

## **Preliminary evidence from a survey of adolescent sexual health knowledge and self-identified priorities for sex education**

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**Background:** Human infertility is recognised as a global public health issue by the World Health Organisation, experienced by 1 in 6 couples. Importantly, there is evidence of poor public awareness about health and lifestyle factors detrimental to fertility, and young people are an understudied population. Additionally, high schools are increasingly suggested as the ideal place to entrench realistic ideals and expectations about fertility. This project will identify the fertility and sexual health knowledge gaps of adolescents schooled in Australia and determine priorities for future comprehensive sexual health education.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional survey was administered via social media advertising (Meta: Facebook, Instagram) to adolescents (aged 15-18 years) who had or were currently schooled in Australia. It contains 17 questions assessing knowledge of sexual and reproductive health; including sources (and quality) of information sought, reproductive function/anatomy, contraception, pregnancy, and STIs.

**Results:** At the time of abstract submission, the survey has 917 respondents, with 601 completions. The survey has two weeks remaining of advertising before analysis. The majority of participants identify as a woman (66%), and are born in Australia (89.14%). Around 5% of participants identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. 59.7% of participants identify as LGBTQIA+. Sexual health knowledge will be assessed and priorities for sex education. Open text responses will determine participant priorities. We will investigate any sociodemographic predictors of knowledge via multivariable modelling.

**Conclusion:** Comparatively less research has been done on the fertility and reproductive health knowledge of adolescents in comparison to adults in their reproductive prime. This research is an opportunity to develop evidence based, consumer driven priorities for comprehensive sex education that will serve them in the years beyond schooling. For it is only through integrated, engaging, relevant educational materials that we may strengthen the general public's understanding of fertility and work towards reducing preventable infertility.

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