

What do parents want to know?

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Introduction

- Mapping exercise was conducted by CHILDREN 1st in 2013 identified that there was lack of information for parents of teenage children
- Parent and Carers of Young People Information Group was set up to respond to the findings and provide guidance on the development of information for parents/carers
- Scotinform was commissioned to undertake consultations with parents/carers of 11-19 year olds
- Consultations conducted through four focus groups:
 - Dalkeith/Glasgow locations
 - 7-8 participants in each
 - Included single parents, fathers and parents from ethnic minority groups

Information Needs

- Participants recognised the need for information relating to teenage children – period of significant change during adolescence, including move to secondary school
- Topics that parents had sought information on included:
 - Internet usage
 - Drugs
 - Homework
 - Exams
 - Bullying
 - Careers advice
- Triggers for seeking information could be external (e.g. media coverage) or the young person asking for information

Information Needs

“Didn’t have any issues with kids at Primary 7, it is just when they are starting 1st year, starting to grow up and the hormones kick in.”

Glasgow parent of 11-14 year old

"The things my kids come and ask us is what things they do at a certain age, when they get discounts, when they don't? When they can get on and off a bus at different ages, when they can go to the cinema, when they can be left at home alone?"

Edinburgh parent of 15-19 year old

Sources of Information

- Main sources were:
 - Internet
 - Schools – including school websites
 - Family/friends
- Some reference to printed material, picked up in schools, libraries, doctor's surgeries

Sources of Information

"All the schools now, you can go onto their web page and there is masses of information."

Glasgow parent of 11-14 year old

"If I saw a leaflet at school I would certainly pick it up. One of the downsides of the Internet is that you can put something into a search engine and get mincemeat."

Edinburgh parent of 11-14 year old

Interest in Topics

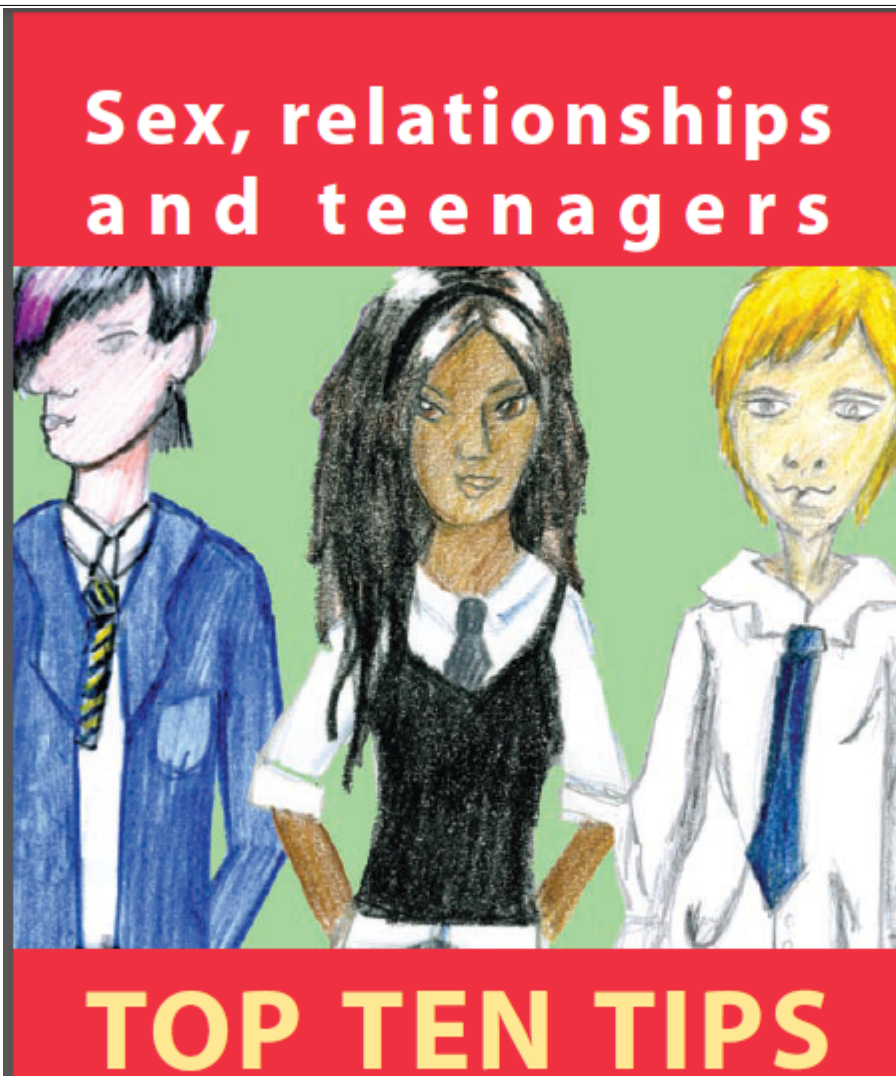
- Highest levels of interest in information on **drugs** and **internet usage**
 - both are areas where parents/carers feel they are out of touch
- Also interest in other topics such as exams, bullying , employment , healthy eating and health (particularly mental health)
 - but anticipated that schools will provide information on these topics
- Expectation some topics required a personal/tailored approach, and therefore not necessarily relevant to generic information provision - e.g. behaviour/discipline, communication, family relationships, friendships

Views on Current Material (1)

A range of material was shown to participants – sourced from Family Lives, NHS Health Scotland, NSPCC, Parentline, Parenting across Scotland, Talk2

- Most effective format was small (approx A6) booklets – perceived as easy to browse and put in pocket/bag
 - A5 leaflets potentially useful to browse, but less likely to pick up and take home
- Key to participants picking up print material were:
 - an eye catching front cover (photo or illustration)
 - content that was easy to browse
 - signposting to online sources for more information




Views on Current Material (1)



Views on Current Material (2)

- Potential to share print material with teenage children was a major plus – design had to be appropriate for both
- Websites seen as offering far greater depth than print – and potentially more up to date
- Web-based material is also browsed/scanned for relevant information
 - good example of presentation of information in NHS Health Scotland drugs information

Views on Current Material - Example

<p>Alkyl nitrites (Stimulant) amyl nitrite, butyl nitrite</p>  <p>Poppers: Brand names include TNT, Liquid Gold</p>	<p>Cannabis (Hallucinogen)</p>  <p>Hash, dope, blow, draw, grass</p>	<p>Drug name and group</p>
<p>Clear yellow liquid, smells sweet when it's fresh and 'sweaty' when it's not. Vapour is breathed in through nose or mouth from a small bottle or tube</p>	<p>Comes as solid lump 'resin'; leaves, stalks and seeds called 'grass'; or sticky dark oil. Can be smoked or cooked and eaten with food.</p>	<p>Street name</p>
<p>Almost instant 'head rush' with flushed face and neck. Lasts 2-5 minutes.</p>	<p>Users feel relaxed and may have sharper sense of colours and sounds. Some feel urge to eat. In food, the dose taken is much harder to control.</p>	<p>What it looks like and how it's taken</p>
<p>Short term: Pounding headaches, nausea, fainting, bulging eyes. If spilled it can burn the skin and may be fatal if swallowed. People with anaemia, glaucoma and breathing or heart problems are particularly at risk.</p> <p>Long term: Regular use can lead to tolerance (greater amount needed to produce same effect) and an increase in risks listed above.</p>	<p>Short-term: Impairs ability to concentrate. Anxiety, panic and suspicion are not uncommon. Damages ability to learn and carry out many tasks, including operating machinery and driving vehicles. Can lead to tiredness and lack of motivation.</p> <p>Long term: Regular heavy use may lead to development or worsening of mental health problems including paranoia, schizophrenia, psychosis, depression and anxiety. Smoked with tobacco, it increases health risks associated with tobacco use, for example: lung cancer, bronchitis and other respiratory disorders, and can lead to nicotine addiction. Can lead to heart and breathing problems. Very heavy cannabis use can lead to withdrawal symptoms.</p>	<p>Immediate effects</p>
<p>Amyl nitrite is a prescription-only medicine. Possession is not illegal but supply through sex shops and clubs can be an offence under The Medicines Act.</p>	<p>Cannabis (resin, grass, oil) was reclassified to Class B in January 2009.</p>	<p>Risks</p>
		<p>Legal status</p>
		<p>Associated paraphernalia (where appropriate)</p>

Views on Current Material

"The smaller ones are more to the point [than A5]. I would read them."

Edinburgh parent of 15-19 year old

"I like this one because it has no big words, it is simple. It starts by acknowledging the parent."

Glasgow parent of 11-14 year old

"If it's a subject that catches your attention, if you're having issues with gangs or whatever then you would read it whatever it looked like." Glasgow parent of 11-14 year old

Developing Information

- Main areas of interest relate areas that parents/carers feel out of touch – information must be up to date
- Print material should be easily browsed and act as signpost to online resources
- Sources include schools and the internet – other sources are libraries, surgeries, community centres
- Design and content should ideally be suitable for parents to pass on to teenage children