

# Early sexual intercourse

*Didier Garriguet*

## Abstract

### *Objectives*

This analysis estimates the percentage of adolescents who have had sexual intercourse by age 14 or 15 and examines characteristics at age 12 or 13 that are associated with early sexual activity.

### *Data source*

The data are from the 1996/97, 1998/99 and 2000/01 National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, conducted by Statistics Canada.

### *Analytical techniques*

Descriptive statistics were used to determine the proportion of 14- or 15-year-olds who have had sexual intercourse. Logistic regression was used to model sexual activity at age 14 or 15 in relation to the adolescent's characteristics at age 12 or 13.

### *Main results*

The percentages of boys and girls who had had intercourse by age 14 or 15 were almost the same—12% and 13%—but the characteristics associated with such behaviour differed. Among girls, region of residence, the onset of puberty, weak self-concept, having tried smoking or drinking, and not being overweight were significantly associated with early sexual activity. For boys, older age, a poor relationship with parents, low household income, and having tried smoking were significant.

## Key words

sex behaviour, adolescent behaviour, risk behaviour, lifestyle

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A substantial number of Canadian adolescents are sexually active at a relatively young age. The proportion reporting having had sexual intercourse by age 15 has been rising since the beginning of the 1980s.<sup>1</sup>

Early sexual intercourse can have serious consequences. The sooner that young people begin having sex, the longer they are exposed to the risk of an unwanted pregnancy or of contracting a sexually transmitted infection.<sup>2</sup> Teenage mothers have difficulty completing school; therefore, their economic and career opportunities are restricted,<sup>3-7</sup> and their likelihood of living in poverty is relatively high.<sup>8</sup> As well, babies born to teenagers are at greater risk of premature birth, low birth weight and of dying during their first year of life.<sup>9,10</sup>

Several recent American studies have profiled the characteristics of young people who have had sexual intercourse.<sup>7,11-13</sup> However, generalizations about Canadian adolescents based on American research may be misleading. Moreover, those reports typically focused on teenagers older

than 15. The sexual activity of younger adolescents has received relatively little attention, even though they are the group who would have the longest exposure to the associated risks. While a profile of these young people is informative in itself, it may be even more useful to identify characteristics that are precursors of early sexual activity.

This article uses data from cycles 2, 3 and 4 of the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and

Youth (NLSCY) to examine characteristics at age 12 or 13 that are associated with having had sexual intercourse by age 14 or 15 (see *Methods* and *Definitions*). The independent variables selected for analysis are demographic, socio-economic and personal characteristics that either tend to increase the likelihood of having sex or are protective factors that reduce the likelihood.

## Methods

### Data source

This analysis is based on data from cycles 2, 3 and 4 of the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY). Data collection for each cycle began in September of 1996, 1998 and 2000, respectively, and lasted 10 months. The dependent variable (having had sexual intercourse) was derived from cycles 3 and 4. The sample selected for the first cycle of the NLSCY (1994/95) was representative of the population in 1994. Therefore, this analysis considers two groups of children: those aged 8 or 9 in 1994/95 who were 14 or 15 in 2000/01 (cycle 4), and those aged 10 or 11 in 1994/95 who were 14 or 15 in 1998/99 (cycle 3). The characteristics of these children at ages 12 or 13 (in 1998/99 for the first group and in 1996/97 for the second) were examined to identify factors associated with having had sex by age 14 or 15.

The sampling frame used to select the initial sample for the NLSCY was the list of households responding to the Labour Force Survey. Households chosen for the sample had to include at least one member aged 0 to 11 in 1994.<sup>14</sup>

In each household, the person considered most knowledgeable about the child (usually the mother) answered a set of questions during a telephone interview. If the selected child was aged 10 or older, the interviewer went to the home and had the child complete a written questionnaire in private. To ensure confidentiality, the child placed the questionnaire in an envelope and sealed it before giving it back to the interviewer.

The self-reported component of the questionnaire has a relatively high non-response rate: 14% for cycle 3 and 24% for cycle 4. The data were reweighted, based on sex and province. This analysis pertains to 3,212 children who were aged 14 or 15 in 1998/99 or in 2000/01 (Appendix Table A).

### Analytical techniques

Descriptive statistics were used to present estimates of the proportion of 14- or 15-year-olds who had had sexual intercourse in relation to selected characteristics of these adolescents at age 12 or 13. The

percentages were calculated using the longitudinal weights from cycles 3 and 4 for children who participated in cycle 1. The weights are mutually exclusive and represent the population aged 8 to 11 in the 10 provinces in 1994.

Logistic regression was used to model having had sexual intercourse by age 14 or 15 in relation to the child's characteristics at 12 or 13. Based on a review of the literature and the availability of data in the NLSCY, the following variables were included in the full model: sex, cohort, age, region, onset of puberty, body mass index, self-concept, parent-child relationship, smoking, alcohol consumption, family income, religious attendance, household education, family type, time alone at home, emotional problems, number of friends, and relationships with friends (Appendix Table B). The final model used to compare the sexes retained the following variables: sex, cohort, age, region, onset of puberty, self-concept, parent-child relationship, smoking, alcohol consumption, family income, body mass index and religious attendance. To ensure an adequate sample size, "missing value" categories were included for some independent variables, but their odds ratios are not shown.

To account for survey design effects, coefficients of variation, standard errors and confidence intervals were calculated with the bootstrap technique.<sup>15,16</sup> The significance level was set at  $p < 0.05$ .

### Limitations

The validity of the self-reported data in this analysis is unknown. Adolescents may give socially acceptable answers to questions about matters such as sexual activity, alcohol consumption and smoking that are not accurate reflections of their behaviour. On the other hand, young people may exaggerate their experience in these matters. Recall errors are also possible.<sup>17</sup>

The term "sexual intercourse" was not defined in the NLSCY question. While some respondents may consider certain behaviour to constitute sexual intercourse, others may not.

### More than 1 in 10

By age 14 or 15, about 13% of Canadian adolescents have had sexual intercourse. The percentages were almost the same for boys and girls: 12% and 13%, respectively (Appendix Table A). However, the variables that were related to early sexual intercourse differed for boys and girls. These factors can include physical development such as the onset of puberty and weight; psychological traits such as self-concept; the parent-child relationship; socio-economic status; and willingness to engage in other risk-taking behaviours such as drinking and smoking (see *Definitions*). As well, these characteristics do not exist in isolation. For instance, an adolescent who is experimenting with behaviours such as drinking and smoking may have a poor relationship with his or her parents.

### High in east, low in west

Young adolescents in the eastern provinces and Québec were more likely to report being sexually active than were those in Ontario and the west (Chart 1). At age 14 or 15, 15% of adolescents in the Atlantic provinces and 18% in Québec reported

having had sex, compared with around 10% in Ontario and the western provinces.

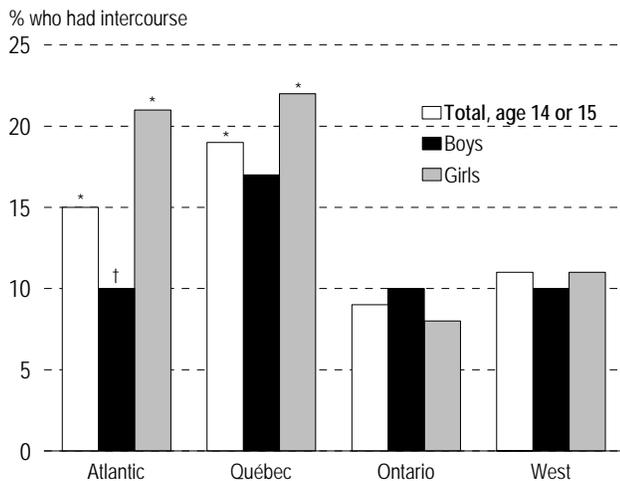
But when the results were examined separately for boys and girls, and the effects of the other physical, psychological, socio-economic and familial factors were taken into account, these regional differences persisted only for girls (Table 1). The odds of early sexual intercourse were high for girls in the Atlantic provinces and Québec, compared with Ontario. The odds that boys would have had sex by age 14 or 15 did not differ significantly from one region to another.

### Age and physical development

As might be anticipated, the percentage of 15-year-olds who had had sexual intercourse was higher than the percentage of 14-year-olds. But when adjustments were made to control for the effects of the other variables, the difference was significant only for boys. Girls aged 14 were no less likely than those aged 15 to be sexually active.

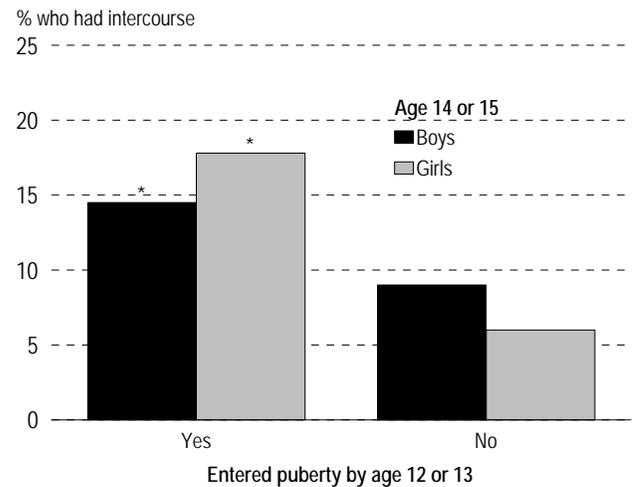
Physical development is closely tied to the age at which adolescents first have sexual intercourse. Among those who had entered puberty by age 12

Chart 1  
Percentage of 14- or 15-year-old boys and girls reporting sexual intercourse in 1998/99 or 2000/01, by region, household population, Canada excluding territories



Data source: 1998/99 and 2000/01 National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, longitudinal file  
\* Significantly higher than corresponding value for Ontario ( $p < 0.05$ )  
† Significantly lower than value for girls in same region ( $p < 0.05$ )

Chart 2  
Percentage of 14- or 15-year-old boys and girls reporting sexual intercourse in 1998/99 or 2000/01, by onset of puberty at age 12 or 13, household population, Canada excluding territories



Data source: 1996/97, 1998/99 and 2000/01 National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, longitudinal file  
\* Significantly higher than value for same sex who had not entered puberty ( $p < 0.05$ )

or 13, nearly 15% of the boys and 18% of the girls reported having had sex by age 14 or 15. For those who had not entered puberty by age 12 or 13, the proportions reporting sexual activity were 8% and 6%, respectively (Chart 2).

When the effects of the other variables were taken into consideration, the onset of puberty was

significantly related to early sexual intercourse only among girls (Table 1). This result may be because the indicator of puberty used for boys (change in voice range) is not as good a measure of development as the indicator used for girls (menstruation).

This association between puberty and early sexual intercourse among girls is not necessarily cause-and-

Table 1

Percentage of and adjusted odds ratios for 14- or 15-year-old boys and girls reporting sexual intercourse in 1998/99 or 2000/01, by selected characteristics at age 12 or 13, household population, Canada excluding territories

	Boys			Girls		
	%	Adjusted odds ratio	95% confidence interval	%	Adjusted odds ratio	95% confidence interval
<b>Cohort</b>						
2000/01 (aged 8 or 9 in 1994/95)	1.35	1.72*	1.04, 2.81	12.5	0.86	0.52, 1.40
1998/99 (aged 10 or 11 in 1994/95) <sup>†</sup>	10.0	1.00	...	14.4	1.00	...
<b>Age</b>						
14 <sup>†</sup>	8.4	1.00	...	11.4	1.00	...
15	15.1*	1.77*	1.04, 2.82	15.5	0.93	0.61, 1.46
<b>Region</b>						
Atlantic	10.7	0.86	0.44, 1.71	20.7*	2.80*	1.68, 5.47
Québec	17.1	1.45	0.72, 2.90	22.1*	2.30*	1.37, 4.45
Ontario <sup>†</sup>	10.2	1.00	...	8.2	1.00	...
West	9.9	0.83	0.49, 1.56	11.4	1.04	0.61, 2.01
<b>Onset of puberty</b>						
Yes	14.5*	1.23	0.74, 2.19	17.8*	3.46*	1.91, 5.72
No <sup>†</sup>	9.4	1.00	...	5.7	1.00	...
<b>Body mass index</b>						
Overweight <sup>†</sup>	10.0	1.00	...	10.2	1.00	...
Not overweight	12.1	1.11	0.53, 2.42	13.9	2.10*	1.01, 4.66
<b>Self-concept</b>						
Strong <sup>†</sup>	12.6	1.00	...	10.9	1.00	...
Weak	9.3	0.42*	0.21, 0.89	19.4*	1.84*	1.02, 3.07
<b>Parent-child relationship<sup>‡</sup></b>						
Poor	21.6*	3.05*	1.69, 5.23	21.0*	1.70	0.98, 3.06
Good <sup>†</sup>	10.1	1.00	...	12.0	1.00	...
<b>Tried smoking cigarettes</b>						
Yes	26.7*	6.95*	4.06, 11.69	27.8*	3.75*	2.23, 6.74
No <sup>†</sup>	6.4	1.00	...	7.1	1.00	...
<b>Tried drinking alcohol</b>						
Yes	17.2*	1.41	0.79, 2.53	21.9*	2.18*	1.27, 3.90
No <sup>†</sup>	7.4	1.00	...	8.4	1.00	...
<b>Family income<sup>‡</sup></b>						
Below LICO	21.4*	2.23*	1.17, 3.84	18.6	0.99	0.49, 1.77
At or above LICO <sup>†</sup>	10.0	1.00	...	12.3	1.00	...
<b>Religious attendance in past 12 months<sup>‡</sup></b>						
Yes <sup>†</sup>	11.6	1.00	...	12.7	1.00	...
No	12.2	0.90	0.50, 1.51	16.0	1.31	0.80, 2.31

*Data source:* 1996/97, 1998/99 and 2000/01 National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, longitudinal file

*Note:* Models are based on records for 1,593 boys and 1,619 girls. Variables for "missing" onset of puberty, self-concept, parent-child relationship, smoking, drinking, body mass index and religious attendance were entered into the models; odds ratios are not shown.

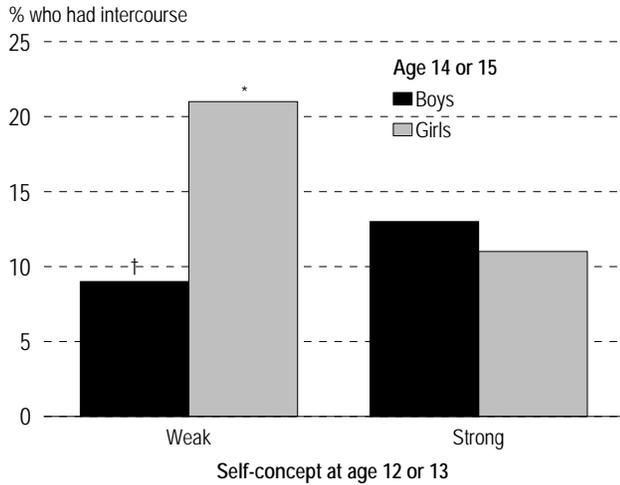
<sup>†</sup> Reference category

<sup>‡</sup> Reported by parent

\* Significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

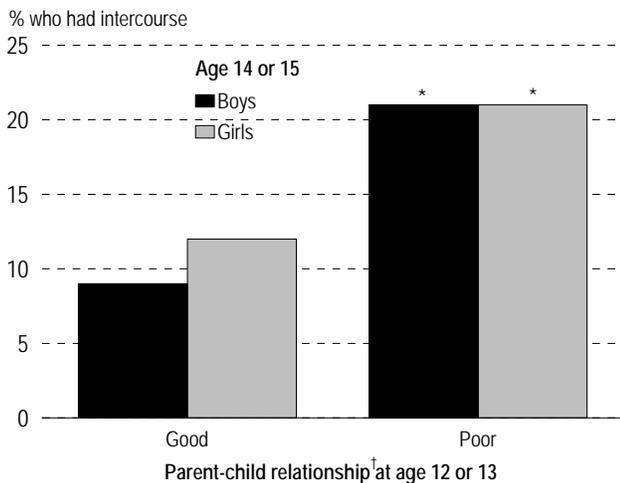
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Chart 3  
 Percentage of 14- or 15-year-old boys and girls reporting sexual intercourse in 1998/99 or 2000/01, by self-concept at age 12 or 13, household population, Canada excluding territories



Data source: 1996/97, 1998/99 and 2000/01 National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, longitudinal file  
 \* Significantly higher than value for girls with strong self-concept ( $p < 0.05$ )  
 † Significantly lower than value for boys with strong self-concept ( $p < 0.05$ )

Chart 4  
 Percentage of 14- or 15-year-old boys and girls reporting sexual intercourse in 1998/99 or 2000/01, by parent-child relationship at age 12 or 13, household population, Canada excluding territories



Data source: 1996/97, 1998/99 and 2000/01 National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, longitudinal file  
 † Reported by parent  
 \* Significantly higher than value for same sex who had good relationship with parents ( $p < 0.05$ )

effect. The proportion of girls having sex before age 15 has been rising for about two decades,<sup>18</sup> yet most recent studies indicate no real change in the age of first menstruation over that time.<sup>19</sup> Factors other than the onset of puberty are also associated with early sexual activity.

For girls, weight was related to having had intercourse by ages 14 or 15. The odds of having done so were twice as high for girls who were not overweight at ages 12 or 13, compared with those who were overweight. By contrast, among boys, weight was not associated with having had intercourse.

### Self-concept

Self-concept is how adolescents view themselves: do they generally like the way they are? feel that they have much to be proud of? consider themselves competent? Girls whose self-concept was weak at age 12 or 13 were much more likely than those with a strong self-concept to have had sexual intercourse by 14 or 15 (Chart 3). The opposite was true for boys—those with a weak self-concept were less likely to have had sex. Even allowing for the influence of other variables, these opposing associations between self-concept and sexual intercourse persisted (Table 1).

### At home

According to the analysis of NLSCY data, around 20% of boys and girls whose parent reported a poor relationship with them at age 12 or 13 had had sexual intercourse by the time they were 14 or 15 (Chart 4). This was about double the proportion for young people whose parent had said that the relationship was good. However, when the other factors related to the adolescent's development and behaviour were accounted for, the parent-child relationship was significantly associated with early sexual intercourse only among boys (Table 1).

Adolescents living in low-income households were more likely to have had intercourse than were those in households above the Statistics Canada low-income cut-offs. But again, when the effects of the other factors were controlled, the association

## Definitions

The National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY) contains the question: "Have you ever had sexual intercourse?" This was asked as part of a written questionnaire that adolescents aged 14 and 15 completed themselves, then placed in an envelope, sealed, and gave to the interviewer.

The independent variables used in this analysis pertain to the adolescents' characteristics at age 12 or 13. Some of these variables came from the self-completed questionnaire.

Adolescents aged 12 and 13 were categorized according to whether they had entered *puberty*. For girls, this was signalled by having had a menstrual period; for boys, by a change in voice range.

*Body mass index (BMI)* was calculated based on the height and weight of the adolescent; specifically, weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in metres. Respondents were classified as overweight according to the age- and sex-specific BMI cut-offs defined by Cole et al.<sup>20</sup>

Overweight is body mass index greater than or equal to:

Age	Boys	Girls
12	21.56	22.14
13	22.27	22.98

To measure *self-concept*, adolescent respondents were asked to reply to four statements on a five-point scale: false (score 0); mostly false (1); sometimes false/sometimes true (2); mostly true (3); and true (4):

- In general, I like the way I am.
- Overall, I have a lot to be proud of.
- A lot of things about me are good.
- When I do something, I do it well.

Scores could range from 0 to 16, with higher scores indicating a strong self-concept. Scores of 10 or less (lowest decile of the weighted distribution) were defined as indicating a weak self-concept.

Those who had *tried smoking cigarettes* were compared with those who had not.

Adolescent respondents were asked if they had ever had a drink. In cycle 2, the response choices were "yes" or "no"; in cycle 3, "yes, at least one glass" and "yes, a few sips" were combined for the "yes" category. All individuals with such responses were considered to have *tried drinking alcohol*.

The other independent variables came from the questionnaire completed by the "person most knowledgeable" about the child, usually the mother.

*Parent-child relationship* was based on a problem resolution scale, with values ranging from 0 to 28, depending on the parent's responses to eight true/false statements about his/her relations with the adolescent:

- We disagree and fight.
- We bug each other or get on each other's nerves.
- We yell at each other.
- When we argue, we stay angry for a very long time.
- When we disagree, we refuse to speak to each other.
- When we disagree, one of us stomps out of the room, or house, or yard.
- We make up easily when we have a fight (reverse scored).
- When we disagree, we solve problems together (reverse scored).

High scores indicate greater conflict. Parent-child relationships were considered to be poor if the score was 12 or more (ninth decile of the weighted distribution).

Using the Consumer Price Index, Statistics Canada establishes low-income cut-offs (LICOs), which are income thresholds calculated for different geographic and family-size categories. For this analysis, the LICO calculated in 1996 was used to determine if an adolescent's *family income* placed him or her below or at/above the LICO.

*Religious attendance* (services or meetings) was collapsed into two groups: the adolescent had or had not attended a religious service (aside from special occasions such as weddings) in the previous 12 months.

between low income and having had sex was significant only for boys.

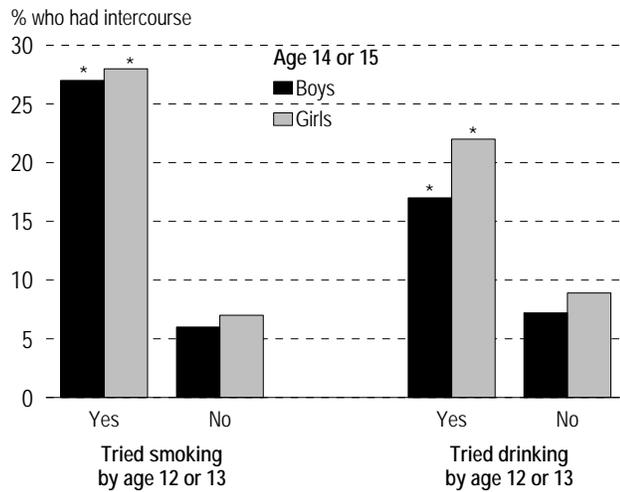
### Risk-takers

In previous research, associations have emerged between drinking, smoking and sexual activity among adolescents.<sup>21</sup> While these three risk behaviours are closely linked and tend to be initiated around the same time, it cannot be inferred that one "causes" another. Rather, these are a cluster of behaviours characteristic of adolescents who are "risk-takers."

At age 12 or 13, 26% of boys and 31% of girls reported that they had tried smoking cigarettes (Appendix Table A). By age 14 or 15, over a quarter of this group reported that they had had intercourse. By contrast, just 6% who had not tried smoking by age 12 or 13 had had sex (Chart 5). Even when the effects of the other factors were taken into account, the association between smoking and early sexual intercourse was significant for both sexes (Table 1).

Close to half (45%) of the boys and over a third (37%) of the girls reported that they had tried drinking by age 12 or 13. Among those who had

Chart 5  
Percentage of 14- or 15-year-old boys and girls reporting sexual intercourse in 1998/99 or 2000/01, by smoking and drinking at age 12 or 13, household population, Canada excluding territories



Data source: 1996/97, 1998/99 and 2000/01 National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, longitudinal file  
\* Significantly higher than value for same sex who had not tried smoking/drinking ( $p < 0.05$ )

done so, 17% of the boys and 22% of the girls reported having had sex by age 14 or 15, compared with 7% and 9%, respectively, of those who had not consumed alcohol. But when the effects of the other factors were considered, the association between alcohol consumption and early sexual intercourse was significant only for girls.

### Religious attendance

In the United States, one of the factors most extensively studied in relation to adolescent sexual activity is the influence of religion. American research has shown that adolescents who do not practice a religion have a higher probability of having sex, compared with those who do practice a religion.<sup>13</sup> By contrast, according to the analysis of NLSCY data, the situation is not the same in Canada: 12- or 13-year-olds who reported that they had not attended religious services in the previous year were no more or less likely than those who had done so to be sexually active by age 14 or 15 (Table 1).

Table 2  
Percentage of 14- or 15-year-olds reporting sexual intercourse in 1998/99 or 2000/01, by religious attendance over time, household population, Canada excluding territories

Religious attendance (Age 12 or 13→Age 14 or 15)	% reporting sexual intercourse at age 14 or 15
Attend→Attend <sup>†</sup>	10
Attend→Do not attend	23*
Do not attend→Attend	14
Do not attend→Do not attend	14

Data sources: 1996/97, 1998/99 and 2000/01 National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, longitudinal file

<sup>†</sup> Reference category

\* Significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

However, a change in religious attendance was related to the likelihood of having sexual intercourse. Between the ages of 12 or 13 and 14 or 15, the proportion of adolescents who did not regularly attend religious services rose from 23% to 32% (data not shown). Those who had ceased religious attendance were significantly more likely to have had sexual intercourse by age 14 or 15 than were those who continued to attend (Table 2). However, young people who started to attend religious services were no more or less likely to have had intercourse.

### Concluding remarks

Results from the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth show that by age 14 or 15, 13% of adolescents have had sexual intercourse. Several characteristics at age 12 or 13 were associated with having sex at an early age. However, these characteristics were not the same for boys and girls. For girls, the important factors tended to be more personal and individual than those that seemed to make a difference for boys, which had more to do with their social context. Among girls, weight, the onset of puberty, a weak self-concept and having tried smoking or drinking were significantly associated with early intercourse. For boys, older age, a poor parent-child relationship, low family income, and having tried smoking were significant. As well, a weak self-concept reduced the odds that boys would have had sexual intercourse by age 14 or 15.

This analysis demonstrates temporal relationships between several characteristics at ages 12 or 13 and having had sexual intercourse two years later, but they should not be interpreted as cause-and-effect associations. These characteristics are, however, precursors, and knowing some of the early signs

makes it possible for parents, teachers and health professionals to better target messages about the consequences of early sexual activity to those young people who are most at risk of engaging in such behaviour. ●

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Table A  
Distribution of selected characteristics of 12- or 13-year-olds, household population, Canada excluding territories, 1996/97 and 1998/99

	Boys			Girls		
	Sample size	Estimated population		Sample size	Estimated population	
		'000	%		'000	%
<b>Total</b>	1,593	812	100	1,619	770	100
<b>Sexual intercourse by age 14 or 15</b>						
Yes	211	95	12	254	103	13
No	1,382	717	88	1,365	667	87
<b>Age 14 or 15 in:</b>						
2000/01	672	405	50	689	385	50
1998/99	921	407	50	930	386	50
<b>Age when asked about sexual intercourse</b>						
14	894	405	50	905	385	50
15	699	407	50	714	386	50
<b>Region</b>						
Atlantic	373	68	8	409	65	8
Québec	281	185	23	310	176	23
Ontario	411	302	37	395	286	37
West	528	257	32	505	244	32
<b>Onset of puberty<sup>†</sup></b>						
No	838	435	54	572	277	36
Yes	533	267	33	817	374	49
Missing	222	110	13	230	119	15
<b>Body mass index<sup>†</sup></b>						
Overweight	275	133	16	233	98	13
Not overweight	1,318	679	84	1,386	673	87
<b>Self-concept<sup>†</sup></b>						
Strong	1,221	603	74	1,162	544	71
Weak	249	137	17	334	164	21
Missing	123	72	9	123	62	8
<b>Parent-child relationship<sup>†</sup></b>						
Poor	220	116	14	258	124	16
Good	1,319	665	82	1,300	608	79
Missing	54	31	4	61	38	5
<b>Tried smoking cigarettes<sup>†</sup></b>						
Yes	447	214	26	534	236	31
No	956	497	61	923	437	57
Missing	190	101	12	162	97	13
<b>Tried drinking alcohol<sup>†</sup></b>						
Yes	690	363	45	622	285	37
No	748	365	45	861	401	52
Missing	155	84	10	136	84	11
<b>Family income<sup>†</sup></b>						
Below LICO	250	124	15	248	134	17
At or above LICO	1,277	652	80	1,305	597	78
Missing	66	36	4	66	39	5
<b>Highest education in household<sup>†</sup></b>						
Postsecondary graduation	1,259	655	81	1,260	602	78
Less than postsecondary graduation	291	132	16	320	140	18
Missing	43	25	3	39	28	4
<b>Family type<sup>†</sup></b>						
Lone-parent	243	126	16	259	128	17
Two parents	1,309	663	82	1,321	614	80
Missing	41	24	3	39	28	4
<b>Time alone at home<sup>†</sup></b>						
One hour or more a day	507	258	32	557	226	30
Less than one hour a day	871	439	54	879	440	57
Missing	215	115	14	183	104	14
<b>Emotional problems<sup>†</sup></b>						
Yes	111	54	7	179	88	11
No	1,242	637	78	1,221	573	74
Missing	240	121	15	219	109	14
<b>Relationships with friends<sup>†</sup></b>						
Poor	237	119	15	138	74	10
Good	1,237	630	78	1,365	628	82
Missing	119	64	8	116	68	9
<b>Religious attendance in past 12 months<sup>†</sup></b>						
Yes	1,102	546	67	1,157	523	68
No	339	193	24	334	177	23
Missing	152	73	9	128	70	9

Data source: 1996/97, 1998/99 and 2000/01 National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, longitudinal file

† At age 12 or 13

Table B

Adjusted odds ratios for 14- or 15-year-olds reporting sexual intercourse in 1998/99 or 2000/01, by selected characteristics at age 12 or 13, household population, Canada excluding territories

	Adjusted odds ratio	95% confidence interval		Adjusted odds ratio	95% confidence interval
<b>Sex</b>			<b>Tried drinking alcohol</b>		
Boys†	1.00	...	Yes	1.81 *	1.21, 2.75
Girls	0.95	0.70, 1.36	No†	1.00	...
<b>Cohort</b>			<b>Family income</b>		
2000/01 (aged 8 or 9 in 1994/95)	1.13	0.78, 1.61	Below LICO	1.31	0.76, 1.99
1998/99 (aged 10 or 11 in 1994/95)†	1.00	...	At or above LICO†	1.00	...
<b>Age</b>			<b>Highest education in household</b>		
14†	1.00	...	Less than postsecondary graduation	1.17	0.76, 1.64
15	1.22	0.85, 1.69	Postsecondary graduation†	1.00	...
<b>Region</b>			<b>Family type</b>		
Atlantic	1.79 *	1.23, 2.91	Lone-parent	1.18	0.80, 1.79
Québec	1.99 *	1.28, 3.32	Two parents†	1.00	...
Ontario†	1.00	...	<b>Time alone at home</b>		
West	1.05	0.72, 1.62	One hour or more a day	1.17	0.82, 1.66
<b>Onset of puberty</b>			Less than one hour a day†	1.00	...
No†	1.00	...	<b>Emotional problems</b>		
Yes	1.87 *	1.30, 2.74	Yes†	1.00	...
<b>Body mass index</b>			No	1.33	0.71, 2.23
Overweight†	1.00	...	<b>Number of friends</b>		
Not overweight	1.53	0.89, 2.72	More of opposite sex†	1.00	...
<b>Self-concept</b>			Equal or more of same sex	1.14	0.56, 2.42
Strong†	1.00	...	<b>Relationships with friends</b>		
Weak	1.33	0.83, 2.11	Good	1.91	0.87, 4.53
<b>Parent-child relationship</b>			Poor†	1.00	...
Poor	2.16 *	1.43, 3.18	<b>Religious attendance in past 12 months</b>		
Good†	1.00	...	No	1.01	0.70, 1.53
<b>Tried smoking cigarettes</b>			Yes†	1.00	...
Yes	4.60 *	3.18, 6.85			
No†	1.00	...			

Data sources: 1996/97, 1998/99 and 2000/01 National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth

† Reference category

\* Significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

... Not applicable