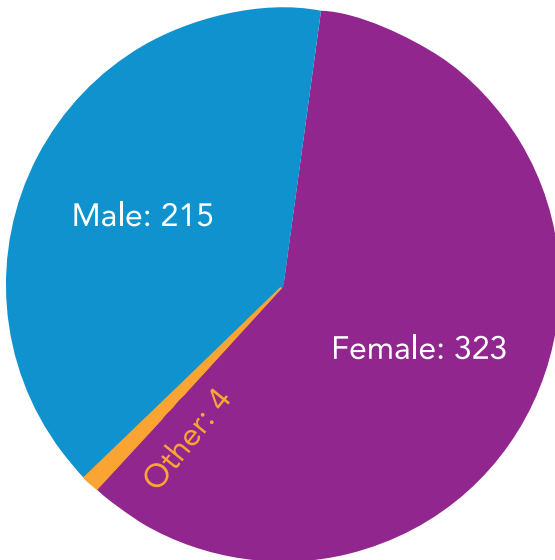
Throughout the month of May, the survey was continuously promoted on social media accounts.

FINDINGS OF THE SURVEY

The survey was completed by 542 people with the gender, age and sexual identity being as follows:

1. Basic Information

Gender



Age

12-13 year-old: 108 (19.93%)



Males: 76; Females: 31; Other 1

14-15 year-old: 123 (22.69%)



Males: 69; Females: 53; Other 1

16-17 year-old: 130 (22.69%)



Males: 34; Females: 96

18+ years old: 181 (22.69%)



Males: 36; Females: 143; Other 2

Sexual Identity



Straight: 499 (92.07%), Gay: 6 (1.11%), Lesbian: 8 (1.48%), Bisexual: 28 (5.17%), Homosexual: 1 (0.18%)

Breaking this question down further and more specifically by age the results are as follows:
 16/17-year-old: **90.77%** identified as 'Straight', 14/15-year-old: **87.80%** identified as straight,
 12/13-year-old: **95.37%** identified as being straight.

2. Relationships and You

Have you ever been in relationship?

MALES:

	I'm in one right now	I have been in one but I'm not anymore	I have never been in a relationship
12-13	9.68%	35.48%	54.84%
14-15	13.85%	38.46%	47.69%
16-17	36%	40%	24%
18+	64.29%	28.57%	7.14%

FEMALES:

	I'm in one right now	I have been in one but I'm not anymore	I have never been in a relationship
12-13	20%	36%	44%
14-15	12.12%	36.36%	51.52%
16-17	34.72%	40.28%	25%
18+	62.35%	25.88%	11.76%

Participants who identified as other selected the options I have been in one but I'm not anymore and I'm in right now.

• **What is the longest relationship you have been?**

Answers to this question were very varied right across the board ranging from a few week's right up to 19 years (Over 18). The younger the age, the less likely to have a longer relationship. As the age categories went up, the length of relationships also increased.

• **What age do you think is an acceptable age to get into a relationship with a partner?**

Similar to the question above the answer to this question varied depending on the age range. Young people on the 12-13 age category roughly said an age between 12-15 years old with some young people commenting "depends on the person" and you can start a relationship "if you are mature to keep it". Young people in the category 14-15 picked their own age 14/15 as an acceptable age to get into a relationship, a very low amount said anything below 14 or above 16. The older category of 16/17 were similar to the age below them and said ages, on average, 15 above. Some of the comments included "Any time after 15-16 and knows about RSE" and "Anytime as long as both parties aren't pressured into it". The over 18 range averaged on the ages 16/17 with comments including "depends on the people", "Sexual relationship -16(minimum), Romantic relationships – 14/15", "When you're ready" and "18+, enjoy life".

• **Please select the top five characteristics of a healthy/unhealthy relationship to you.**

The top characteristics of a healthy relationship from boys Males of all age ranges (12-18+) were respect with trust coming second, other answers included loyalty, caring, communication and equality. Girls Females from all age ranges (12-18) said respect was their top characteristics. Females also said answers like get on well together, caring, fun, teamwork and time for each other. The other category selected answers such as respect, loyalty and honesty. Jealousy and violence topped the characteristics for the unhealthy relationships from the both males and females boys and girls of all age ranges (12-18+). The youngest boys males (12/13) also said alcohol/drug abuse. The words "only sexual" and "Too sexual" etc. appeared frequently in the female categories (14-17). The words selected by others were similar to that of females, with violence being mentioned.

•••••••••• **If you have ever been in relationship was it mostly healthy or mostly unhealthy?**

MALES:

	Mostly Healthy	Mostly Unhealthy	Never in a relationship
12/13	49.15%	1.69%	49.15%
14/15	54.10%	3.28%	42.62%
16/17	60%	16%	24%
18+	78.57%	14.29%	7.14%

FEMALES:

	Mostly Healthy	Mostly unhealthy	Never in a relationship
12/13	56%	8%	36%
14/15	40%	20%	40%
16/17	57.14%	17.14%	25.71%
18 +	72.62%	19.05%	8.33%

If you break the two into a male/female overall divide there is a clear indication that females either recognises or experience an unhealthy relationship more so than males with female's breakdown at 17.22% (Unhealthy relationship) and male's breakdown at 5.66%.

OTHER:

Those who recognise as being 'other' broke down as 66.67% mostly healthy, 33.33% mostly unhealthy.

If you break the two into a male/female overall divide there is a clear indication that females either recognise or experience an unhealthy relationship more so than males with female's breakdown at 17.22% (Unhealthy relationship) and male's breakdown at 5.66%. Those who recognise as being 'other' broke down as 66.67% mostly healthy, 33.33% mostly unhealthy.

..... If a friend was in an unhealthy relationship,
do you think you would be able to spot the signs?

MALES:

	Yes	No
12/13	66.13%	33.87%
14/15	78.46%	21.54%
16/17	76%	24%
18+	85.71%	14.29%

FEMALES:

	Yes	No
12/13	80%	20%
14/15	84.85%	15.15%
16/17	84.72%	15.28%
18+	83.53%	16.47%

OTHER:

The 'Other' all said that they would be able to spot the signs of an unhealthy relationship.

Those who completed the survey were also asked to comment on the signs they would recognise. The younger female categories (12-15) mainly said words that related to signs of their friend being unhappy, not themselves or depressed. The older category (16+) more commonly mentioned controlling partners, signs of violence, low self-esteem and not seeing them as often. The younger male category (12-15) was similar to the females of this age in saying if they appeared unhappy, however they also mentioned controlling more than the females did. The older males (16+) mentioned their friend not being themselves or appearing to be feeling down. The older male category, unlike females of the same age did not mention the words violence or signs of violence.

How confident would you be in telling a friend they were in an unhealthy relationship?

(Scale of 1-10, 1 being afraid to tell them, 10 being completely comfortable telling them)

MALES:

Age	Average (Out of 10)
12/13	6.7
14/15	7.1
16/17	7.6
18+	7.2

FEMALES:

Age	Average
12/13	7.3
14/15	8
16/17	6.4
18+	7.3

OTHER:

The 'other' broke down to 7.8

If you were in a relationship would you let your partner

(Tick all that apply or move onto next question if you wouldn't let them)

MALES:

	Read your text messages	Decide who you can or can't socialize with	Decide what you can or can't wear	Do your homework for you	Buy your expensive gifts	Lie for you
12/13	64.71%	7.84%	5.88%	43.14%	43.41%	43.14%
14/15	63.64%	11.36%	9.09%	36.36%	59.09%	25.00%
16/17	86.86%	0%	0%	36.36%	45.45%	36.36%
18+	88.89%	11.11%	11.11%	22.22%	22.22%	33.33%

If you were in a relationship would you let your partner

(Tick all that apply or move onto next question if you wouldn't let them)

FEMALES:

	Read your text messages	Decide who you can or can't socialize with	Decide what you can or can't wear	Do your homework for you	Buy your expensive gifts	Lie for you
12/13	81.82%	18.18%	9.09%	54.55%	36.36%	36.36%
14/15	41.67%	0%	0%	50%	62.50%	33.33%
16/17	70.59%	7.84%	5.88%	27.45%	29.41%	35.29%
18+	70.49%	8.20%	4.92%	24.59%	52.46%	19.67%

OTHER:

Read your text messages	Decide who you can or can't socializing with	Decide what you can or can't wear	Do your homework for you	Buy you expensive gifts	Lie for you
100%	50%	50%	100%	50%	100%

Do you think young people get taught enough about relationships?

(Scale 1-10, 1 being not enough, 10 being plenty)

MALES:

Age	Average (Out of 10)
12/13	3.6
14/15	3.6
16/17	3.2
18+	2.4

FEMALES:

Age	Average (Out of 10)
12/13	3.7
14/15	3
16/17	2.4
18+	2.4

OTHER:

Others: 2.7

..... In relation to relationships, what information do you think young people
should be taught (Tick all that apply)

MALES:

Age	Sexual Health	Relationships and Social Media	Warning signs of negative relationships	Peer Pressure	Legal issues (e.g. age of consent)	Other (Please specify)
12/13	79.03%	77.42%	67.74%	72.58%	58.06%	4.84%
14/15	87.69%	78.46%	78.46%	80%	75.38%	6.15%
16/17	76%	88%	92%	72%	84%	32%
18+	85.71%	64.29%	85.71%	78.57%	57.14%	7.14%

FEMALES:

Age	Sexual Health	Relationships and Social Media	Warning signs of negative relationships	Peer Pressure	Legal issues (e.g. age of consent)	Other (Please specify)
12/13	60%	88%	84%	88%	64%	8%
14/15	90.91%	75.76%	96.97%	81.82%	75.76%	6.06%
16/17	94.44%	80.56%	94.44%	79.17%	80.56%	6.94%
18+	98.82%	88.24%	96.47%	84.71%	84.71%	14.12%

OTHER:

Sexual Health	Relationships and Social Media	Warning signs of a negative relationship	Peer Pressure	Legal Issue (e.g. age of consent)	Other (Please Specify)
100%	66.67%	100%	33.33%	66.67%	33.33%

..... Where would you like to receive information on relationships?

(Tick all that apply)

MALES:

	From a Teacher	From a Youth Worker	An older school peer	Parents/guardians	Others (Specify)
12/13	35.48%	19.35%	16.13%	22.58%	6.45%
14/15	26.15%	20%	16.92%	27.69%	9.23%
16/17	32%	36%	8%	20%	4%
18+	50%	21.43%	7.14%	21.43%	0%

FEMALES:

	From a Teacher	From a youth worker	An older school peer	Parents	Other (Specify)
12/13	12%	24%	12%	40%	12%
14/15	30.30%	27.27%	21.21%	21.21%	0%
16/17	25%	37.50%	18.06%	9.72%	9.72%
18+	23.53%	34.12%	8.24%	31.76%	2.35%

OTHER:

	From a teacher	Youth Worker	An older school peer	Parents	Other (Specify)
0%	33.33%	33.33%	0%	33.33%	

The majority of the other options suggested included online sources and through a friend or partner.

How would you like a relationship programme be run?

This question had the option of two answers; a one day programme or a long term programme e.g.12 weeks. Across all age ranges the majority of people selected the long term programme option. In particular, the female categories were a very clear majority in a long term programme. However the 'other' selected the one day session option.

3. Socialising and Relationships

What social media platform's do you use?

(Tick all that apply)

MALES:

	Facebook	Instagram	Snapchat	Tik Tok	Twitter	House Party
12/13	40.32%	75.81%	93.55%	20.97%	37.10%	58.06%
14/15	39.06%	85.94%	95.31%	14.06%	32.81%	26.56%
16/17	84%	92%	100%	4%	36%	8%
18+	100%	78.57%	78.57%	0%	28.57%	0%

FEMALES:

	Facebook	Instagram	Snapchat	Tik Tok	Twitter	House Party
12/13	54.17%	75%	95.83%	54.17%	16.67%	66.67%
14/15	66.67%	93.94%	100%	51.51%	33.33%	30.30%
16/17	86.96%	92.75%	98.55%	13.04%	20.29%	0%
18+	100%	81.82%	75.32%	1.30%	33.77%	0%

OTHER:

Facebook	Instagram	Snapchat	Tik Tok	Twitter	House Party
66.67%	100%	100%	66.67%	66.67%	66.67%

Do you communicate with your friends more through social media or in person?

MALES:

	Social Media	In Person
12/13	45.16%	54.84%
14/15	35.94%	64.06%
16/17	24%	76%
18+	14.29%	85.71%

FEMALES:

	Social Media	In Person
12/13	45.83%	54.17%
14/15	33.33%	66.67%
16/17	36.23%	63.77%
18+	51.95%	48.05%

OTHER:

Social Media	In Person
66.67%	33.33%

..... Have you ever been asked to do or say something
through social media that made you feel uncomfortable?

MALES:

	Yes	No
12/13	14.52%	85.48%
14/15	25%	75%
16/17	32%	68%
18+	35.71%	64.29%

FEMALES:

	Yes	No
12/13	14.52%	85.48%
14/15	25%	75%
16/17	32%	68%
18+	35.71%	64.29%

OTHER:

Yes	No
33.33%	66.67%

Survey participants were also asked if they answered yes could they share what it is that made you feel uncomfortable (If you feel comfortable to do so).

In the male 12/13 category responses included *“Online Bullying”* and *“saying something that wasn't nice”*. Male 14/15 category *“send nudes”*, *“I have been asked to talk about a best friend behind their back”* and *“break up with my friend's girlfriend for him”*. Male 16/17 *“nudes”*, *“Pretend I was someone else”* and *“I have had to lie and I have send some messages that I knew would upset the other person so I couldn't bring myself to do it to their face”*. Finally, Male 18+ *“send nudes”*, *“tease and slag someone”* and *“post on a page”*. Female category 12/13 *“send nudes”*, *“to drink”* and *“get with someone”*. 14/15 category *“send nudes”* and *“send pornographic images”*. 16/17 category *“manipulated into sending pictures”* and *“send inappropriate images”*. Female category over 18 *“When I was 14 I was asked to send nudes”*, *“felt pressured into sending sexually explicit messages”* and *“asked questions that were invading privacy”*.

A survey participant who identified as Other, said *“Send Nudes, (Major regrets)”*.

.....•What is your understanding of sexting?.....
(The following is some of the raw data collected)

MALE 12/13 YEARS OLD:



"When (2) people send each other inappropriate text messages"



"Sending pictures of themselves naked"



"having sex while texting"



"Sexting is sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit messages, photographs, or images, primarily between mobile phones, of oneself to others. It may also include the use of a computer or any digital device."



"Texting about some sexual stuff to make each other feel good"



"Texting pictures of you"



"Sending nude pictures on social media"



"sending nudes"



"When people are sending sexually orientated messages or pictures"



"I don't know"



"Haven't a clue"



"Talking about sex in text form"



What is your understanding of sexting?

MALE 14/15 YEARS OLD



"Sending graphic photos through social media"



"When people send nude pictures and talk in a sexual manner to each other"



"Sending nudes and texting very sexual words and sentences and probably a few other things."



"I haven't a clue what it means"



"When u have sex through texting by sending naked pictures of your body parts"



"Talking to someone online in a sexual way. Eg pictures."



"Texting inappropriate texts to each other"



"Sending a picture, talking about online or any other means of communication that can be considered in anyway sexual"



"Taking naked photos of yourself and sending them to someone"



"I don't know"



"Sharing sexually explicit messages via social media"



What is your understanding of sexting?

MALE 16/17 YEARS OLD



"Sexual texting, whether it be raunchy pictures, words, etc."



"sending naked pictures"



"Sending explicit pictures of your body to another person and also acting out a sexual scene or scenario through text"



"Texting with the intent to flirt"



"Sending explicit images or words on a mobile phone"



"Sending dirty pictures, flirting over text messages, making dirty or sexual acts with emojis"



"Flirting conversation with a person doesn't have to be sending inappropriate pictures but it can be that too"



"Sexually suggestive texts and/or pictures, not necessarily nudity"



"The sending of explicit images, often in an exchange, to another person by the use of social media, most frequently for sexual pleasure"



MALE OVER 18



"Use of sexually indicative words or images"



"Sexual conversation"



"Sending inappropriate images of yourself or receiving from another to try get them more sexually attracted to you"



"Constant messaging to a person where there is obvious flirting"



"Texting flirting and texting looking to meet up for a bit"



"Nudes"



"Using text messages to fulfill sexual gratification"



"The sharing of sexually explicit pictures of yourself with others in social media."



"Sexual explicit messaging including sending pictures"




"text photos"



.....•What is your understanding of sexting?•.....
(The following is some of the raw data collected)

FEMALE 12/13 YEARS OLD

 "I don't know"
(Very common answer
in this category)


 "People are asking other to do
things they don't want to do"

 "sending inappropriate images"

 "It means that you are
being forced to send
pictures of your body
when you don't want to"


 "Flirting and sending
revealing pictures"

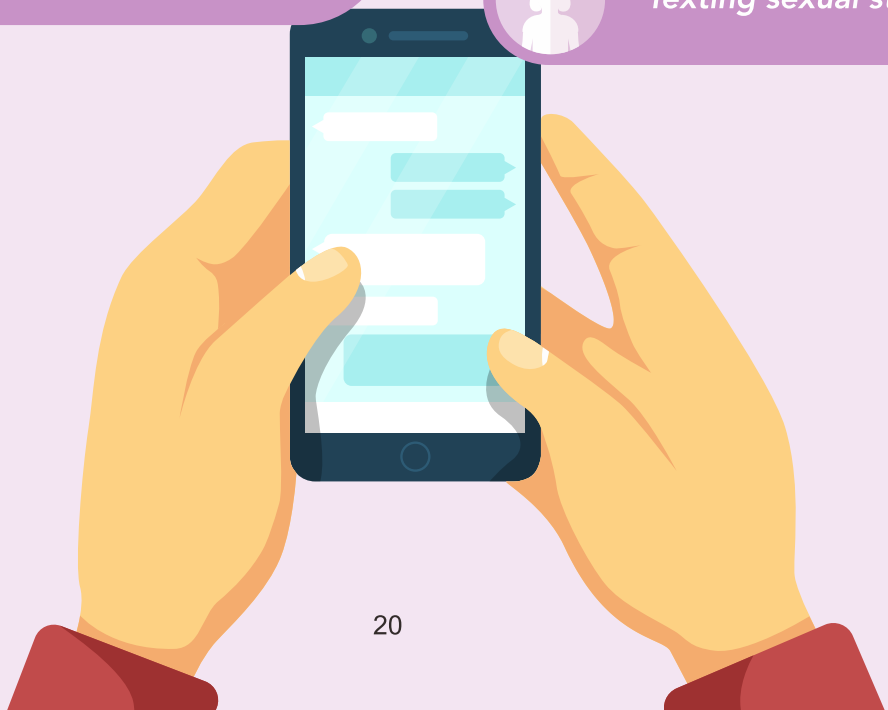
 "Having a step by
step conversation of sex
with someone"

 "people have sex over the phone"

 "Inappropriate texts
and pictures"

 "Sending sexual messages
or pictures to another person"

 "Texting sexual stuff"



.....•What is your understanding of sexting?•.....
(The following is some of the raw data collected)

FEMALE 14/15 YEARS OLD



"People sending nude or provocative images"



"Sending people naked selfies"



"Sending inappropriate images"



"I don't no"



"Sending text messages or dms of a sexual nature"



"Send (someone) sexually explicit photographs or messages via mobile phone."



"Sending nudes, graphic images or messages"



"flirting through text"



"Sexually talking over the phone"



"Sending photo of an intimate part of the body"



"The sending and receiving of pornographic photos/videos"



FEMALE 16/17 YEARS OLD



*"Sexual images sent through internet/
texting (nudes, provocative images"*



*"Sexual relationship
through text or pictures"*



*"Sending messages to
someone about sex or
things you would do if
you were there"*



*"Sending sexual texts
or images to a peer
or partner"*



*"Sending pictures of
yourself naked to
someone else"*



*"Sexual speaking over
text with a partner"*



*"Texting over social media.
Texting in a sexual nature
with/without pictures"*



*"The texting of two people
in a sexual manner that
includes nude photos and
provocative and sexual language"*



*"When another party asks
the male/female to send
them inappropriate pictures
for his/her benefit"*





.....What is your understanding of sexting?.....

FEMALE OVER 18

-  "Texting dirty suggestive sexual messages"
-  "Sending nude pictures and heavily flirting"
-  "Talking about sex on social media and inappropriate behaviour on social behaviour by man or woman."
-  "Send messages that are explicit or sexual to another person"
-  "It is child pornography"
-  "Teasing someone, discussing your plans with them sexually to turn them on"
-  "Sending irrelevant pictures bad text messages"
-  "Sexting is defined as sending of sexually explicit messages or images by cell phone"
-  "Sexually talking through text"
-  "Talking in a sexual manner over social media and sending nude pictures/videos"

OTHER:

-  "Sending sexualising words"
-  "Sending sexual messages/images"



..... Have you ever been asked to send a "nude" picture through social media?

(Percentages for yes)

	12/13	14/15	16/17	18+
Male	6.45%	21.88%	64%	42.86%
Female	37.50%	60.61%	79.71%	50.65%

Others: 100%

If yes was it from someone you know or a stranger?

Amongst the female categories the answers varied right across the board from someone they knew, to a stranger and to both. In particular, the older female categories 16/17 and 18+ commented "both".

Male categories were similar to female categories. All the age ranges varied from someone they knew, to a stranger and to both.

The other categories inc

..... If you were in a relationship would you share your social media password with your partner?

(Percentages for yes)

	12/13	14/15	16/17	18+
Male	38.71%	21.88%	56%	64.29%
Female	58.33%	18.18%	42.03%	36.36%

Others: 100% said no they wouldn't share their password.

..... Have you ever attended a teenage disco?

The figures illustration females of all the age ranges attend teenage discos more so than males. It also shows a vast increase of males age 14-15 attending teenage discos.

Gender	Age 12-13	Age 14-15	Age 16-17
Females	54%	87%	97%
Males	27%	76.5%	88%

Others: 100%

..... Do you feel pressured to dress or act in a certain way at a teenage disco?

(e.g.: "Get with someone", drink alcohol, wear revealing clothing?)

Gender	Age 12-13	Age 14-15	Age 16-17
Females	45% (Yes)	39% (Yes)	62% (Yes)
Males	25% (Yes)	31% (Yes)	52% (Yes)

Other

Yes	No
33.33%	66.67%

Survey participants were asked, if yes to explain their answer. Comments included: "To dress slutty" (female 16/17), "To drink alcohol" (female 12/13) and "you get judged if you don't do stuff".

The Males responses were as follows, "To get with someone you don't like" (Male 14/15) and "Yes because you need something expensive to wear" (Male 12/13). "Drinking alcohol" appeared very frequently right across all age categories and gender.

Other "it's a normalised teenage ritual, I hate it".

4. Consent

Do you know what consent is?

(Percentage for yes)

	12/13	14/15	16/17	18+
Male	75.81%	87.50%	96%	100%
Female	45.83%	96.88%	94.20%	97.22%

Others:

Yes	No
66.67%	33.33%

Do you know what consent is? If yes, what is your understanding of consent?

(Answers include examples of the raw data collected):

MALE: 12/13 YEARS OLD

"Asking can i have some nudes before she gives them"

"My understanding of consent in a relationship is that both people agree to, and want to stay in this relationship"

"Giving consent to act in a sexual manner"

"Consent means both people being happy"

"Consent means giving permission and in healthy relationships you would need some consent and in a unhealthy relationship they always do something without consent"

"It means you's do stuff for each other and stay together and there is no getting out of it."

"Consent is when someone gives you the ability to do something with or to them"

"HAVING PERMISSION TO HAVE SEX"

"You have to give your consent for sex if u don't it is rape"

Do you know what consent is? If yes, what is your understanding of consent?

(Answers include examples of the raw data collected):

MALE: 14/15 YEARS OLD

"WHEN THE OTHER PERSON GIVES PERMISSION TO HAVE SEX. YOU MUST HAVE CONSENT OR IT IS ILLEGAL"

"You must give your consent to have sex or anything like that"

"You have to be willing to do stuff"

"HAVENT A BLOODY CLUE LIKE"

"Your decision to have sex with your partner"

"You cannot have sex with someone under 18"

"Allowing a person to send nudes to people or other pictures"

"Both persons in the relationship being free to decide what they want to do"

"when you are able to make your own decisions in a relationship"

"Consent is someone's willingness to engage in anything that may make them feel insecure e.g partying, drinking, kissing or sex"

"Having mutual agreement to engage in sexual activities without feeling intimidated or threatened into doing it"

Do you know what consent is? If yes, what is your understanding of consent?

(Answers include examples of the raw data collected):

MALE: 16/17 YEARS OLD

"Understanding that they can say no."

"if they say no they mean no"

"Is giving permission, making your partner feel happy."

"when you are 17 and you have permission from your partner to have sexual interaction. Both of you agree on giving each other consent and not pressuring it or take advantage."

"If both people are happy and give permission to each other regarding certain things"

"having ur partners permission to do anything that involves u more than them"

"A definitive yes that the other person you are engaging in the relationship with is willing to proceed in whatever action is taking place"

"Consent is a mutual agreement, often in reference to sexual intercourse, that ensures both parties are invested and comfortable with a given action. However, in a healthy relationship, I believe a couple should understand each other enough to know what consent is and if they are comfortable with each other"

"Consent means saying yes or no towards a sexual activity. Consent can be withdraw"

Do you know what consent is? If yes, what is your understanding of consent?

(Answers include examples of the raw data collected):

MALE: 18+

• "Both people happy or agree to things you do including many other things not just sex"

• "Both parties agree to sexual contact"

"Agreement"

"Both parties must agree to take part otherwise consent is not given"

"Yes means yes, no means no"

• "It is a understand and respect between the couple of what they are happy to part take in without being pressured into doing it"

• "both party's need to sit down and talk about what each other is comfortable with"

"no agreeing to something you are not comfortable with"

• "Consent is when yourself and your partner are looking a bit. You have a mutual understanding when your looking some."

Do you know what consent is? If yes, what is your understanding of consent?

(Answers include examples of the raw data collected):

FEMALE 12/13 YEARS OLD

"allow someone to have sexual relations with you"

"To not force or put pressure on someone and make sure they give you consent to do something"

"Allowing something to happen"

"there permission to engage in sexual activities"

"I don't know what it means"

"Consent is like to do things"

"giving permission"

"At what age u can have a relationship"

"Idk (I don't know) what consent means"

"When two people give permission to have sex"

Do you know what consent is? If yes, what is your understanding of consent?

(Answers include examples of the raw data collected):

FEMALE 14/15 YEARS OLD

"Making sure your partner is comfortable with what you're doing"

"To ask permission"

"Permission to do things and that both people are comfortable"

"consent is getting mutual permission from the person you are relationship with and yourself to do things in a relationship"

"Making sure if you are wanting to do anything with another person that they are in the right state of mind, say yes or you're not taking advantage of them - eg if they're drunk and didn't say yes or no"

"Being allowed to do/carry out certain activities, certain tasks. Your partner may give you this consent"

"Agreeing to being touched or kissed in a sexual way"

"If you consent to any form of touching, sending things, etc., you are enthusiastically saying yes to it. If there is any hesitation at all on either side, there is no consent"

"Age of consent and that you both are sure you want to do something"

"My permission and will to do something i am comfortable doing and willing to accept the consequences for"

Do you know what consent is? If yes, what is your understanding of consent?

(Answers include examples of the raw data collected):

FEMALE 16/17 YEARS OLD

"Consent is when each partner agrees on a certain action/subject usually related to sex"

"your partner asks for permission to do certain things"

"Telling someone that you want to engage in sexual intercourse while you're in a fit state. Eg. Sober"

"Giving consent is giving the other person permission to have sex with you"

"Consent is agreeing to do something fully and saying yes, not being forced to do so it is completely of your own free will"

"to give permission for things to be done to u with or associated with u"

"Saying yes to things without pressure and being allowed and comfortable to say no before or during things"

"giving a person permission to act in a certain way with you but also that there is an understanding that a person can change their mind"

"Doesn't matter how close you are, no means no"

Its clarifying with a person your with is it ok to do this or that and there comfortable about doing it and don't feel pushed into anymore they don't want to do"

Do you know what consent is? If yes, what is your understanding of consent?

(Answers include examples of the raw data collected):

FEMALE 18+

"be allowed to agree or disagree to how far sexually relationship is carried"

"saying you're comfortable with whatever you're doing"

"Being able to have a choice when in sexual activity and choosing for yourself"

"Giving verbal words to say yes in partaking in sexual activities with another person. Consent has to be verbal."

"The ability to decide whether I should take part in the activity sex, sexual behaviour etc"

"Consent is an absolutely necessary part of a healthy relationship. Consent in a dating relationship is when partners mutually agree to sexual activity. This can include hugging, kissing, touching or sex. ... Also, just because someone consents to something one time, it does not mean that they will always consent."

"Letting the other person know you feel comfortable doing whatever and giving them 999 permission to touch you"

"When you have talked and discussed at length if you would like to have sex with one another and if your of the right age and maturity"

"Consent is essentially agreeing to take part in something whether it being kissing, sex etc"

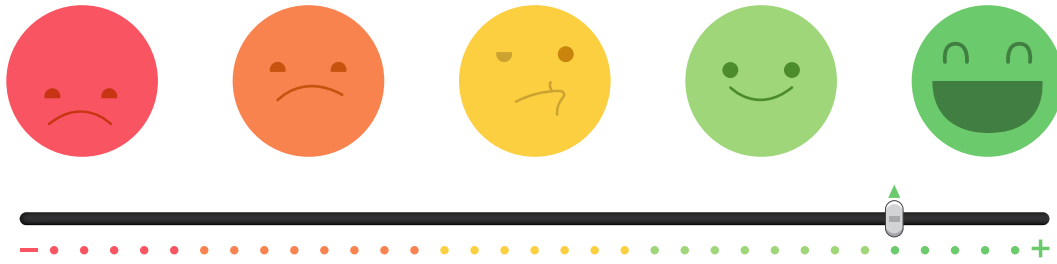
"Verbal clarification to make sure both parties are comfortable with a proposed action"

OTHERS:

"it is to give permission"

"THE MEANS OF COMMUNICATION THAT CONFIRMS ONES WILLINGNESS TO DO SOMETHING (I.E. ENGAGE IN SEX)"

MONAGHAN COMHAIRE NA NÓG EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg believe that the survey findings show that there is a clear need for young people in Co. Monaghan to receive more education around the topic of relationships.

Findings that stood out to members include the following:



Have you ever been asked to send a "nude" picture through social media?

The findings show that younger females, 12/13 year olds 37.50% and 14/15 years old 60.61%, were far more likely than their male counterparts, 12/13 years old 6.65% and 14/15 year olds 21.88%, to be asked to send a nude picture. The gap does close the older the young people get, males 16/17 years old 64% and females of the same age 79.71%.



Do you feel pressured to dress or act in a certain way at a teenage disco?

(e.g.: "Get with someone", drink alcohol, wear revealing clothing? Females in the younger age category, 45% yes, felt pressured to act or dress in a certain way at discos, however the boys/males of the same age worked out at 25%. The older the young people got the amounts facing pressure to act or behave a certain way increased significantly for males and females, 16/17-year-old male group 52% and females of the same age 62%. Large numbers of young people mentioned the pressure to drink alcohol or dress a certain way.



Sexual Identity

Comhairle members felt that 92.07% identifying as 'Straight' was higher than they would have estimated.



If you have ever been in relationship was it mostly healthy or mostly unhealthy?

Females in all age ranges were more likely to have experienced a negative relationship than their male counterparts. In the younger ages, females 14/15 year olds 20% had experienced a negative relationship, males of the same age were only 3.28%.

MONAGHAN COMHAIRE NA NÓG

RECOMMENDATIONS

Monaghan Comhairle have the following recommendations based on the findings of the survey:

1. Relationship programme for First and Second Year students

Comhairle members felt that there is a need for young people in first and second year to receive more information on relationships through a structured programme over a period of time, opposed to one of events.

Comhairle members felt that the programme would cover the same issues in both years but the issues would be more advanced, "heavier", in second year as the students became more mature.

In first year Comhairle members recommend that young people cover topics such as:

- Peer pressure e.g. pressure to kiss someone before a certain age, clothing for disco
- Using social media correctly and safely e.g. not giving people your password or sharing too much information.
- A basic understanding of consent
- Characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Friendships (Doesn't always have to be about boyfriends and girlfriend)
- LGBT+ Relationship information

In Second year Comhairle members recommend that young people cover topics such as:

- Peer Pressure e.g. pressure to become more sexually active.
- Using Social Media correctly and safely e.g. consequences of sending nudes and sexting
- Consent- Sexual consent and how to clearly give consent.
- Sex talk – Safe sex.

Comhairle members felt that a programme would work best if it was delivered by Youth Workers, similar to another programme delivered in schools in Co. Monaghan "Don't Pour Your Dreams Away". They also believed that young people would be more inclined to speak about such topics if their teacher was not present, but Comhairle members understood that this is not always possible.

Comhairle members believe that the programme would be best delivered in small mixed groups, male/females/others, as it would be a good way for the opposite sex to listen to each other's viewpoints. They also stressed that young people would be more willing to engage in conversations if the programme was run towards the end of the first year as students will be more comfortable with their peers by this stage in the year, opposed to the beginning of first year.

2. Consent talk education for students in TY/LCA

Comhairle members recommend that consent talks for young people in TY/LCA, 15-17 year olds, would be beneficial as a follow up to the 1st/2nd year Relationship Programme suggested above. Large numbers of Comhairle members between the ages of 15-17 year olds have yet to receive information or talk on consent in their schools.

APPENDIX

The Survey

Monaghan Comhairle na nÓg are working on promoting positive relationships this year. As part of our project we would like to get an understanding of what romantic relationships are like for young people in Co. Monaghan

BASIC INFORMATION

*1. Age:12-13

- 14-15
- 16-17
- 18+

*2. Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Other

*3. Which word best describes your sexual identity?

- Straight
- Gay
- Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Homosexual
- Other (please specify)

RELATIONSHIPS AND YOU

*4. Have you ever been in a relationship?

- I'm in one right now
- I have been in one but I'm not any more
- I have never been in a relationship

5. What is the longest relationship you have been in? (Skip if not relevant)

.....

*6. What age do you think is an acceptable age to get into a relationship with a partner?

.....

*7. Please select the top 5 characteristics of a healthy relationship to you. E.g. Respect, Equality etc.

- Quality 1.....
- Quality 2.....
- Quality 3.....
- Quality 5.....
- Quality 5.....

***8. Please select the top 5 characteristics of an unhealthy relationship to you.**

E.g. Violence, Jealousy

Quality 1.....

Quality 2.....

Quality 3.....

Quality 4.....

Quality 5.....

***9. If you have ever been in a relationship was it mostly healthy or mostly unhealthy**

Mostly Healthy

Mostly Unhealthy

Never in a relationship

***10. If a friend was in an unhealthy relationship, do you think you would be able to spot the signs?**

Yes No

If yes, what signs would you be able to spot?.....

.....

***11. How confident would you be telling a friend they were in an unhealthy relationship?**

Afraid to tell them

Not sure

Completely comfortable telling them

12. If you were in a relationship would you let your partner...

(Tick all that apply or move onto next question if you wouldn't let them)

Read your text messages

Decide who you can or can't socialise with

Decide what you can or can't wear

Do your homework for you

Buy you expensive gifts

Lie for you

***13. Do you think young people get taught enough about relationships?**

Not even close

Not Sure

We get taught loads about it

***14. In relation to relationships, what information do you think young people should be taught** (Tick all that apply)

Sexual health

Relationships and Social Media

Warning signs of a negative relationship

Peer pressure

Legal issues e.g. age of consent

Other (please specify).....

***15. Where would you like to receive information on relationship? (Tick all that apply)**

From a teacher

A youth worker

An older school peer (TY students)

Parents/Guardians

Other (please specify).....

16. How would you like a relationship programme be run?

One day session

A long term programme e.g. 12 week programme

SOCIALISING AND RELATIONSHIPS

***17. What social media profiles do you use?**

(Tick all that apply)

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Snapchat
- Tik Tok
- Twitter
- House Party

***18. Do you communicate with your friends more through social media or in person?**

- Social Media
- In Person

***19. Have you ever been asked to do or say something through social media that has made you feel uncomfortable?**

- Yes
- No

If yes, please share what it was that made you feel uncomfortable. (If you feel comfortable to do so)

.....
***20. What is your understanding of the word "Sexting"?**

.....
***21. Have you ever been asked to send a "nude" picture through social media?**

- Yes
- No

If yes, was this from someone you know or a stranger?

.....
***22. If you were in a relationship would you share your social media password with your partner?**

- Yes
- No

***23. Have you ever attended a teenage disco?**

- Yes
- No

***24. Do you feel pressure to dress or act in a certain way at teenage discos? (e.g "Get with someone", Drink Alcohol, Wear revealing clothing)**

- Yes
- No

If yes, Please specify

CONSENT

***25. Do you know what consent is?**

- Yes
- No

***26. If yes, What is your understanding of the word consent, in relation to being in a relationship?**

.....

LIST OF RESOURCES



- SpunOut.ie is Ireland's youth information website created by young people, for young people. www.spunout.ie/health/category/health-sexual-health
- Belongto is the national organisation supporting young LGBTI people and their parents. www.belongto.ie
- TENI is the national organisation supporting transgender people, including young transgender people and their parents www.teni.ie
- HSE: Sexualwellbeing.ie is the HSE's sexual health website. It has a section to help parents talk with their children about relationships, sexuality and growing up. www.sexualwellbeing.ie
- HSE: You Can Talk to Me is a free DVD and booklet to help parents talk with their 11 to 15 year-olds about sexual health. Available to order from www.healthpromotion.ie.
- HSE: Advice for Mams & Dads – Talking to Teenagers about Relationships & Sex is a free supplement to assist parents of older adolescents in talking with their teenagers about relationships and sexuality. www.healthpromotion.ie/hp-files/docs/HCP00671.pdf
- HSE: B4uDecide.ie is the HSE's website on relationships and sexuality for young people. It also has sections for parents, teachers and youth workers. www.b4udecide.ie/parents/



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