

# Young People talk about Sex on National Radio

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# Acknowledgements

- Hot 30: Kyle, Jackie O, Alexis, Labrat, Higgs, Ryan and Sean
- Dolly magazine
- Callers and colleagues

# Young people's sexuality:

- Research usually focuses on behaviours
- Emphasis on 'high risk' sexual practices
- Priority given to 'safe sex', in clinical and education settings
- Young people's concerns about sexuality are more diverse and contextual

# Popular media

- Is a popular source of sexual health information
- Offers a unique vehicle for anonymous dialogue
- Allows the study of *unsolicited* concerns

# *Kyle and Jackie O*



# Methods:

- 2002 – 2004 - medical talkback segment embedded in a commercial, national radio program targeting young people
- Questions aired on 36 consecutive programs recorded
- Content analysis performed manually and based on *question asked*
- Independent analysis conducted by both researchers (MK and SQ)
- Questions grouped into broad categories (“sexuality” and “other”). “Sexuality” category further broken down

## Results: callers

- 231 questions over 36 consecutive programs between 2002 and 2004
- 150 female callers and 81 male callers
- age range 12 – 23 years
- 212 (92%) related to sexuality and sexual health (135 female, 77 male)

# Results: question categories

<b>Main Category</b>	<b>Female</b> (% of category)	<b>Male</b> (% of category)	<b>Total</b> (% of total)
<b>Sexual development</b>	<b>41 (57.7)</b>	<b>30 (42.3)</b>	<b>71 (33.5)</b>
<b>Sexual / reproductive health</b>	<b>39 (60.9)</b>	<b>25 (39.1)</b>	<b>64 (30.2)</b>
<b>Sexual relationship issues</b>	<b>36 (73.5)</b>	<b>13 (26.5)</b>	<b>49 (23.1)</b>
<b>Sexual practices</b>	<b>19 (67.9)</b>	<b>9 (32.1)</b>	<b>28 (13.2)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>135 (63.7)</b>	<b>77 (36.3)</b>	<b>212 (100.0)</b>

# Sexual development

n = 71 (41 female, 30 male)

- Bodily changes (27)

*“My breasts are different sizes, is this normal?” - female*

- Sexual arousal and function (24)

*“I’m addicted to sex, is something wrong with me?” – female*

*“I get erections all the time, what can I do?” – male*

- Genital anatomy (15)

*“What’s the average penis size?” – male*



- Same sex attraction (5)

*“I think I’m a lesbian, how would I know?” – female*

*“I had oral sex with a male and liked it, does that mean I could be gay?” - male*

# Sexual and reproductive health

n = 64 (39 females, 25 males)

- Genital and other symptoms (26)

*“I get a migraine headache after each orgasm, what’s wrong?” – male*

*“I have blood in my urine and it hurts to wee after I had sex” - female*

- Reproductive health (25)

*“I want to go on the Pill, which one is the best?” – female*

*“Is it safe to keep condoms in my wallet or will they then break when I use them?” - male*

- Sexually transmitted infections (13)

*“Can you get STIs from oral sex?” – female*

*“How do you get rid of crabs?” – male*

# Sexual Relationship Issues

n = 49 (36 females, 13 males)

- Perceived problem within sexual relationship (27)

*“How can my boyfriend make me orgasm?” – female*

*“I take too long to ejaculate, I’m worried about the effect on my relationship” – male*

- Negotiating the sexual encounter (16)

*“My partner has bought all these sex toys but I don’t know how to talk to her about it” – female*

*“My (male) partner only wants me to be receptive, it’s not satisfying, what do I do?” – male*

- Other relationships issues (6)

*“My parents have banned me from seeing my boyfriend, what can I do?” – 16 year old female*

*“I’m getting teased at school because some kids found out I had a wet dream” – male*



# Sexual Practices

n = 28 (19 females, 9 males)

- Masturbation

*“Is it dangerous to masturbate with an electric toothbrush?”* – female

*“I masturbate 3 – 5 times a day, is that bad?”* – male

- Oral sex

*“How do you give a guy fellatio?”* – female

*“What do I need to be aware of before I give my girlfriend oral sex?”* – male

- Other

*“Is bondage OK?”* – 23 year old female



# Type of response sought

- Seeking personal advice n = 172  
(81.1%)

*“I get turned on when I look at my brother’s porn, is that OK?” – female*

*“I’ve had sex a few times and never had an orgasm, what’s wrong?” – male*

- Seeking factual information n = 40  
(18.9%)

*“Do pubic hairs go grey when you get old?” – female*

*“What’s the withdrawal method?” – male*

# Summary

- Reassurances of 'normality' commonly sought
- Relationship context significant
- Less than one third of questions concerned STIs, pregnancy and contraception

# Conclusion

- Young people going through puberty and experiencing early intimate and sexual feelings and relationships are concerned about normality, curious about sex and worry about how to negotiate relationships. This suggests that a broader approach to health and education encounters and interventions would be useful

