

## » Youth Sexuality 9th Iteration

# In Focus: Advice Centres

The Federal Centre for Health Education's (BZgA) representative study Youth Sexuality 9th Iteration is a representative repeat survey. A large-scale survey of young people, their parents and young adults was launched for the ninth time in the summer of 2019. It follows on from predecessor studies conducted between 1980 and 2014. The goal of the study is to acquire reliable data about the attitudes and behaviours of young people in the Federal Republic of Germany with regards to sexuality and contraception.

Sexuality education and pedagogy primarily take place in the home and at school. Expert advice in gynaecological practices remain almost exclusively reserved for girls. Consequently, advice centres could close an important gap for boys and those adolescents and young adults who do not have a trusted person in their social setting.

The right to advice is provided for in law, in § 2 of the Act on Assistance to Avoid and Cope with Conflicts in Pregnancy (SchKG). Germany possesses a dense network of recognised advice centres where staff will answer questions about sexuality, relationships, contraception and pregnancy(conflicts). They co-operate with institutions such as schools in the area of sexuality education. This fact sheet presents the core results on the role and significance of advice centres for sexuality education and contraception, largely for the sample group of 14- to 17-year-olds, but in some places also for the 18- to 25-year-old young adults.

Results: An Overview	Page
1 Young people are aware of the services offered by advice centres and recognise their expertise.	2
2 Advice centres play an important role for those who have little access to information.	4
3 The majority of adolescents and young adults have been made aware of advice centres by their school.	6
4 Whether or not girls and young women take advantage of contraceptive advice from experts is determined by their cultural-religious background.	7

## Result 1

## Young people are aware of the services offered by advice centres and recognise their expertise.

Young people recognise the expertise of advice centres: for around one in five girls and one in five boys (19% and 18%) the experts at advice centres count among their preferred sources of information about sexual topics that they want to learn more about.

For young people with a migrant background and/or close religious ties, adult professional contacts at advice centres hold a particularly significant role (see Figure 1 and Figure 2).

This fact is even more true for the boys than the girls. This is because in the realm of contraceptive advice by experts, girls also have doctors 'as a resource', which is not the case for the boys.

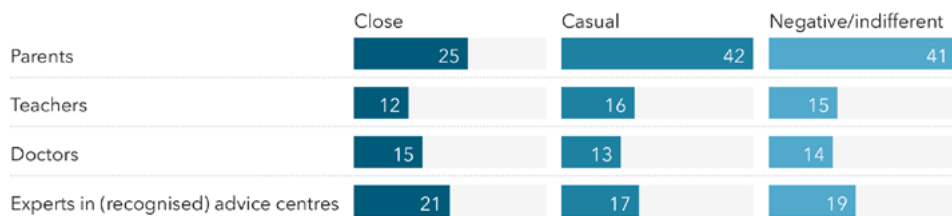
Therefore the expert staff in advice centres hold an important societal function in the context of sexuality education, because they reach boys and girls, particularly those with a migrant background and with close religious ties, with regards to passing on information about sexuality and contraception.

[See Youth Sexuality 9th Iteration - Fact Sheet 'In Focus: Gynaecologists'](#)



### Individuals who provide sexuality education and contraceptive advice (by strength of religious ties)

Question: From which of these people would you like to receive more information about the topics you gave? (list provided)

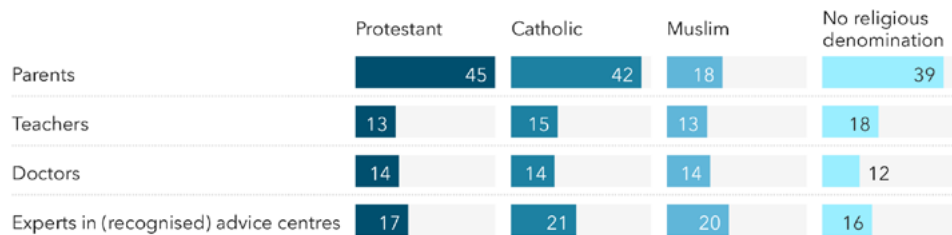


Basis: 14- to 17-year-olds | multiple responses possible | figures in percent  
 Source: BZgA, dataset Youth Sexuality, 2019 survey

Figure 1

### Individuals who provide sexuality education and contraceptive advice (by religious denomination)

Question: From which of these people would you like to receive more information about the topics you gave? (list provided)



Basis: 14- to 17-year-olds | multiple responses possible | figures in percent  
 Source: BZgA, dataset Youth Sexuality, 2019 survey

Figure 2

## Result 2

## Advice centres play an important role for those who have little access to information.

Even though around a quarter of the young people surveyed cite experts at advice centres as a preferred source of information, only 8 percent of the girls and young women between the ages of 14 and 25 and 7 percent of their male counterparts said that they had been to an advice centre in order to obtain information about contraception.

The question whether the respondents had been to an advice centre achieved yes responses in the double percentage figures in the following groups:

- 18- to 25-year-old men with a migrant background: these are more likely to affirm having been to an advice centre than young men without a migrant background (10 % versus 7 %) and than the 14- to 17-year-old boys with or without a migrant background (3 % and 4 % respectively)
- 18- to 25-year-old young women with Turkish roots (10 %)
- 18- to 25-year-old young women (regardless of their cultural background) with a basic level of education (11 %)
- 18- to 25-year-old young men who have not yet had sexual intercourse (11 %) or who have not had sexual intercourse often (up to ten times) yet (10 %)
- 18- to 25-year-old young women who became sexually active early - at 14 or younger (13 %)
- 18- to 25-year-old young women who were not in a steady relationship with their first sexual partner, but merely well acquainted (12 %)
- 14- to 25-year-olds who did not or only hardly knew their partner with whom they experienced their first sexual intercourse (11 %)

- 14- to 25-year-olds who struggle or are unable to accept their own body (11 %); the percentage here is particularly high among 18- to 25-year-old young women who struggle to accept their own body (16 %)

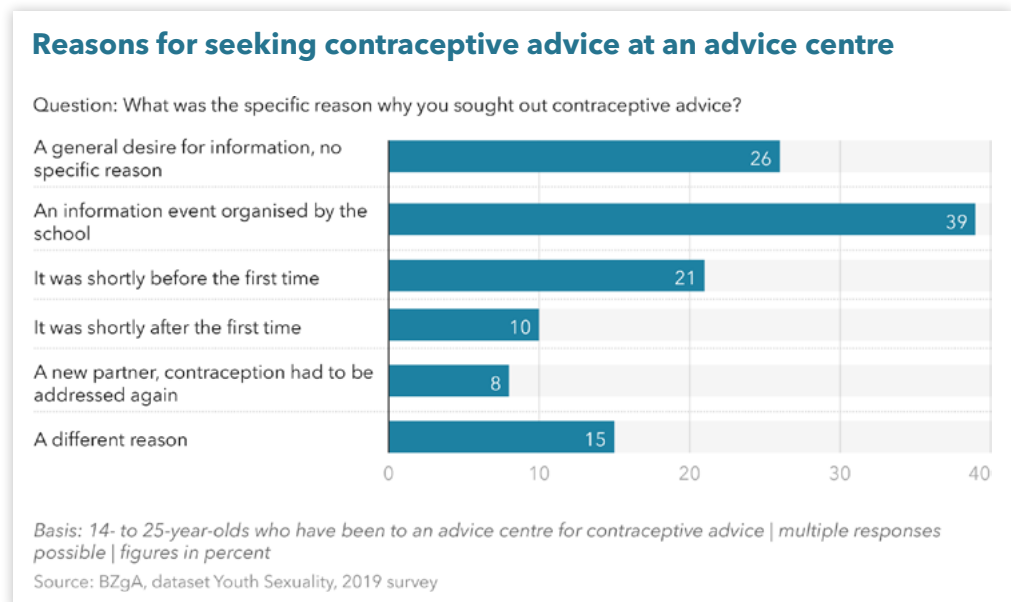
In addition to contraceptive advice, questions around sexual orientation are a reason for seeking out an advice centre. Among the 14- to 25-year-old respondents who are not or not exclusively heterosexual in their orientation, the figure is 13 percent. Among the 18- to 25-year-old young men it is 12 percent and among the 18- to 25-year-old young women the figure with homosexual or bisexual orientations is 15 percent.

## Result 3

## The majority of adolescents and young adults have been made aware of advice centres by their school.

For all of the 14- to 25-year-old adolescents and young adults it can be said that many do not come across advice centres of their own accord. Instead, they come across advice centres via 'an information event organised by the school' (see Figure 3). Every second boy and young man in particular only became aware of advice centres through a school event. Among the girls and young women this figure was merely 29 percent.

Figure 3



A general interest in information has increased in importance in the trend comparison: currently this reason is cited by 26 percent of the adolescents and young adults, which is an increase of 10 percentage points compared to the 2014 survey.

## Whether or not girls and young women take advantage of contraceptive advice from experts is determined by their cultural-religious background.

Looking specifically at the girls and young women, to see whether they seek out contraceptive advice from experts, regardless from what source, it can be said that 27 percent of the 14- to 25-year-old Muslim girls and young women seek out contraceptive advice from a gynaecological practice or advice centre (compared to 63 % and 68 % for other religious denominations) (see Table 1). Looking at strength of religious ties, it is more the girls and young women with a close tie to their religion who do not seek out contraceptive advice compared to those with a casual tie or no religious denomination (42 % versus 65 %). Among those with close ties to Catholicism the figure is only roughly a half of the respondents and among those with close ties to their Muslim faith it is only roughly a fifth who take advantage of contraceptive advice from an expert.

### Going to a gynaecological practice or advice centre for contraceptive advice (by religious denomination)

Question: Have you ever been to see a doctor or an expert in an advice centre to get contraceptive advice?

	Protestant	Catholic	Muslim	No religious denomination
Yes	68	66	27	63
No	31	34	73	37
No data	0	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100	100

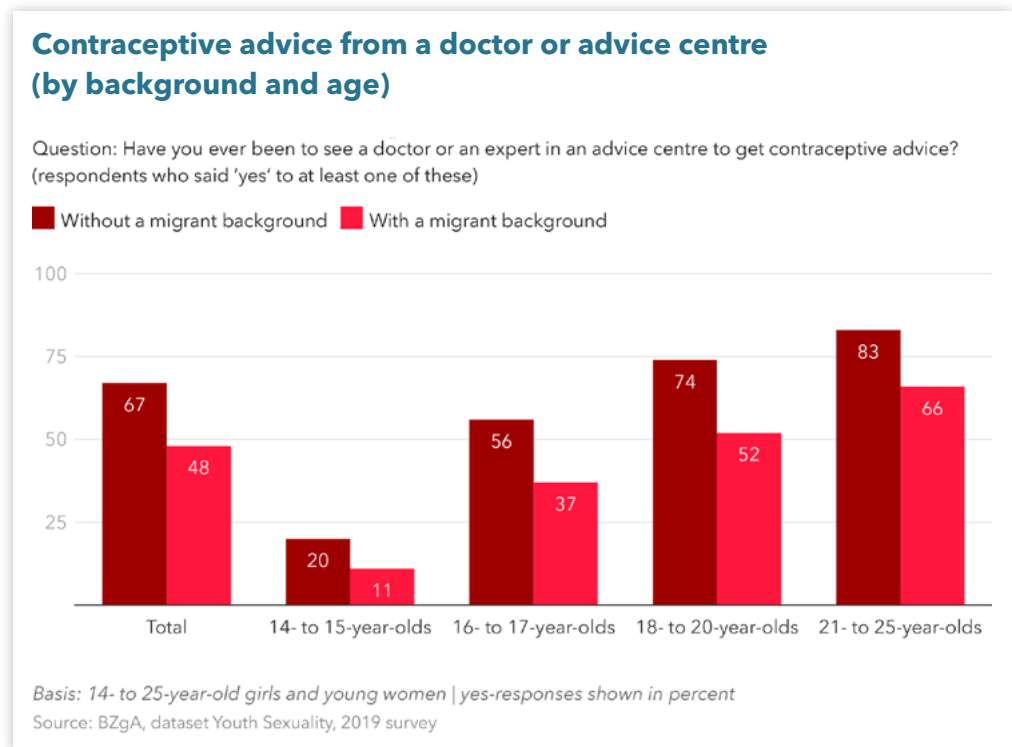
Basis: 14- to 25-year-old girls and young women | figures in percent | deviations from the sum of 100 % are due to rounding

Source: BZgA, dataset Youth Sexuality, 2019 survey

Table 1

The contraceptive consultation in advice centres and/or gynaecological practices is sought out by the girls and young women without a migrant background to a greater extent than their counterparts with a migrant background across all age groups (see Figure 4).

Figure 4



A substantial reason for these differences is the varying degree of sexual activity in the two comparison groups. The girls without a migrant background become sexually active earlier on average than the girls with a migrant background, which is why contraceptive advice is also relevant earlier for them (BZgA, 2020).



## References

---



Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung (BZgA). (2020). *BZgA-Studie „Jugendsexualität 9. Welle.“ Zentrale Ergebnisse* [Youth Sexuality 9th Iteration, Central Results]. Available in German: <https://www.sexualaufklaerung.de/forschungsergebnis/jugendsexualitaet-9-welle-3/> in English: <https://www.sexualaufklaerung.de/en/english/projects/detail/youth-sexuality-9th-iteration-central-results/> [accessed on 02 June 2023]

Census UK (2019): Tolland, L. & Evans, J. (2019, February 21). *What is the difference between sex and gender?* Gov.uk; Office for National Statistics. Available at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/articles/whatisthedifferencebetweensexandgender/2019-02-21> [accessed 3 April 2023]

Gesetz zur Vermeidung und Bewältigung von Schwangerschaftskonflikten (Schwangerschaftskonfliktgesetz - SchKG). Abschnitt 1 [Act on Assistance to Avoid and Cope with Conflicts in Pregnancy (SchKG). Section 1] Available at <https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/beratungsg/BJNR113980992.html#BJNR113980992BJNG000100307> [accessed on 06 Oct 2021]

Statistisches Bundesamt (Destatis). (2021). *Migrationshintergrund* [Migrant Background]. Available at <https://www.destatis.de/DE/Themen/Gesellschaft-Umwelt/Bevoelkerung/Migration-Integration/Glossar/migrationshintergrund.html> [accessed on 11 Jul 2021]



## Notes on the data

---

- As the percentages shown has been rounded to whole numbers, it is possible that they may not add up to 100 percent.
- For the same reason the combined categories (e.g. 'very satisfied' and 'mostly satisfied') can deviate from the sum of the individual categories depicted.
- For questions where the respondents were able to pick several answers, the total figure can exceed 100 percent.
- Where data is available from previous surveys, the survey results are shown in a trend comparison. Because of how the samples were done it is possible to see the long-term trend covering almost 40 years for boys and girls between 14 and 17 without a migrant background.
- Participants are deemed to have a migrant background if they themselves or at least one parent was born without German citizenship; this definition is also used by the Federal Statistical Office of Germany (Statistisches Bundesamt, 2021).
- The level of education is determined by the (desired) qualifications the study participants were/are seeking at school based on the education system in Germany. Low: 9 years of school, most are around 15 years old when they leave (e.g. Hauptschule) Moderate: 10 years of school, most are around 16 years old when they leave (e.g. mittlere Reife). High: 12 to 13 years of school, most are 18 to 19 years old when they leave (e.g. Abitur).
- Because of the methodological design of the Youth Sexuality Study a further non-binary differentiation of gender has had to be left out. For this same reason, the term 'sex' (biological aspects, assigned by birth) continues to be used (in contrast to 'gender' in the sense of social construction, gender identity as personal internal perception of oneself) to enable statements on long-term trends (see also Census UK, 2019). This decision is purely a methodological necessity and not based on a lack of awareness of diversity here.

## Imprint

---

### **Publisher**

Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche  
Aufklärung (BZgA) [Federal Centre  
for Health Education (BZgA)]

Acting Director:  
Prof. Dr. Martin Dietrich

Maarweg 149-161  
50825 Köln  
Tel.: 0221 8992-0

[www.bzga.de](http://www.bzga.de)  
[www.sexualaufklaerung.de](http://www.sexualaufklaerung.de)

Twitter: @BZgA\_SchKG

### **Authors**

Dr. Sara Scharmanski,  
Angelika Hessling, BZgA

### **Translation**

Josephine Cordero Sapién, Exeter/England

### **Editing, Concept and Design**

Kühn Medienkonzept & Design GmbH,  
Ruppichteroth, Köln

### **Version**

PDF version (EN) 1.0,  
published online July 2023,  
translated from German version 1.1  
(May 2022),  
first published online October 2021

All rights reserved.

### **Citation Style**

Scharmanski, S. & Hessling, A. (2021).  
*In Focus: Advice Centres. Youth Sexuality  
9th Iteration. BZgA Fact Sheet.*  
Cologne: Federal Centre for Health  
Education (BZgA).

[https://doi.org/10.17623/  
BZgA\\_SRH:fb\\_JUS9\\_en\\_advice\\_centre](https://doi.org/10.17623/BZgA_SRH:fb_JUS9_en_advice_centre)

## The Research Project: Background, Research Team, Methodology

The Federal Centre for Health Education's (BZgA) representative study Youth Sexuality 9th Iteration is a repeat survey. In the summer of 2019 the ninth large-scale survey of young people, their parents and young adults began. A total of 6,032 interviews were conducted nationwide. Since 1980, the BZgA has been investigating the attitudes and behaviour of young people in the Federal Republic of Germany with regard to sexuality education, sexuality and contraception. This current study follows on from the previous years' studies with the explicit aim of illustrating trends.

### Project profile

<b>Client</b>	Federal Centre for Health Education (BZgA)
<b>Project lead</b>	Angelika Hessling, BZgA
<b>Survey institute</b>	Kantar GmbH
<b>Survey population</b>	Adolescents and young adults between the ages of 14 and 25
<b>Survey method</b>	Computer-supported combined oral-written survey; for the more intimate questions the questionnaire was to be filled out by the respondents without the interviewers being able to see.
<b>Selection method</b>	A disproportionately selected quota sample with regards to sex, age and migrant background
<b>Sample of young people</b>	6,032 interviews of which 3,556 were with adolescents between the ages of 14 and 17 and 2,476 with young adults between 18 and 25
<b>Sample: parents</b>	In the households of the 14- to 17-year-old adolescents without a migrant background one parent was also surveyed (2,422 interviews)
<b>Weighting</b>	All the data shown underwent a representative weighting in order to remove the sample's disproportionalities caused by the design.
<b>Survey period</b>	May to October 2019



### More information about the study Youth Sexuality 9th Iteration Central results and further fact sheets

<https://www.sexualaufklaerung.de/en/english/projects/detail/youth-sexuality-9th-iteration/>