




AN EXPLORATION OF DISSEMINATION TOOLS AND MECHANISMS: Consultation among different stakeholder groups

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**A designated WHO Collaborating Centre
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The Health Behaviour in School aged-Children (HBSC) study

- World Health Organisation (WHO) cross-national research project
 - Improve understanding of young people's health and wellbeing, including sexual behaviours
 - 200,000 school children aged 11, 13 and 15 years across 43 countries every 4 years
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HBSC Ireland

- Carried out in Ireland since 1998
 - Data collection in Ireland extended to include young people aged 9 to 18 years
 - Sample is representative of geographical population distribution of children in Ireland based on census data
 - In HBSC Ireland 2010:
 - 256 schools were recruited - response rate of 67%
 - 16,060 school children took part - response rate of 85%
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Dissemination


- 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
 - HBSC aims to disseminate findings to as wide an audience as possible, be it academic, practitioner or non-specialist
 - Traditionally research findings tend to target a more professional or adult audience through:
 - Reports
 - Academic papers
 - Formal presentations
 - Factsheets
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Dissemination


- The benefits of disseminating research findings depend on recognition, up-take and implementation by the end users
 - Dissemination is more effective if relevant stakeholder groups are consulted with and included in activities and the evaluation of methods used to distribute the information
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Aim


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 the process were young people, parents, youth workers and teachers.




Methods

- Participants were recruited from the stakeholder groups of young people (15 years+), parents, youth workers and teachers
 - Convenience sampling was used to engage a diverse range of participants
 - Focus/discussion groups:
 - 4 x young people (n=39)
 - 2 x parents (n=12)
 - 3 x youth workers (n=15)
 - 4 x teachers (n=14)
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Methods

- Stakeholders groups were asked:
 - about levels of awareness of HBSC
 - about level of interest in the topics
 - for feedback on the current formats
 - for recommendations for future dissemination
 - All groups asked to estimate the percentage of 15-17 year olds in Ireland who reported ever having sexual intercourse, and also ever being really drunk – indicator of perceptions
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Results

- Very positive response to the study content
 - **Physical fighting & bullying, drug/alcohol use and sexual health & 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 risk behaviour is often over-estimated by young people.
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Young people

- Over-estimated the proportion of young people who were sexually active or who had ever been drunk
- Interested in having information about the health behaviours of young people their own age in Ireland
- Facts and statistics around behaviours such as engaging in sexual intercourse would lessen peer pressure for adolescents
- Information should be short, concise, have little text - focus on visual colour and images.
 - **Key suggestions:**
 - Social media e.g., Facebook and YouTube
 - Short video clips made by young people themselves

Young people - quotes

“It’s what we’re going through – to see if you can relate or if you are different, like”

“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”

“Videos are best because if it’s just in writing nobody wants to read it”



Parents

- Mixed perception of health behaviours of young people in Ireland
- Found the research interesting and felt it was good for them to know the realities of adolescent life
- More eager that their children have the information
- No novel suggestions for the design of dissemination resources
 - **Key suggestions:**
 - Increased distribution of research findings in schools and libraries
 - Increasing links with existing resources such as newspapers and websites e.g., The National Parent's Council.

Parents - quotes

“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”

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

“Some people look for information – others don’t until it’s in front of them”



Youth workers

- Found the research and its findings interesting and agreed it would be useful for them to have such information
- Necessary to have the facts presented in a way that was relevant to their own work
- Interested in more local or regional level data
 - **Key suggestions:**
 - Link in with the established Foróige Best Practice Unit
 - Also highlighted involving young people themselves in the dissemination process, for example making videos or PowerPoint presentations

Youth workers - quotes

“It’s good for us to know – it validates things for us”

“Getting the truth to them is vital”

“Sometimes there’s a perception that they know everything – but they don’t – it’s quite surprising”

“So much information comes at us every day, you know, we will miss some of it”



Teachers

- Teachers found the research to be valuable and useful in a range of subjects including SPHE, CSPE, Home Economics and Religion
 - Dissemination methods must be tailored to the specific classroom needs of teachers
 - Factsheets that were clear and easy to photocopy were the most popular dissemination method
- **Key suggestions:**
 - Information should target specific teachers and subject areas
 - Presented in a classroom-ready format such as a PowerPoint presentation

Teachers - quotes


“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”

“Graphical representation is important, d’you know, because you can see at a glance what you’re looking at”

“Really and truly, you’re going to get this book and it’s going to be left on a shelf”



Summary

- Distinct differences in the preference of dissemination materials and methods between stakeholder groups
 - Each group had clear priorities in the type of materials that are useful in their specific environment and the best modes of communicating these materials among their contemporaries
 - Valuable guidelines which will benefit the dissemination of both existing and future research
 - Potential to expand the reaches of the HBSC survey and other research to a broader audience
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