

Trends & Tudes

Keeping you informed of current topics in youth and education research.

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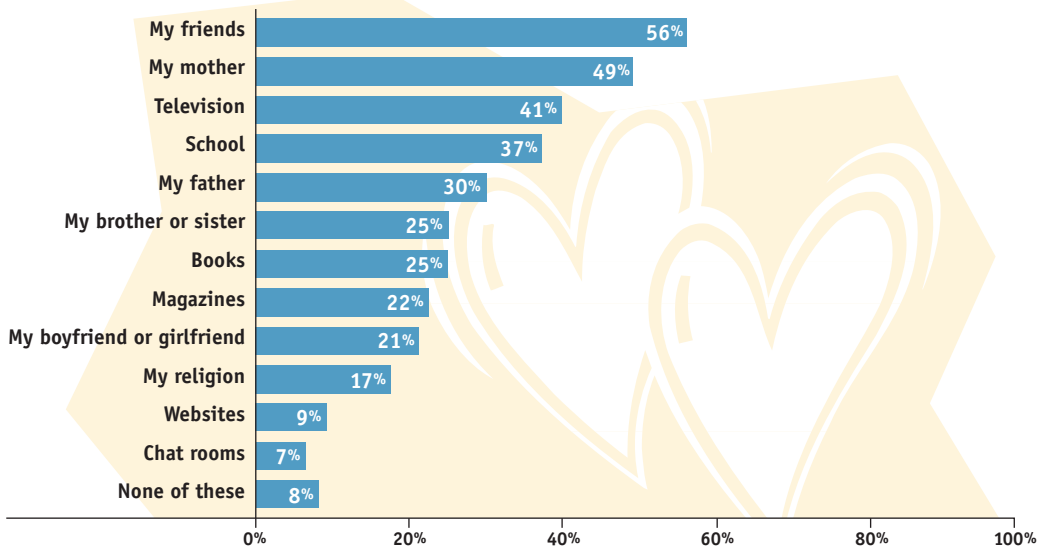
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Love And Romance And America's Youth

Data we gathered via our YouthQuerySM monthly omnibus illustrate that today's young people are highly influenced by their friends, mothers and the television when learning about love and relationships. Although the majority said that they learn the most about relationships from their friends, tweens (ages 8 to 12) are more likely than teens (ages 13 to 18) to say their mothers leverage the greatest influence on this subject (68% vs. 33% respectively).

Nearly half of male and female teens are likely to say that TV is their top source about romance—and more teens say they learn about love and relationships from TV than from their parents. And in today's world of the Internet, instant messaging, email and chat rooms, only a small minority of teens and tweens report learning what could potentially be very sensitive and emotional subject matters from chat rooms (7%) and websites (9%).

Where Have You Learned The Most About Love And Relationships?



SOURCE: Harris Interactive YouthQuerySM Monthly Omnibus

Dating is an important element of the teenage years. We found that parental rules for dating are much more restrictive for girls than for boys. Fifty-six percent of teenage girls report that their parents have rules as to how late they can stay out on a date, compared to 38 percent of teenage boys. Fewer than one out of 10 boys said their parents have rules about

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Editorial: Our Take On It

by **John Geraci**

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As Valentine's Day nears, we thought we would spend a little time reviewing the polling data Harris has gathered regarding young people and relationships. Much of the time, when adults consider the romantic relationships of the young, we tend to concentrate on the most dire consequences that can arise out of these relationships – STDs, AIDS, teenage pregnancy and parenthood. Despite much recent evidence that teen pregnancy rates are decreasing (according to the National Center for Health Statistics, teenage pregnancy and birth rates are down over the last decade in all 50 states), controversies over appropriate pregnancy prevention strategies (sex education, abstinence, birth control, etc.) seem to be intensifying.

Teen pregnancy remains an issue of huge national importance. Although decreasing, teen pregnancy rates remain alarmingly high. According to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy, four out of 10 girls in the United States will get pregnant by age 20.

The consequences of teen pregnancy to society are great. If we as a nation can reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy, we would see a considerable reduction in a host of social problems. Child abuse and neglect, crime rates, single parenthood, poverty, and failures of our educational system all have roots in teenage pregnancy. However, for teens themselves, teen pregnancy is not among their most important issues.

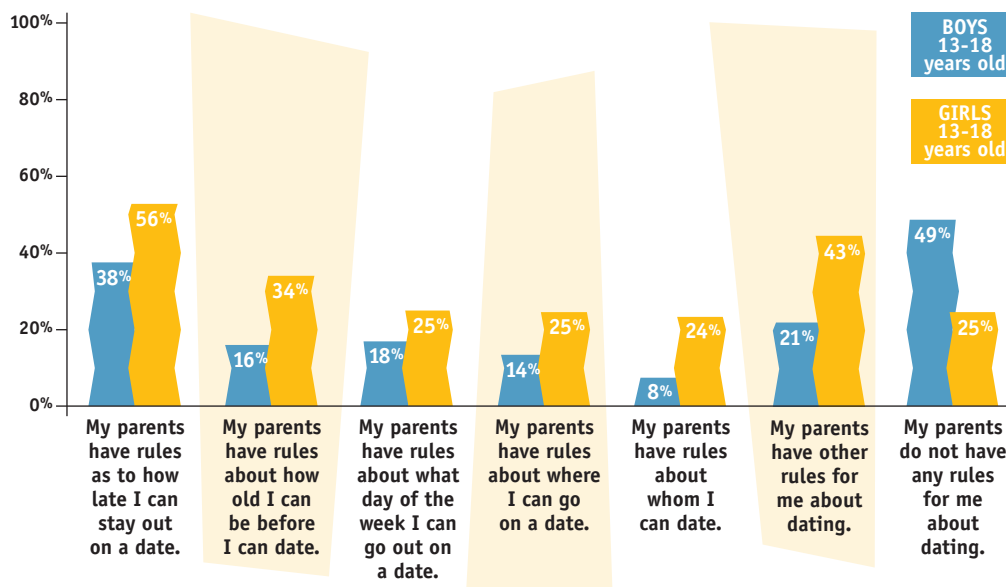
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Harris Heritage. 2 Interactive Power.

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whom they can date whereas girls reported this at three times the frequency. More girls than boys said that they have to be of a certain age before they are allowed to date, and more boys than girls said their parents do not have rules for them about dating.

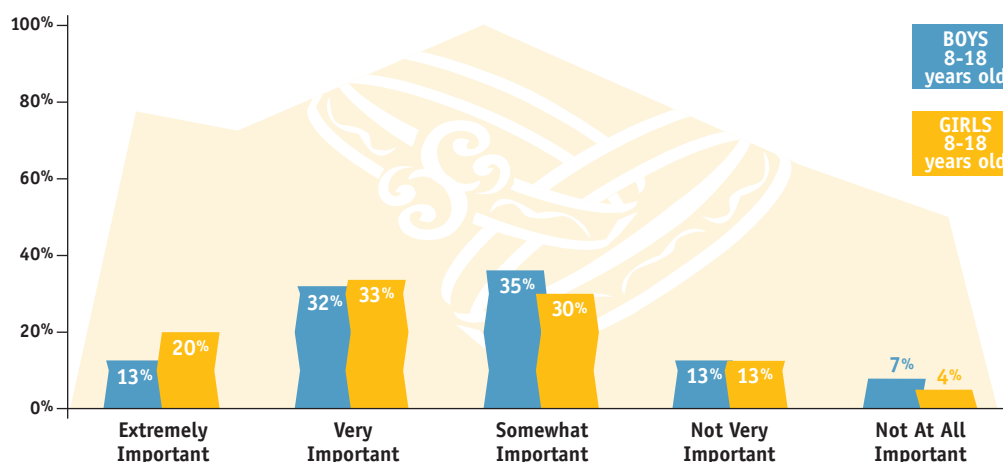
Which Of The Following Are True For You?



SOURCE: Harris Interactive YouthQuerySM Monthly Omnibus

Marriage is a union both boys and girls find favorable whether they are a tween or a teen. Overall, only two out of 10 think marriage is “not important.” Nearly half of both girls and boys view getting married someday as extremely or very important, although more girls than boys view it as “extremely important.” The importance of being married someday is greater for older girls than for their younger counterparts: 61 percent of teenage girls report marriage in their future as being important compared to 43 percent of tween girls. This notion seems to change as girls grow older. However age does not distinguish boys' views of the importance of marriage—45 percent of both teen and tween boys deem marriage as an important part of their future.

How Important Is It For You To Get Married Someday?



SOURCE: Harris Interactive YouthQuerySM Monthly Omnibus

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A recent survey Harris Interactive conducted on behalf of Do Something (www.dosomething.org) examined top issues among today's youth. Seventy percent of youth believe that individual rights and freedom are extremely or very important issues. In contrast, much fewer report that teen pregnancy (44%) or AIDS/STDs (48%) is that important.

Teen pregnancy rates are down for a reason. Generation Y has some fundamental differences in attitudes than previous generations of young people. They are highly aspirational and seek opportunity and living a life without limits. They invented the "group date" and the "virginity pledge." Relationships are as important as ever to young people, but they do seem to have a greater understanding of the consequences of their actions.

As researchers and marketers, we probably understand less than we would like to about the role of relationships in their lives. Tweens and teens are in a constant quest to define themselves, and their relationships are at the center of their lives. Interestingly, about two-thirds of teens (67%) have told us they have had a broken heart (even though only 38% report having been in love), and relationships seem to define the emotional development of young people. Three-quarters of teens (76%) believe it is important to be emotionally close to a person before being physically intimate, with girls more likely than boys to feel this way (82% vs. 70%).

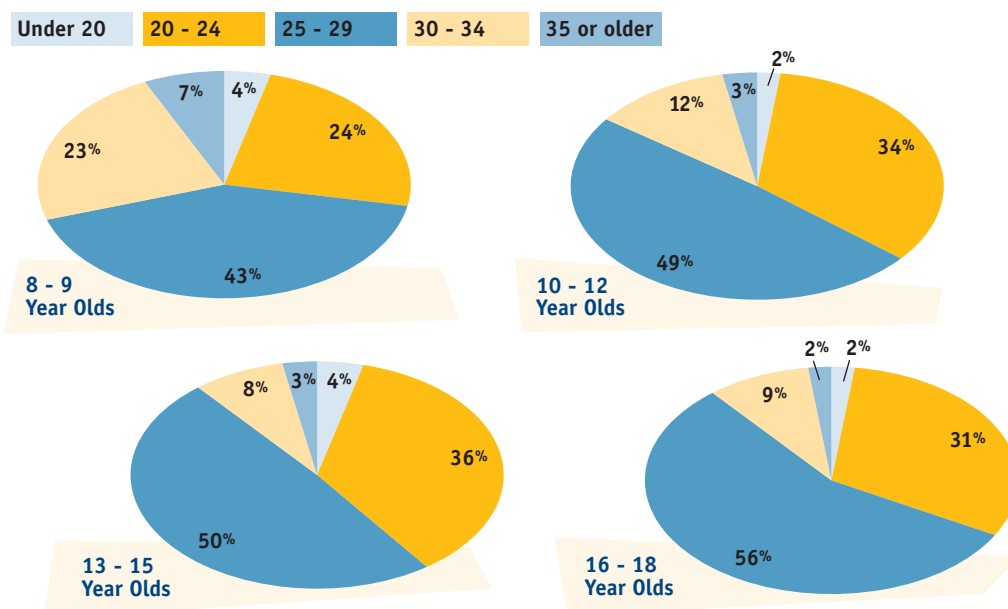
Here is what we do know: Of 8- to 18-year-olds, 42 percent tell us that they have a boyfriend or girlfriend

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Most young people today see marriage as an important part of their future, but what do they see as "the perfect age" to get married? When asked, five out of 10 boy-and-girl tweens and teens agreed that the perfect age to get married was between 25 and 29 years old. The less than perfect ages reported were under 20, and 35 or older.

In Your Opinion, What Is The Perfect Age To Get Married?



SOURCE: Harris Interactive YouthQuerySM Monthly Omnibus

Come See Us At Kid Power!

Harris Interactive is proud to be a sponsor of Kid Power 2003, May 6-9, in Orlando. We will be leading a conference session on May 7. For more information on this event, go to www.kidpowerx.com.

Announcement:

Fall 2002 Wave of 360 Youth College Explorer™ powered by Harris Interactive now available!

The 360 Youth College Explorer powered by Harris Interactive is the only syndicated study of college students that's conducted among all types of students nationwide in the key age groups: 18 to 24 and 25 to 30. And it is the only study to take the next step by including 18- to 24-year-olds not enrolled in school, at times used as a basis of comparison. The study covers a wide spectrum of areas, including income and spending, students' hopes and worries, financial services, technology and wireless, entertainment, snack foods and beverages, and personal care products. The Fall 2002 report also includes sections on "Road Rules for Advertisers," brand loyalty and retail preferences.

Next month's issue of *Trends & Tudes* will highlight findings from the report.

Complete study results are available on a subscription basis. For more information, please contact Larry Brown at 800.866.7655, x7135.

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currently. Ten- to twelve-year-olds are more likely than teens (55% vs. 37%) to tell us they have a boyfriend or girlfriend. Girls (46%) are more likely than boys (37%) to tell us they have a boyfriend or girlfriend. It seems that what it means to have a boyfriend or girlfriend may change as a tween grows to adolescence, and girls may be more apt to call a relationship "romantic" than boys. For example, among 13- to 15-year-olds, boys are more likely than girls to report that they "don't believe in romance."

Few (21%) say that they feel peer pressure to have a boyfriend or girlfriend—pressure they may face comes from within. Almost half (45%) tell us their friends don't go on dates; rather they spend time together in groups. The dating experience is becoming more social and less formalized.

Romance is alive and well within Gen Y. Most of today's young people (53%) believe in love at first sight. Of 8- to 18-year-olds, 38 percent told us that they have been in love (including about half of late teens, 16 to 18). The most common age for a "first love" is 13, although 44 percent told us that they have never been in love. Some of the most romantic activities in our poll were spending time together, being taken care of when ill, getting flowers, or going to a restaurant. 60 percent of girls and 45 percent of boys thought that asking someone to be your Valentine was romantic.

Cohabitation is an expectation for Generation Y—about half (49%) feel that living together without being married is an important step before marriage. About a third (31%) feel

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Recent Research for Public Release

From time to time, the Harris Interactive Youth Research team is fortunate to work with media, leading foundations and non-profit organizations, and we often are able to release the results of these studies publicly.

The 45th Annual GRAMMY Awards: The Bubble-gum Vote

A recent Harris Interactive survey asked a nationally representative sample of 891 teenagers (ages 13-19) who they would choose if they had the opportunity to vote for this year's GRAMMY award winners. Although the GRAMMY awards are voted on by music industry insiders, this Harris Interactive survey can be considered the "bubble-gum vote": a snapshot of teen music preferences that translates into millions of dollars in music sales.

According to the Harris Interactive survey, teens believe that Eminem and Avril Lavigne deserve to win top GRAMMY awards. The results of this survey reflected popular youth tastes in music, with Nickelback also receiving a large number of votes. Artists that skew toward a more adult audience, such as Bruce Springsteen and Norah Jones, received few votes from teens, despite the fact that these two artists have each sold three million copies of their albums. It is also interesting to note that teens maintain an enthusiasm for pop music over music that addresses more serious themes, such as Springsteen's "The Rising," and Alan Jackson's "Where Were You (When the World Stopped Turning)?" Several country and hip-hop stars received a surprisingly unenthusiastic response from teens, with the Dixie Chicks, Alan Jackson, Ashanti, and Nelly netting few votes, despite selling millions of albums. Time will tell if GRAMMY voters share similar opinions.

Results of the Harris Poll included:

Record of the Year: "How You Remind Me" by Nickelback (27%); "Without Me" by Eminem (27%); "Dilemma" by Nelly featuring Kelly Rowland (19%); "A Thousand Miles" by Vanessa Carlton (16%); and "Don't Know Why" by Norah Jones (11%).

Album of the Year: "The Eminem Show" by Eminem (45%); "Nellyville" by Nelly (20%); "Home" by Dixie Chicks (14%); "The Rising" by Bruce Springsteen (12%); and "Come Away With Me" by Norah Jones (9%).

Song of the Year: "Complicated" by Avril Lavigne (51%); "A Thousand Miles" by Vanessa Carlton (15%); "Don't Know Why" by Norah Jones (13%); "Where Were You (When the World Stopped Turning)?" by Alan Jackson (11%); and "The Rising" by Bruce Springsteen (10%).

Best New Artist: Avril Lavigne (42%); Ashanti (19%); Michelle Branch (15%); John Mayer (15%); and Norah Jones (8%).

The 45th annual GRAMMY awards will air on February 23, 2003 live from Madison Square Garden in New York City on the CBS television network.

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that it is okay to live together as long as you are engaged or intend to be married. Just 14 percent told us that they believed cohabitation was wrong. This is a generation that has felt the effects of divorce on their parents, and they seem to feel that cohabitation before marriage may provide some insurance for them.

Our poll also shows that parental rules for dating differ for boys and girls—parents are far more protective of girls. They are more likely to have curfews, rules about how old you have to be to go out on a date and to place restrictions on whom will be dated.

The media clearly play an important role in teaching children about love and relationships. Our respondents tell us they have learned the most about relationships from their friends and their mothers, but the next most common answer is “television.” Television is listed ahead of school, their fathers, their siblings, and books and magazines. Many have placed blame on the media for promoting unhealthy messages about sex and relationships to the young, and although television’s influence should not be ignored, objective data tell us that today’s young people are more responsible about relationships and sex than previous young people were.

As adults, we are probably no better at understanding the relationships of the young than when we ourselves were young and struggling with these issues ourselves. What is important is that we look at Gen Y with a fresh perspective and that we do not automatically assume that they view the world as we did.

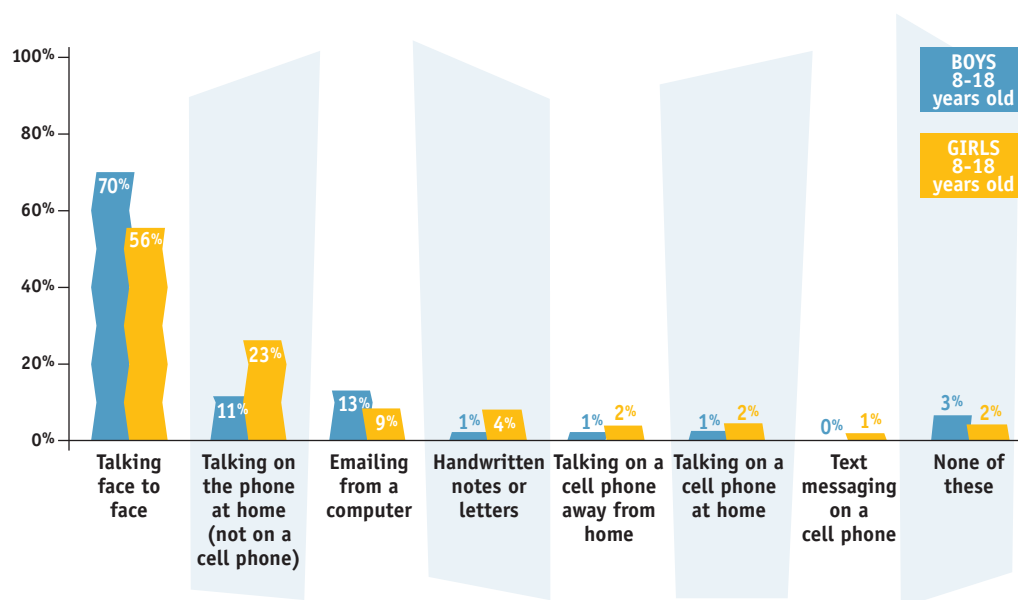
Ask a Question...

Have a burning question you would like to ask kids and teens? Here’s your chance to submit a free question for our upcoming YouthQuerySM youth omnibus. Just send us an email with your suggestion. We will pick one question each month and then publish the results in the next issue of this newsletter.

...Get an answer

Jani Westcott from Frankel submitted the following question:

What Is The First Notion That Comes To Mind When You Think About “Communicating With Friends?”



SOURCE: Harris Interactive YouthQuery Omnibus

To view previous issues of Trends & Tudes, please visit our website at http://www.harrisinteractive.com/news/newsletters_k12.asp

Contact Us:

To discuss this newsletter or your upcoming research project, call **Larry Brown**
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