



## **Reaction for Action: Youth Participatory Action Research on Young Minnesotans' Opinions about Their Sexuality Education**

### **Survey and Sample Information**

The Annex Teen Clinic received funding from Youthprise to do a youth participatory action research (YPAR) project on young Minnesotans' opinions about the sexuality education they received. The group decided that they wanted to collect data from a large group of people and so decided to use an online survey.

**Inclusion Criteria:** Ages 13-24, must have attended or be currently attending middle and/or high school in Minnesota

**Recruitment Goals:** The group wanted to have a sample that was diverse, represented the LGBTQ+ community, and came from across the state.

**Methods:** survey was online, primarily distributed through social media, putting up flyers, and sharing with people through email or tabling at events

#### **Sample Demographics:**

There were 401 individuals who responded, with 291 completed surveys.

- Race/Ethnicity: majority white identified
- Sexual Orientation: two thirds LGB+
- Gender: majority identified as women
- Metro vs Non-Metro: about one third non-Metro
- Age: 13-27, average age of 19 years

### **Key Findings**

We are still in the process of analyzing all of the data, particularly the qualitative data, but here are some of the findings that have stood out to us so far.

#### **Quality of Instruction and Learning Environment**

Of those who responded to these questions related to the learning environment and perception of instruction:

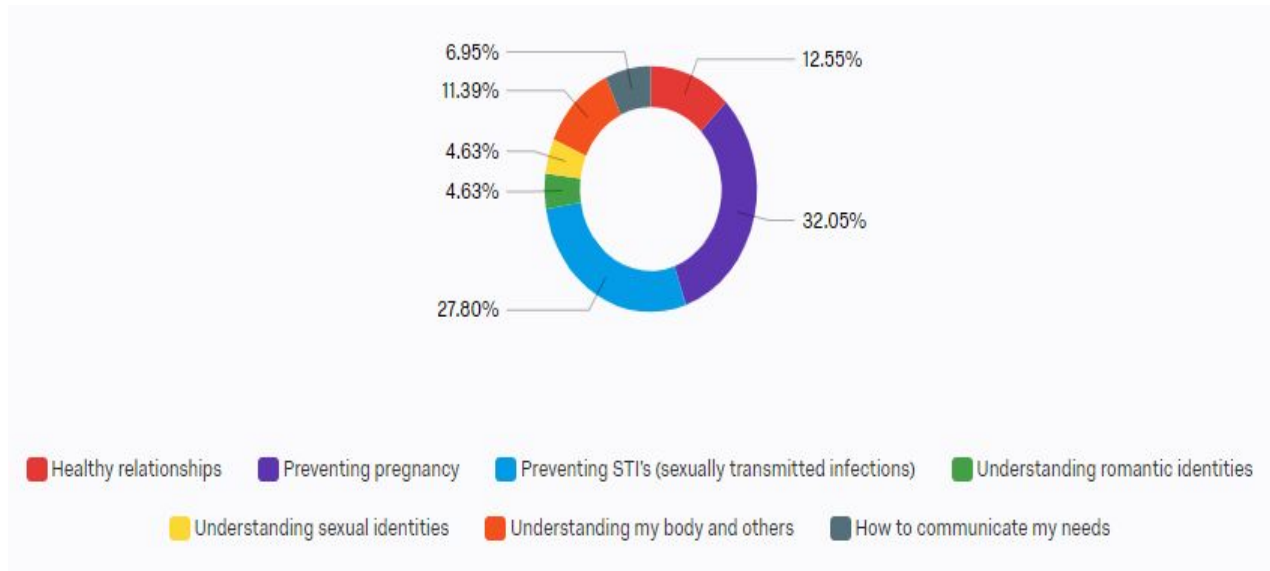
- 67% felt they were unable to ask questions without judgment

- 62% felt that the beliefs and/or opinions of their teacher changed how they were taught sex ed
- 54% felt their teacher was comfortable teaching about sexual health
- 57% agreed that their teacher was knowledgeable about sexual health
- 47% disagreed that they felt that their personal experiences were validated
- 50% agreed that they felt that themselves and their identities represented in their sexual health curriculum

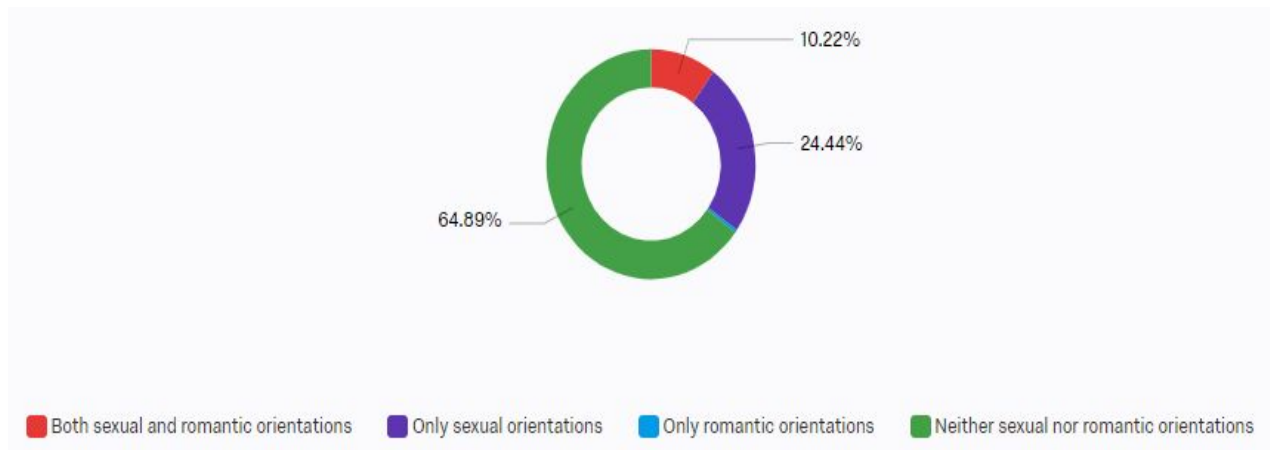
**Content Covered in Sex Ed Classes**

Participants were asked a range of questions about the content that was covered in their classes, including what they feel they understand and what was covered in their classes.

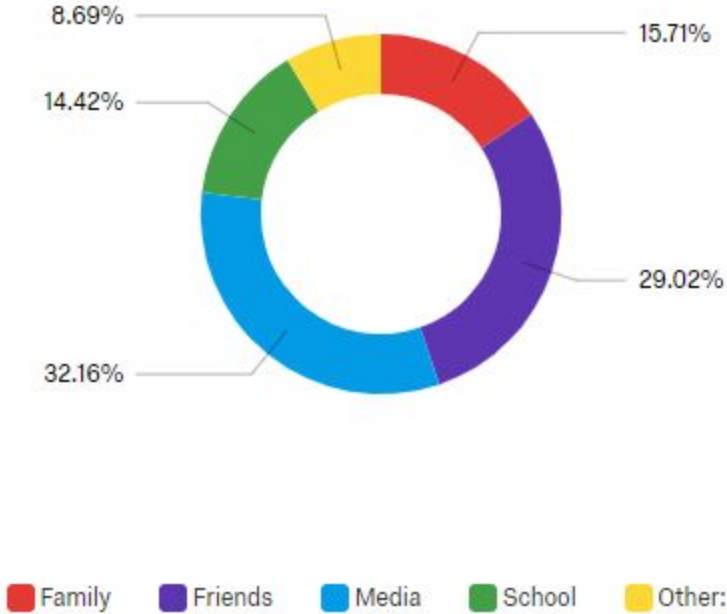
Responses to the question “I feel my sexual health education prepared me for...”



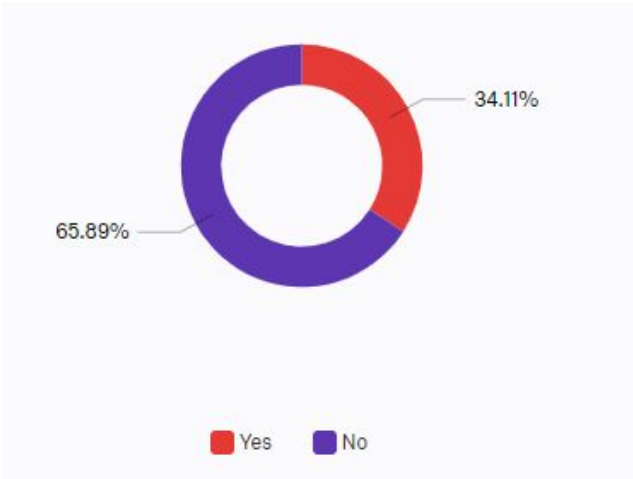
Responses to the question “Did you learn about sexual orientations (lesbian, gay, bisexual, straight, etc.) or romantic orientations (aromantic, heteroromantic, panromantic, etc.) in your sexual health education class?”



Responses to the question "From which sources did you learn about consent?"



Responses to the question "Did you learn what sexual assault was in your sexual health education class?"



## Initial Themes from Qualitative Data

Main themes from the question: *Knowing what you know now, what do you wish would have been taught in your sexual health education classes?*

- healthy relationships
- different environment/educational focus (e.g., more comprehensive, not religious, more sex positive)
- bodies (e.g., anatomy, pleasure, bodily autonomy)
- LGBTQ+ related
- consent and rape culture
- birth control
- sexually transmitted infections

We are starting on coding the responses to the following questions, so here are some starter themes. *If you were talking to the people who were creating these standards (i.e. lawmakers, school district officials etc.), what would you suggest to them based on your experience in sexual health education?*

- teachers: bring in outside experts, need to have teachers who are comfortable and passionate about the content, take it seriously
- more education on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression
- young people need a broader range of content including healthy relationships, consent, pleasure
- stop the scare tactics and framing sex as negative
- start younger
- content and quality of instruction should be equally available across the state, not dependent on location
- provide more classes (e.g., more days, classes at multiple points in school)
- teachers need to teach facts not based on their experiences/opinions
- provide good resources
- be honest and open