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Adolescent Sexual Health Behaviour: An exploration of dissemination tools and mechanisms

Consultation among different stakeholder
groups

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INTRODUCTION

The Health Behaviour in School-aged Children Ireland (HBSC) study has provided the first nationally representative and internationally comparable data on the sexual behaviour and contraceptive use of adolescents in Ireland. An important part of the HBSC research process is ensuring that data and findings are used to improve the lives of children as well as to inform the broader research area. The area of adolescent sexual behaviour has previously been under-researched in Ireland, and so it is of vital importance to ensure the findings are utilised to their full potential. The sexual behaviour of adolescents in Ireland is a particularly sensitive topic. For this reason, any research or dissemination in the area is a complex process that must be carefully planned and requires specific ethical considerations.

It is an ethical imperative of the Adolescent Sexual Health in Ireland; Data, Dissemination and Development study (DDD-ASH) to disseminate research findings to as wide an audience as possible, be it academic, practitioner or non-specialist. This is of particular significance when data of a sensitive nature is collected from young people as it is important to demonstrate its value. This impact can be achieved through an appropriate and effective dissemination process designed to meet the requirements of the specific research study as well as any relevant stakeholder groups.

The Healthy Ireland framework has recognised the role of research and knowledge dissemination in empowering people and creating a successful research and evidence base in order to improve the health and well-being of the population (Department of Health, 2013). The process of research dissemination is more likely to be effective if members of relevant stakeholder groups are consulted with and included in activities and in the evaluation of methods being used to distribute the information (Fullilove, Green, Hernández-Cordero, & Fullilove, 2006).

The anticipated benefits of disseminating research findings depend on recognition, up-take and implementation by the end users i.e., the stakeholders, as they will decide the relevance and value of the materials or resources that are disseminated (Green, Ottoson, Garc, C. & Hiatt, 2009). Findings should be disseminated in a manner that is useable, understandable and appropriate for stakeholder groups. In order to disseminate research in a meaningful way to a variety of stakeholder groups it may be necessary to utilise different modes of dissemination as well as tailored dissemination materials for each audience.

This report describes the findings from a qualitative exploration into the most appropriate mechanisms and tools for disseminating research findings on the sexual behaviour of adolescents in Ireland to a range of stakeholder groups. Traditionally research findings tend to

take the form of academic documents and papers targeting a more professional or adult audience. The main aim of this study was to identify alternative and suitable methods of disseminating to a variety of audiences as well as to collate feedback on existing resources. Stakeholder groups identified for inclusion in this process were young people, parents, youth workers and teachers. Thus, the stakeholders were either the peer group of HBSC study participants or people who are in regular contact with young people, with the potential to influence their health behaviour, in either a personal or professional capacity. The research was carried out through a series of focus and discussion groups with the chosen stakeholder groups. Due to the sensitive nature of the sexual behaviour data only young people aged 15 years and older were invited to take part in the focus group process.

METHODS

Participants

Participants were recruited from a number of interest/stakeholder groups such as: young people; parents, youth workers and teachers. Convenience sampling was used to engage a diverse range of participants – particularly with the young people. In total, 11 focus groups and two discussion groups were conducted.

Three focus groups and a discussion group were carried out with young people (n=39) with a mix of boys and girls. These focus groups were carried out in a range of settings which consisted of a post-primary school in Galway City, a post-primary school in Galway county, an early school leaver centre in Dublin City (Youthreach) and a youth group in Donegal (Foróige) reflecting the diversity of this sample.

Three focus groups were carried out with youth workers (n=15) from Foróige youth groups in Galway, Roscommon and Donegal – group participants were predominantly female with one group containing a mix of male and female youth workers.

Two focus groups were carried out with parents (n=13), group participants were predominantly female with one group containing a mix of males and females. These were accessed through two mixed gender post-primary school Parent's Association groups in Galway and Mayo.

Two focus groups and two discussion groups (two teachers present) were carried out with teachers (n=14) and consisted of a mix of male and female teachers from a variety of subject backgrounds. These were carried out in two post-primary schools in Galway County.

Data collection

Focus groups consisted of a semi-structured format but the conversation and questions evolved based on the responses and areas of relevance of the participants. The key topic areas included:

- Awareness of the Health Behaviour in School-age Children (HBSC) study

- Level of interest in the topic of adolescent sexual health and behaviour
- Feedback on HBSC study report formats
- Feedback on HBSC study factsheets
- Relevance and interest of these resources to the specific stakeholder group
- Relevance of the HBSC study website
- Recommendations for more relevant stakeholder group specific dissemination materials
- Recommendations for relevant stakeholder group specific modes of dissemination and communication
- Recommendations for raising the profile of the study and area of adolescent sexual health and behaviour among the specific stakeholder group

All the focus groups were facilitated by the same researcher and co-facilitated by a second researcher. All focus groups were audio digitally recorded with the consent of all participants present.

The focus groups lasted between 17 and 40 minutes. Recordings were transcribed to reflect the key suggestions and comments made by the focus group participants. A number of relevant quotes were also extracted from the focus group recordings.

All stakeholder groups were asked to estimate the percentage of 15-17 year olds in Ireland who reported ever having sexual intercourse, and also ever being really drunk. This was used as an indicator of the perception the different groups had around the level of risk behaviours among Irish adolescents of that age. All groups were also shown samples of previous HBSC reports as well as topic specific factsheets in order to obtain their feedback and opinions on the usefulness and appropriateness of these materials.

RESULTS

The following section describes the outcomes from the focus and discussion groups carried out with young people, parents, youth workers and teachers. A summary of the focus group details is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of focus and discussion groups

Group	Number & Gender	Prioritised Topics	Locations	Interview length
Young people	• 7: 2 boys & 5 girls (+ 1 volunteer)	Injuries General health Exercise & Physical activity (x2)	1. Donegal	40 mins
	• 11 girls	Physical fighting & bullying (x2) Drug use (x2) Alcohol use (x2)	2. Galway	22 mins
	• 6: 4 boys & 2 girls	Smoking (x2) Food & Dieting Self-care	3. Dublin	19 mins
	• 15 girls	Sexual health behaviours	4. Galway	18 mins
Parents	• 4 females (later joined by the school principal & other mothers towards the end of the focus group)	Drugs use Sexual health behaviours Bullying (Parents were also concerned with issues of self-harm and mental health)	1. Co Mayo	33 mins
	• 8: 7 females & 1 male		2. Co Galway	26 mins
Youth Workers	• 5: 3 female, 2 male.	Physical fighting & bullying (x2) Bullying	1. Galway city	26 mins
	• 6 female	Food & dieting Drug use (x3) Alcohol use (x3)	2. Co Roscommon	22 mins
	• 4 female	Sexual health behaviours (x2) Self-care (the meaning of this may have been misunderstood?) Family structure Food & Dietary behaviour (interested in mental health)	3. Co Donegal	39 mins

Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7: 5 female; 2 male 	The topics that would be relevant to their own teaching areas (x2)	1. Rural town	17 mins
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 female 	As above	2. Rural town	15 mins
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3: 2 female; 1 male 	Bullying Alcohol use Sexual health and behaviour	3. Same rural town as above	21 mins
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 female 	Interested in the relationships that young people have with their parents	4. Same rural town as above	18 mins
			(note: 3 of the teachers groups took place in the same school at different times on the one day)	

Results are presented according to the four main output themes of the focus groups:

- 1. What they want information about**
- 2. Response to report and fact-sheet formats**
- 3. How do they get their information**
- 4. How would they like to get the information**

For the purpose of comparison across the different stakeholder groups, the outcomes and findings of each of these themes are presented according to the individual feedback of young people, parents, youth workers and teachers.

1. WHAT THEY WANT INFORMATION ABOUT

Young people

None of the young people who took part in the focus groups had previously heard of the HBSC study.

The topics which the young people identified as priorities reflected both their perceived gaps in knowledge and, also, the topics about which they consider that they are well informed. Thus, the students in one focus group (3) considered that they did not require information about sex

or drugs as they already knew everything that they needed to know about the subjects. However, this group like the others who were asked consistently over-estimated the proportion of young people who were sexually active or who had ever been drunk – although they did make the point that their own experiences may be different to that of the statistically average teenager in other parts of the country.

They requested that the information be focussed and were interested in finding out about gender differences and not interested in class differences

Because I'm a girl and I wanna find out what girls do (yp3)

I don't know what social class is (yp2)

The information could be helpful to reference their own experiences against

It's what we're going through – to see if you can relate or if you are different, like.
(yp1)

If people think everyone is doing it they'll want to do it as well, if they know everyone isn't then they wouldn't (yp2)

And it was suggested that young people might feel less subject to peer pressure if they were armed with statistical facts.

One focus group considered that it would be valuable to have the information about specific geographical areas available to them so that they could look at the responses that they believed were most relevant to their own experiences. Another group identified that they were interested in knowing about the effects of risk behaviours.

Parents

None of the parents had previously heard of the HBSC study.

The HBSC topics which they were most interested in having information about were drug use, bullying and sexual health behaviours and one group was also curious about the data included under the heading of injuries. Parents were interested in accessing information about mental health and, specifically, about self-harm. One group of parents over-estimated the percentages of young people reporting ever being really drunk or ever having had sex whereas the estimates of the other group were close to the actual percentages. The actual statistics were considered to be very useful information as it gave an insight that was not mediated by the media either 'scare-mongering' or 'playing things down'. Likewise, this information was thought to be important for the young people themselves

That would be important to get out to them (p1)

as young people were believed to, often, perceive things differently to the actual reality.

In general, however, parents were more inclined to focus on the usefulness of information for their children rather than for themselves. Their own identified information deficits were more in the realm of issue solving and issue resolution rather than information per se.

Youth workers

None of the youth workers had previously heard about the HBSC study.

Although there was a range of accurate and inaccurate estimates about how many 15-17 year olds had reported having ever been really drunk, they were not surprised by the percentages of this age group who reported that they had ever had sex. The youth workers tended to be interested in any gender differences but not in social class differences.

The youth workers felt that having facts would be useful in their work but that the facts should be presented in a way that was relevant to their work. Some could foresee information such as that relating to sexual activity informing their sexual health programmes

It's good for us to know – it validates things for us (yw2)

Youth workers expressed an interest in receiving statistics and data that were at a local or regional level and area-specific information would assist greatly when they are making funding applications.

The youth workers considered that young people themselves would benefit from having greater access to the HBSC data. Young people were thought to be in need of accurate information about the norms of teenage behaviour

Getting the truth to them is vital (yw1)

which might serve to dispel misconceptions held by them

sometimes there's a perception that they know everything – but they don't – it's quite surprising (yw2)

This information should be presented in a 'simple' format which allows the teens to compare their own experiences to that of their peers.

Teachers

None of the teachers had previously heard of the HBSC study, although one believed a report had been delivered to the school.

Many considered that the information produced by the HBSC study was important and useful. One group expressed an interest in being able to access the population profiles for the different behaviours; gender differences were said to be more interesting than social class differences.

Many of the teachers wanted information that was relevant to the subjects that they teach and could envisage it informing a variety of classes – even language classes.

There's a drive in numeracy and literacy and some of these things would be fantastic for say English – there's comprehension involved and lots of numbers and you could use it in class with the kids like (t1)

It was suggested that the data about smoking, sexual health and food and dietary behaviours could be used in science classes and that many of the topics could be used during Home Economics classes; all the groups identified that the data would be suitable to incorporate into the teaching of Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE), Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE) and religion.

The issue of cyber bullying was of particular interest and concern to the teachers in one focus group.

One group of teachers over-estimated the percentage of 14-17 year olds who had reported ever being really drunk or having sex; another group correctly estimated the percentage reporting having had sex. And although a group agreed that it was important that young people know the correct percentage reporting sexual activity

That's really important(they know) it isn't everybody but me (t2)

they queried the responses to the question about being drunk

perhaps they have a low perception of what really drunk is (t2)

2. RESPONSE TO REPORT AND FACTSHEET FORMATS

Young people

Many of the young people acknowledged that the information contained in the reports and factsheets was information that might be/was of interest/be useful to them and to others involved with young people.

However, they unanimously rejected the formats. If given the reports by their teachers, and they didn't have to look at it, then they would not look at it. Young people, largely, would not even pick the reports up as they were said to look as if they were meant for adults, were too dark to be attractive to them, with writing that was too small and an overall look that was too much like a college prospectus. The factsheets met with slightly more approval than the reports – specifically the graphs on the factsheets - but even they were not considered attractive to young people

If you had that up on the wall, like, it's not gonna catch your eye (fg3)

Too much information cramped in (fg3)

Parents

Although one group of parents liked the level of detail that was presented in the factsheets the other group considered that the report was a more useful format. They liked the comprehensiveness of the report and suggested that it would be a useful reference document to have to hand whereas the fact sheets were more easily lost or misplaced. One focus group of parents commended the Trends report in particular

It's really interesting actually – that book (p1)

I think even for teenagers themselves it would be very interesting to see the difference from 10 years ago and now (p1)

The information was, in itself, said to be needed by parents

It's very useful for parents in fairness because we don't know what the other half are doing – what anyone is doing – you think you know but you haven't a clue (p1)

Parents recommended that the findings from the HBSC should be used as a tool for developing school policy, in particular as an aid to prioritising issues.

Youth workers

Most youth workers considered that the information in the reports and factsheets was very interesting and useful

Everything there is useful for us (yw2)

It brings it home to the people working with young people, you know, - Jesus that's the reality – we need to invest in young people because of what the trends are showing us (yw3)

However, some were unsure whether they would ever actually use the information and how it would link into their everyday work.

Staff were said not have the time to read such documents such as the report and therefore they are not practical for them

So much information comes at us every day, you know, we will miss some of it (fg3)

I thinks that's the problem – you see it (the report), -it crosses your desk and gets put on the shelf – that's the reality of it (fg3)

The youth workers, generally, liked the factsheets and thought that they would be suitable for young people if they were more visual, had more colour and less information. It was also pointed out that neither the fact sheets nor the reports lent themselves to photocopying which limited their usefulness as a resource to use directly with young people.

Two of the groups, however, suggested that the information in the reports could be useful to them when making grant applications especially if they could access area-specific statistics.

Teachers

Some teachers liked the format of the reports but most thought that, although they were well presented, teachers would not actually have time to read them

Really and truly, you're going to get this book and it's going to be left on a shelf (t1)

You get a lot of things that look like this [the report] coming into the school (t2)

The factsheets were considered to be more useful, particularly for busy people and many teachers commented on the convenience of the graphs

Graphical representation is important, d'you know, because you can see at a glance what you're looking at (t3)

However, one focus group suggested that the factsheets should be re-designed to facilitate photocopying as much of the information would become indistinguishable if the fact-sheet was copied.

3. HOW DO THEY GET THEIR INFORMATION

Young people

The young people identified that they get the information that they need from school, parents and friends and that they also look to the internet for their information. They do not target specific sites for information but access the top site from a Google search or the site which manages to catch their eye. Some young people may not so much search for information but use the information which randomly appears to them

You don't really look for yourself – it just pops up and you look at it (fg2)

Only one young person identified that if they were to seek information such as that provided by the HBSC, they would look to an Irish website such as Spunout.

Parents

Parents did not identify that they sought out the type of information produced by HBSC; in general though, people were said to be either the type that looked for information or the type who waited for it to be handed to them

Some people look for information – others don't until it's in front of them (p2)

Youth workers

Youth workers are sent a lot of unsolicited information from different organisations. For that reason, some suggested that it is best to send material through the post because the envelopes will be opened and the material may be noted. Emails, on the other hand, can be deleted without being read and therefore should be sent with an alluring tag such as “*Here's something new that will tie in with your work*” or “*did you know that....?*” that may capture the attention of the recipients of the email.

Some youth workers identified that they looked to websites such as Spunout and B4udecide for information and evidence. However, most of the youth workers stated they would look firstly – and often exclusively – to Foroige's Best Practice Unit for information. Emails from the best practice unit are always opened and therefore any link from them may be accessed.

Teachers

The teachers reported that if they were looking for information such as that contained in the HBSC reports, they would search through Google for specific topics or link in to the HSE website or other government or education websites.

4. HOW WOULD THEY LIKE TO GET THE INFORMATION

Young people

The word count was a key consideration of the young people; they wanted information presented using as few words as possible. They argued that if text is to catch the eye of a young person, then it should be presented very visually, with big writing, colourful pictures and few words. It was suggested in one focus group that the use of the colour pink and some glitter might make the documents more attractive to girls!

Several young people suggested using Facebook and/or creating a Facebook page to get the information to their age group. They said that they would look at such information if it has been shared by other people – especially if it was in the format of a picture with a small bit of information. Likewise, the HBSC could be advertised on Facebook or Twitter.

The use of video was another suggestion that arose in all three focus groups.

Videos are best because if it's just in writing nobody wants to read it. (fg2)

Videos, it was said, should be short, fun – not just people talking – and presented by young people. Information that is presented by young people was perceived to be more interesting and relevant. These videos could be used in schools or organisations or put up on YouTube. Ideally, one focus group stated, these YouTube videos would be 2-3 minutes long and could be uploaded to a specially created channel. Another group identified that although they would not search for such videos on YouTube, they would watch them if they were being shared by their peers.

Other suggestions for dissemination included events such as dramas, family workshops or table quizzes with prizes. Young people, it was said, would be eager to attend such events if it was during school time. These events could be school or organisation based or could be done at a regional level. One group proposed that the findings should form the basis of a Transition Year programme although it was also suggested that the findings would be more appropriately aimed at first years as the move into secondary school.

One group voiced an opinion about the way in which data was collected for the HBSC project. It was suggested that more young people could take part if it was an online survey which could be completed in a class-period. It was envisaged that there would be one page per questions which would be broken up with pictures and an automatic scrolling onto the next question when one is answered.

Parents

Much of the parents' focus was on getting information to their children and young people rather than accessing information themselves. Thus, they suggested Snapchat, Facebook, workshops and short Power-point presentations with YouTube clips. The reports and factsheets could also be left in the library or chill rooms of schools or linked in with SPHE, possibly in the form of a quiz; in one focus group it was also suggested that some of the information should be included in the information packs that are provided to first-year students.

Parents recommended stocking copies of the reports in public libraries and college libraries. However, many of the suggestions about dissemination to adults/parents focussed on making linkages to other existing channels. The National Parents Council was proposed as a channel to individual parents' associations; the Primary Times (an e-letter for teachers), the Children's Alliance website, county Education Centres and newspaper health supplements were also suggested. A further proposal involved developing the information into a quiz format which could be linked to more detailed information on the HBSC website – it was said to be important not to overwhelm people with too much information at one time.

Youth workers

A key suggestion from youth workers was that HBSC should link in with this Foróige's Best practice Unit and with Foróige's Head Office which disseminates information to their youth workers. The Best Practice staff portal, it was suggested, could be asked to advertise a link to the HBSC website; Foróige's general website was suggested as a useful platform to disseminate the HBSC findings.

Some youth workers were enthusiastic about dissemination efforts such as a coffee morning in the university which could feature half an hour long presentations of relevant aspects of the HBSC data followed by a question and answer session. Foróige projects could be approached directly with invitations to these and such events would strengthen the connections between the HPRC and organisations such as Foróige. It was suggested that HBSC team link into regional and national events that may be organised throughout the year for youth workers and attend these events to present or circulate information. Likewise, the Youth Participation Advisory Committee meet a number of times a year and may be interested in the data.

The youth workers made a number of suggestions about the best way to get the information to young people. Young people, it was said, struggle if too much information is presented at one time and need to have a fun activity if they are to get involved. Being involved in a process was said to be a good way of getting information across to young people and youth workers incorporate information, e.g., that contained in drug and alcohol programmes, into activities such as sports adventure projects during which they build up trusting relationships with the young people. Social media was identified as the most powerful way of attracting the attention of young people and therefore, it was suggested, they should be engaged in a process such as making videos or PowerPoint presentations. Young people were believed to be the most effective disseminators of information to other young people.

One focus group recommended targeting local data to the relevant local newspapers.

One focus group asked about the involvement of high-risk, out-of-school youth in the HBSC survey.

Teachers

One teacher commented that the way to get information to teachers is to present it in a way that it is usable for them; information that can be used in the classroom without modification was described as a big bonus for teachers. Teachers said that they were inundated with information in the form of booklets etc., and they do not get the time to look at them.

Teachers recommended having the information on an App that could be used in the classrooms or having it on a PowerPoint presentation that was ready for use for teaching purposes. One teachers' group suggested that the factsheets should have simpler graphs and fewer words, if they were to be used with children and that, therefore, two versions of the same data should be available.

Several teachers discussed the importance of targeting information to specific teachers as well as to the schools; thus specific factsheets could be sent directly to the SPHE teachers or the English or science teachers – teachers were said to be more likely to read something that was directed specifically to them as a subject teacher. Likewise, it was suggested that the factsheets could be designed and presented as school-subject based sheets with information directed to maths or Home Economics, PE or science teachers.

Some teachers want to be directed to sources of information such as websites; it was suggested that flyers or the factsheets could serve as a gateway to the HBSC website

If you just sent the factsheet, because sometimes like that you give somebody a booklet they won't always sit down and read it –they won't always have time – if you send them a factsheet that's kind of an introduction and tell them there's a website (t4)

It was also suggested that it would be useful to have a page on the website that was, specifically for teachers.

One group suggested that the HBSC team could present the research directly to teachers and that teachers may find this a useful way of using their 'Croke Park' hours.

Teachers also suggested liaising with newspapers about including data in supplements such as the various health supplements and the Farmer's Journal's country section.

DISCUSSION

Although none of the focus group participants from any of the stakeholder groups had heard of the HBSC study previously, they had a very positive response to the study content and were particularly interested in the area of adolescent sexual behaviour. The importance of circulating adolescent sexual behaviour statistics was highlighted across all four stakeholder groups. It was consistently agreed that it is vital that young people in particular are aware of their peer behaviours – especially when peer sexual activity is often over-estimated by young people.

Young people

Young people were interested in having information about the health behaviours of young people their own age in Ireland. They saw the value of knowing the facts and statistics in the case of behaviours such as engaging in sexual intercourse. Most agreed that this sort of knowledge would lessen peer pressure in the lives of many adolescents. While young people were interested in receiving health behaviour information they were clear that it should be short, concise, have little text and have a focus on visual aspects such as colour and images. The majority of young people also suggested social media such as Facebook and YouTube were the best modes of distributing information to them. Many were interested in the use of short video clips made by young people themselves as a method of disseminating research findings.

Parents

Parents had mixed opinions on the actual health behaviours of young people in Ireland with a number of differing views on the prevalence behaviours such as of sexual intercourse among adolescents. They found the research interesting and felt it was good for them to know the realities of adolescent life but were more eager that their children have the information. The parent groups did not report any novel suggestions for the design of dissemination resources but did recommend increased distribution of research findings in schools and libraries. Parents also suggested increasing links with existing resources such as newspapers and websites e.g., The National Parent's Council.

Youth workers

Most youth workers found the research and its findings interesting and agreed it would be useful for them to have such information. They felt it would be necessary to have the facts presented in a way that was relevant to their own work. They were particularly interested in more local or regional level data. Youth workers reported being limited by time constraints as well as being overwhelmed with information from many different organisations. The chief recommendation from youth workers was to link in with the established Foróige Best Practice Unit as it is their main and most reliable source of information. They also highlighted the importance of involving young people themselves in the dissemination process, for example making videos or PowerPoint presentations.

Teachers

The main finding among the teachers groups was that dissemination methods must be tailored to the specific classroom needs of teachers. Teachers found the research to be valuable and suggested the information could be useful in a range of subjects including SPHE, CSPE, Home Economics and Religion. Factsheets that were clear and easy to photocopy were the most popular dissemination material among the teacher groups. In order for the information to be picked up and used by teachers, it was recommended by a number of participants that information should target specific teachers and subject areas. It would also be advantageous if it was presented in a classroom-ready format such as a PowerPoint presentation as this would appeal to busy teachers.

CONCLUSION

This report provides an important exploration into the most appropriate mechanisms and tools for disseminating research findings on the sexual behaviour of adolescents in Ireland. This information was successfully collated from the view point of specifically identified stakeholder groups. Young people, parents, youth workers and teachers effectively identified alternative and appropriate methods of disseminating this sensitive research to their particular interest group.

This study uncovered a range of opinions around the area of research dissemination of adolescent sexual behavioural data. Distinct differences in the preference of dissemination materials and methods were clearly found between the individual stakeholder groups. The focus and discussion groups provided valuable and constructive insights into suitable approaches to the distribution of research findings to a variety of audiences. Each stakeholder had clear priorities in the type of materials that are useful in their specific environment as well as their perceptions on the best modes of communicating these materials among their contemporaries.

These findings have provided valuable guidelines which will benefit the dissemination of both existing and future research in the area of adolescent sexual behaviour. If correctly adopted into future research dissemination processes, this information has the potential to expand the reaches of the HBSC survey extending knowledge on adolescent sexual behaviour and other health behaviours to a broader audience. It may also aid in improving the quality and quantity of adolescent sexual health interventions countrywide. These findings and recommendations are also transferrable across a range of research fields, organisations and interest groups.

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