

# POSITIVE SEXUAL HEALTH

BE BOLD - BE HEARD - BE THE CHANGE

# TALKING

# ABOUT

# SEXUAL

# HEALTH

**Opening conversations with young people about sexual health and staying safe.**

# POSITIVE SEXUAL HEALTH

## BE BOLD - BE HEARD - BE THE CHANGE

### Acknowledgments

This tool was originally developed by NSW Health, then adapted and reproduced with kind permission to an Irish setting. Thanks to Carloyn Murray and Stephanie De Vries (NSW Government - Health) for their assistance in this.



[www.stipu.nsw.gov.au](http://www.stipu.nsw.gov.au)

A working group of youth workers from Youth Work Ireland Member Youth Services worked on the adaptation of this resource and have included some sections based on their expertise that are relevant to Irish youth work settings.

### Working Group and Contributors

Gina Halpin, Youth Work Ireland  
Jacinta Purcell, Ossory Youth  
Rebecca Carbery, Ossory Youth  
Nicky McDonnell, Youth Work Ireland Meath

This tool has been reviewed by experts in The Squashy Couch and the National Youth Health Programme. It has also been reviewed by young people from Meath Comhairle na nÓg



# CONTENTS

Positive Sexual Health Campaign .....	4
Talking About Sexual Health .....	5
Checklist for Starting Conversations .....	6
The Irish Legal Context .....	8
Consent .....	9
The Role of a Youth Worker .....	10
Key Sexual Health Messages .....	11
Checklist for Youth Workers .....	12
Youth Work Environment .....	13
Opening Conversations .....	14
Building on Conversations .....	15
Junior Section .....	16
Dating Apps .....	17
STIs .....	18
Types of Contraception .....	19
Sexual Health Clinics .....	20
Glossary .....	22
National Agencies .....	23
Youth Information Centres .....	24
References .....	25
Youth Work Ireland Members .....	26

# POSITIVE SEXUAL HEALTH

## Youth Work Ireland's Positive Sexual Health Campaign

Youth Work Ireland is the largest youth organisation in Ireland with 21 Member Youth Services providing direct supports and services to over 100,000 young people every week. We work with and for young people to support them have their voices heard on issues that matter to them. The themes and issues we focus on are chosen through a participatory consensus process with young people, youth workers and volunteers.

In 2017 the area of sexual health was chosen as the most important issue for young people. This wasn't too surprising given we are at a unique moment in history where there is open dialogue around issues of sexual health, behaviour, choice, consent, gender equality and what constitutes a healthy relationship.

The Positive Sexual Health campaign began in Spring 2018 with a national online survey and wide-reaching youth consultation. The results have shown us that young people want and need accurate, reliable and consistent information around issues of sexual health. They also want to be empowered and supported in their learning about sexual health in order to make healthy decisions that are right for them. Through initiatives, resource development and events the Positive Sexual Health campaign provides young people with opportunities to have their voices heard on all issues relating to positive sexual health.

We hope this tool will begin to reinforce a positive attitude and approach to talking about sexual health and reduce the stigma around sexual health, sexuality and sexual behaviour that has existed in Ireland for too long.

[www.youthworkireland.ie](http://www.youthworkireland.ie)

**#beboldbeheard**

# TALKING ABOUT SEXUAL HEALTH

## Starting the Conversation

Talking about sexual health is an important part of a youth worker's role, and youth workers are seen as trusted sources of information on many issues for young people. We in Youth Work Ireland know from our recent work on Positive Sexual Health that young people want accurate reliable and consistent information about sexual health, and youth workers are well placed to provide that information and support young people in the decisions they make around their sexual health.

This tool supports youth workers to identify opportunities and to open up conversations with young people about sexual health. It can assist us in understanding what their thoughts, concerns and questions might be, and how we as youth workers can support them to make informed, safe and healthy decisions in relation to their sexual health. The tool is easily adaptable to the young people we work with and can build on good practice in this area. The key steps in the conversations will generally be the same, however the language we use to begin conversations may be slightly different depending on the age, make up and needs of each group.

### **This tool has been developed to provide:**

- Some key messages about sexual health.
- Suggestions and ideas for building a supportive and positive environment to talk about sexual health.
- Examples and scenarios for starting the conversations.
- Tips and suggestions to explore the topic of sexual health in a safe way.
- Additional information on sexual health clinics.
- Details of support agencies for referrals.
- Glossary of Terms.

# TALKING ABOUT SEXUAL HEALTH

## A TOOL FOR YOUTH WORKERS

The aim of this tool is to support youth workers to create a safe space where young people can explore themes and issues around sexual health should they so wish. Engaging young people in conversations about sexual health will not result in them being encouraged to start a sexual relationship. Instead open conversations can result in young people becoming better informed and empowered to develop the ability to make conscious, healthy and respectful choices regarding healthy relationships and sexual health.

### LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES

In all your conversations make sure the young person is clear you are talking about their opinions about issues and not their experiences.

Ask young people if they are comfortable taking part in conversations about sexual health issues.

*“What do you think young people generally would think about...?”*

### OPEN THE CONVERSATION

Find out what they already know by using hypothetical situations. This avoids any personal sharing.

Use scenarios from TV, celebrity news or the media to start conversation and being to explore issues.

*“Do young people talk a lot about porn?”*

### INFORMATION

Extend and build on existing knowledge and correct any misconceptions.

If you don't know the answers find out and get back to the young person

*“Have you seen the article (whatever issue) on the SpunOut website?”*

Talking about sex, sexuality and sexual health with young people is an important part of the role of youth workers. It is not about having all the answers, but about understanding young people's thoughts and concerns and supporting them to make informed and healthy choices about their sexual health.

## Remember...

It doesn't have to be complicated - it can be brief!

It doesn't have to be embarrassing - it's not about you, it's about supporting young people in their learning!

You don't have to be an expert or have all the answers!

### CHECK IN

Acknowledge what they have to say and check their understanding.

*"What do you think young people in Ireland think about these issues?"*

*"Have you thought any more about our chat last week?"*

### RESOURCES

Provide the young person with more information and access to resources.

*"Youth information centres are great places for finding out more about issues that affect young people"*

*"I also really like the Spunout website, it has some really interesting articles."*

### REFERRAL

Explore ways to address any barriers to accessing sexual health services with the young person and introduce them to a service that is right for them.

*"I know from my work experience that there are some services such as ... that other young people have found useful."*

# LEGALITIES

## Youth workers need to be aware of laws relating to sex.

Before you begin to discuss sexual health with young people, ensure that you are up to date with legislation and laws that apply to young people and sexual health. The following is a brief overview:

**Age of Consent:** In Ireland you must be 17 years of age or older to be able to give legal consent to engage in sexual acts with people of the same sex or a different sex.

Under the **Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017** it is a crime to engage in a sexual act with a person under 17. However there is provision for the 'proximity of age' or 'Romeo and Juliet' defence, which may apply where the person who has had sex with someone between 15 and 17 years old, is either younger than them or less than two years older, e.g. if you are 18 and the other person is 16, or if you are both 16, it may not be considered a crime but only if you both agreed freely to engage in the act and neither of you felt exploited or intimidated. The law regards sexual activity with a person who is under 15 as a more serious crime and the penalties for this are greater.

### **Sexual Health and the Law**

- Legal age for marriage is 18 years (unless with a Court Exemption Order).
- Parental consent required for under 16's accessing sexual health services.
- There is no age limit for the purchase of condoms

### **Pornography and the Law**

Hardcore pornography, while legal in Ireland, is not allowed to depict any acts which are illegal in the state. This also covers any participants being beneath the Irish age of consent (17). If any of these are in a video, DVD, film, photograph or website, use and possession of them is illegal. If you are under 18 and a sexual image or video of you is circulated, this is child pornography. Anyone who has distributed this will be liable to be prosecuted as distributors of child pornography.

**Sources: B4U Decide, NYCI, [www.irishstatutebook.ie](http://www.irishstatutebook.ie)**



## Consent in sexual relationships has emerged as a key issue.

In the last number of years consent in sexual relationships has emerged as a key issue for both young people and adults. National and international events have resulted in this issue being openly discussed and examined. So, it is a great time to explore this topic with young people. When talking about consent it is more than just saying “no means no” and “yes means yes”. It is vital to explore with young people what consent *looks, feels and sounds like*. A great way to start the conversations is to show the video **Consent It’s As Simple as Tea** and take the conversation from there - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGoWLWS4-kU>.

### Definition of Consent under Irish Law

A legal definition of consent was introduced in The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2017, which amended The Criminal Law (Sexual Offences) Act 2006. The law now states that *“a person consents to a sexual act if he or she freely and voluntarily agrees to engage in that act”, and provides several circumstances under which consent cannot be given, including being asleep or unconscious; under force or the threat of force, being unlawfully detained or being impaired by alcohol or drugs.*

Some things for a youth worker to know and be mindful of in their conversations on consent are:

- Consent is an agreement between both partners that they definitely want to have sex, or engage in a sexual act.
- Both partners need to fully and clearly agree to it, and it must be continuous for the duration of the act.
- Consent is not limited but can include vaginal, anal or oral sex, mutual masturbation, sexual touching or kissing.
- Under Irish law consent can be revoked at any stage and this must be respected by each other partner.
- Consent should never be assumed.
- Consent can be expressed both verbally and physically.
- Consent cannot be given if a person is under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or is unconscious.
- Consent should happen without pressure, coercion, or manipulation
- If consent is not expressed, it is not sex – it is assault!

# THE ROLE OF A YOUTH WORKER

## Why sexual health important to discuss with young people

Within Irish legislation, youth work is defined as complementary to formal education, so in this respect, youth workers can support the current formal RSE (Relationships and Sexual Education) curriculum. Youth workers are also identified in the *National Sexual Health Strategy* as providers of sexual health information, and also in *Better Outcomes Brighter Futures* as agents to ensure that young people achieve better outcomes in their health.

The following are positive strategies to promote and facilitate ongoing conversations with young people to help, support and empower them in their learning about sexual health.

- Being supportive of young people to learn more about sexual health is not the same as encouraging sexual activity.
- Listen to the young person, this sounds simplistic but try to understand their concerns, so you can help and discuss their needs.
- Be mindful of cultural, sexual or gender diversity and use appropriate terms and language.
- As an information provider, you can ensure young people get the right information and help support them in making their own informed choices about their sexual health.
- Be honest with the young person about what you do or do not know. It is ok to come back to it. This can be learning experiences for both the youth worker and young person. It can also demonstrate to the young person that even adults don't have all the information.
- As a youth worker you can signpost young people who need extra support.
- A youth worker is seen as less authoritarian than a parent or a teacher and it is less embarrassing for young people to speak to
- A youth worker can unpack some of the attitudes, ideas and messages about sex and sexual health, which may not be relevant to young people today.

# KEY SEXUAL HEALTH MESSAGES

Include these core messages in your conversations.

## **Empowerment and Sex Positive Approach**

- Sexuality is about what feels right for each person, it's your body, do what you feel is right, so long as it's healthy, consensual, age appropriate, legal and safe.
- Sexual responsibility and respect for the other person is equally important for males and females.

## **Holistic Approach to Sexual Health**

- Normalise sex and reduce stigmas by reinforcing the idea that a person's sexual health is as important as their physical or mental health and should be taken care of in the same way.
- Talking can take away any embarrassment a young person may feel if they have made unhealthy decisions in the past. Speaking with youth workers can reassure them that everyone can make bad decisions, but this should not define them.
- By speaking openly about sexual health, young people are supported to make the right/healthy choices in the future.
- Porn is fantasy not fact and doesn't represent healthy sexual relationships.

## **Safety**

- Use contraception! This is the best way to protect against STIs or unplanned pregnancy.
- Have regular sexual health checks (tell the young person where more information on Sexual Health Clinics can be found and that STIs can be easily treated).
- Understand what consent is in relation to sexual health and what it isn't.
- Understanding consent means that a person has the skills to leave a situation that doesn't feel comfortable, and respects when other people want to do the same.

## **Each Person is Unique**

- Each young person is unique and has the right to sexual health information for themselves irrespective of what their sexual or gender identity is.
- Sexuality is more than hetero / homo / bi., it can change during a lifetime and this is natural and healthy to acknowledge.

# CHECKLIST FOR YOUTH WORKERS

Before you start a conversation about sexual health with a young person, check you have, or are, mindful of the following:

<b>1</b>	NO PERSONAL SHARING, keep it general and hypothetical – if you are asked something personal throw the question back, e.g. “ <i>wonder what others think?, let’s ask them.</i> ”
<b>2</b>	Always use general and topical scenarios from news and media to explore issues and topics young people bring up.
<b>3</b>	Be aware that some young people may not want to take part in conversations about sexual health so don’t push the issue if it makes anyone uncomfortable.
<b>4</b>	Keep an open mind. Be aware of your own prejudices and remain non-judgemental. Look at where your own beliefs around sexual health and attitudes come from.
<b>5</b>	Be conscious of language and body language when talking about sex. Don’t be defensive, and if you are shocked by something you hear, try not to show it.
<b>6</b>	Don’t make assumptions about a person’s sexual identity or sexual behaviour.
<b>7</b>	How someone expresses their gender identity does not assume their sexuality.
<b>8</b>	Be careful not to mis-gender a young person, if you are not sure how to address a young person, ask them what their pronoun is and use it.
<b>9</b>	Be aware of your organisations’ policies and procedures around sexual health and child protection.
<b>10</b>	Talking can bring up other issues, so you need to make it clear that you are there to support the young person, and available to talk later if needed.
<b>11</b>	Learn as much as you can about other referral and support agencies both locally and nationally.
<b>12</b>	Youth workers aren’t the experts so if there is something you don’t know, use it as an opportunity to learn and get back to the young person.

# CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT TO TALK ABOUT SEXUAL HEALTH

## The youth centre's physical space can communicate positive messages about sexual health.

Creating an environment where it's relaxed, safe and comfortable to talk about sex can be a fun and inventive thing to do, but in all instances it is vital to introduce ease and laughter to both reduce embarrassment and create a space where young people are happy and feel safe participating at their own pace.

- Putting up **posters** that relate to sexual health or promote sexual health services - this can be a simple way to introduce a topic.
- Work on a **sex word cloud poster** with definitions or words relating to sex with your group. This can be an informative arts activity to do, and will give you a sense of the young people's knowledge. You can then put the posters up around the room.
- Create games like **sex pun of the week** and write the puns on a flip chart poster, give a small prize for the best one.
- **'Rude' or Four words game** where teams come up with all the slang words they can think of - one team could have 'Sex' one has 'Masturbation' one has 'Vagina' and one has 'Penis'.
- Link in with **national awareness campaigns** on sexual health and if possible invite a representative of the organisation to speak to the young people (make sure to check their credentials beforehand).
- Display **confidentiality agreements** to ensure there is respect for each other.
- If your space allows, create a **private space** where young people can talk privately with someone (*be aware of and follow your organisations child protection policies in relation to this*).
- Share **sexual health initiatives** other organisations are doing on the topic - you can easily find these on social media.
- **Walking Debate** - this is a great and simple game to play to help young people explore their attitudes and assumptions about sexual health. You can make it interesting by throwing in some tricky questions on a topical issue that is happening.
- By using simple apps such as [www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com) or [www.kahoot.com](http://www.kahoot.com) you can make **sexual health quizzes** and have these as part of a session.
- Set up an **Anonymous Jar** where young people can ask questions anonymously - you can even make some up yourself and add them in, but be mindful not to lead or direct the conversations in ways the young people are either not ready for, or do not want.

# OPENING CONVERSATIONS ABOUT SEXUAL HEALTH

Some examples for starting conversations with young people.

Openers & Opportunities	Example
Look for opportunities to engage young people in conversations about sexual health, by using scenarios from popular culture.	<i>"It's really confusing, all these different messages about sex, like in movies, on TV, online, from parents, different cultures and religions, and from other young people. How can young people work out what's right or wrong for them?"</i>
Explore what they think is expected of them in relationships.	<i>"Just because you go out with someone doesn't mean you have to have sex with them"</i>
Use conversations to bring in legalities on issues of sexual health such as sexting.	<i>"I read in the paper that almost half of teenagers in school say they have participated in sexting - that seems like a high percentage"</i>  <i>"Are there legal implications from this?"</i>
Explore what the expectations boys have of girls, and girls of boys & what they think their roles are in relationships.	<i>"It's so confusing. One week it's 'She's too skinny', then its 'She's too fat'! It's hard to know what it's OK to be these days, isn't it?"</i>
Use hypothetical situations to encourage a young person, or a group, to reflect on an issue.	<i>"How can young people in Ireland protect themselves against STIs?"</i>  <i>"What are the risks to young people of becoming sexual active at a young age?"</i>
Use the strategy of modelling 'info-seeking' behaviour.	<i>"I don't know the answer to that, but I will find out"</i>
Use global events to tease out issues and attitudes.	<i>"Are young people in Ireland influenced by movements like the #metoo campaign?"</i>
Ask questions that make it seem less personal but which help you understand what they know.	<i>"From my experience working with young people around sexual health, I have heard both funny and scary stories about the internet. How can young people use the Internet safely?"</i>
Use the conversations to support young people to find out more.	<i>"A lot of young people have questions and worries about sexual health, but we have some great resources on our information stand"</i>

# BUILDING ON CONVERSATIONS

**Use these approaches to build on conversations and encourage young people to open up more.**

Youth workers are well placed to fill the gap in regards to sexual health information, our work is about opening up conversations, having debate and exploring attitudes and not just about providing information, as this may shut the conversation down.

Be mindful to maintain professional boundaries and avoid disclosing your own personal stories, opinions and experiences. Keep the focus on the young person and their needs.

As long as you show respect it is ok to have fun and have a laugh together. Monitor your body language and make sure young people don't feel judged about their knowledge, behaviour or attitudes.

It is important to also make clear to young people that they do not need to engage in conversations on sexual health if they do not want to.

<b>Building the Conversation</b>	<b>Example</b>
<b>Ask the young people if they would like to give their opinion on a sexual health campaign or something in the news that relates to it.</b>	<i>"Do you think this would be useful information for other young people to learn about?"</i>
<b>Find out what other local services and support agencies offer, and if young people are interested, arrange a visit.</b>	<i>"There are lots of local services that work to support young people around all kinds of issues. There's more information on our website and on our information stand"</i>
<b>Again, use the strategy of info seeking with young people.</b>	<i>"I haven't heard of that term before. What do you think it means?"</i>
<b>Let the young person be the expert.</b>	<i>"I'm not sure about this, but my understanding is... I wonder if this is correct?"</i>
<b>Always make sure you check back in with the young person later to see how the interaction went for them.</b>	<i>"Was that chat we had last week helpful. Would you like to chat about anything else?"</i>

# JUNIOR SECTION

## Care must be taken when speaking with younger young people.

Sexual health information does not have to focus on the physical or biological aspects of sex. For young people under 12 years of age, having age appropriate conversations about healthy relationships, personal boundaries, feelings, attitudes towards their body, gender and friendships is a good place to start.

With younger young people taking a holistic approach to sexual health can gradually introduce age appropriate information around issues of sexual health. With this approach sexual education starts early in childhood and progresses through teenage years and gradually equips and empowers them with information, skills, and positive values to understand and enjoy their sexuality, have safe and fulfilling relationships and take responsibility for their own and others sexual health and well-being. (Ketting et al. 2016)

- For younger young people focus on feelings, caring, mutual respect and safety as part of a healthy relationship.
- Use terms and scenarios they can relate to such as bullying in school, consent and conflict. This can gradually build understanding and awareness of what a healthy and unhealthy friendship/relationship should be.
- Use mile stones such as getting a first phone as a way to introduce and talk about the general pros and cons of social media and staying safe.
- Use conversations around signs of unhealthy relationships, e.g. controlling behaviour, bullying, put downs or jealousy to help them tease out what to do in these situations.
- Slowly build up to it, so when it comes to speaking about sexual health young people will feel safe and be open to having these conversations.
- If someone tells a joke or you hear a song on the radio that refers to something sexual, use it as an opportunity to explore the issue in a safe way.



# DATING APPS

## Staying Safe Online

Dating Apps have become a cultural phenomenon in Ireland over the last couple of years. At the moment one of the most popular is Tinder, but there are a whole range of other apps that operate in a similar manner. The apps uses your location to direct you to other users who are nearby. You can choose to filter who you match with by setting your age range, sex and distance from your location. Users then browse through potential matches, view profiles and pictures before deciding to like/match or dismiss profiles by swiping left (dismiss) or right (match). Grindr is another popular dating app primarily used by gay and bisexual men. It works in the same manner as Tinder using location tagging to show you profiles of other users nearest to you. Unlike Tinder, Grindr does not let you filter who you can see unless you pay for premium functions. This means your profile is visible to everyone when you start.

It is important to note these Apps are offered as 18+ only services but these settings are easily worked around by altering your date of birth to appear 18 on the app. This of course means people can lie about their age and identity. Youth workers need to encourage young people who may be using Tinder, Grindr or other dating apps to be body positive and aware that who they are chatting to may not be who they say they are. Sending pictures online, whether through dating sites or Snapchat can easily be recorded with screen grab functions before the photo “disappears”.

There are many other apps which call themselves ‘Friendship’ apps but these work in the same way as dating apps and allow users to chat and send photos to each other as well.

There is an opportunity to open the conversation with young people around cyberbullying, online predatory behaviour and inappropriate content when discussing the use of dating apps. Remind younger teens that sending and receiving sexual content of anyone under 18 and/or without consent, regardless of age, is illegal and could result in them being charged with Distribution of Pornography of Minors and a criminal record (*see the legal section on pg 8*).

# STIs

## Talking to young people about the risks of STIs

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are infections that are usually passed on (from an infected partner) during unprotected oral, vaginal or anal sex. They are caused by bacteria, viruses and parasites. Some STIs are passed by skin-to-skin contact. Using condoms correctly and every time you have sex will significantly reduce the risk of getting an STI.

STIs in Ireland are on the increase, the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) data confirmed that STIs among young people has risen 11% since 2016, Chlamydia (+10.9%), Gonorrhoea (+19.1%), Herpes (+2.6%). Also 15-24 year olds accounted for 51% of total chlamydia cases reported, 38% of total genital herpes cases reported and 39% of all gonorrhoea cases notified in 2017 (see [www.hpsc.ie](http://www.hpsc.ie) for more information - overall stats for 2018 were not available at the time this resource was going to print).

(<http://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/hivstis/sexuallytransmittedinfections/publications/stireports/>)

There are many different STIs, with some more common than others. For more details on the different STIs listed below and to view (and download) more information in the form of booklets and factsheets, go to **[www.hivireland.ie](http://www.hivireland.ie)**

- Chlamydia
- Gonorrhoea
- Syphilis
- Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)
- Genital Warts
- Genital Herpes
- HIV
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Pubic Lice
- Non-Specific Urethritis (NSU)
- Vaginitis (Bacterial
- Vaginosis and Thrush)
- Trichomoniasis
- Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID)
- Lymphogranuloma Venereum (LGV)

### Preventing STIs

- Get tested regularly.
- Use condoms for vaginal, oral and anal sex.

# CONTRACEPTION

## Brief Guide to Contraception Types

There are various forms of contraception, it is important for young people to be aware of their options and choices regarding the types available. While all contraceptions methods aim to prevent unplanned pregnancy only condoms can prevent both unplanned pregnancy and the spread of STIs. Below is a sample listing for more details see [www.thinkcontraception.ie](http://www.thinkcontraception.ie)



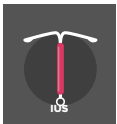
**Condoms:** This barrier method works by preventing sperm from meeting the egg. The external condom is rolled onto the erect penis before sex. The internal condom lines the vagina.



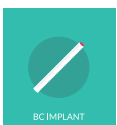
**Combined Oral Contraception Pill:** The Pill contains hormones which are taken every day for three weeks of each month. It works mainly by stopping the production of an egg.



**Injectable Contraception** - Injection of a single hormone every 12 weeks, which works by stopping the production of an egg.



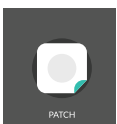
**IUS (Intrauterine System)** - The IUS is a small plastic device that is put into the womb and releases the hormone progesterone. It works either by stopping the sperm from meeting the egg, by delaying the egg getting into the womb or by preventing the egg from implanting in the womb.



**The Implant** - The implant is a small flexible rod that contains hormones and is inserted under the skin of the arm and works mainly by stopping the production of an egg.



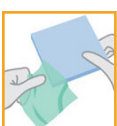
**The Vaginal Ring** - The ring contains hormones and is inserted into the vagina for three weeks of every month and works like the combined oral contraceptive pill.



**The Patch** - The patch is like a thin plaster that contains hormones and is worn for three weeks out of every four and it works like the combined oral contraceptive pill.



**Emergency Contraception** - Can be taken if a person had unprotected sex of if they think the method used may have failed. Emergency contraception can be taken up to 72 hours after unprotected sex, but the sooner it is taken the more effective it is.



**Dental Dam** - This is a barrier between a person's mouth and another person's genitals, used during oral sex to protect against STIs.

# SEXUAL HEALTH CLINICS

**Sexual health clinics are there to support people to take care of their sexual health.**

**Getting an STI test is a fast, easy and sometimes free service** (*HSE centres are free, but GPs and private clinics may charge*), **but if young people don't know this, it can put them off getting checked out. Talking to young people about what happens during an STI test can reassure them that it's not a scary process and may encourage them to go should they ever need to.**

## **What happens when you arrive**

- Some STI clinics operate a walk-in service while other are appointment only, so it's best to check before going (see contact list on pg. 22)
- When you arrive, you'll usually be given a number that will be called when it's your turn (your name won't be called out). You'll be given a form to fill in some personal information and contact details.
- Next you will meet the doctor or nurse who will ask you some personal questions about your sexual health risks and general health, and based on your answers they'll decide what tests you need to do.
- Males (or people with a penis) - You need to not pee for one hour before you get tested. Your skin and testicles will be examined for any rashes, lumps, bumps and discharge. A swab may be taken from your penis, anus and/or throat. You may then be asked for a urine sample and have your blood checked for HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and Syphilis.
- Females (or people with a vagina) - Your skin will be examined for any rashes, lumps and bumps. A smear test may then be done, but this is less likely if you're under 25. A swab may then be taken from your vagina, throat and/or anus, depending on what kind of sex you've had. You may have to give a urine sample, or a blood test for HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and Syphilis may be taken.

## **Results and Treatment**

- Most clinics will have results back in 1-2 weeks. In other clinics you may be able to get your results that day.
- If you test positive for any of the results you'll have a chat with one of the staff at the clinic and they will provide you with antibiotics or any other treatment required.
- Counsellors may also be available in some clinics and you may be advised to attend for pre test counselling and safer sex education.
- If you have an STI, your partner (and previous partners) will need to be tested and, if necessary, treated in order to prevent the infection being passed on to anyone else.
- Staff at the sexual health clinic will be able to advise you about the sexual partners who will need to be contacted, and may be able to contact them on your behalf.

**Source: [www.spunout.ie/health/article/what-to-expect-at-an-sti-clinic](http://www.spunout.ie/health/article/what-to-expect-at-an-sti-clinic)**

# SEXUAL HEALTH CLINICS IRELAND

## Dublin

HIV Ireland, 70 Eccles Street,  
Dublin 7  
[www.hivireland.ie](http://www.hivireland.ie)

St. James Hospital GUIDE Clinic,  
Dublin 8  
[www.guidedclinic.ie](http://www.guidedclinic.ie)

Mater Misericordia Hospital, STI  
Clinic, Eccles Street, Dublin 7  
(t) 01-8032063

Beaumont Hospital, Dept. of  
Infectious Diseases, Dublin 9  
(01) 8093006

Gay Men's Health Service Clinic,  
Baggot St Hospital, Dublin 4  
[www.gmhs.ie](http://www.gmhs.ie)

Outhouse LGBT Community Care,  
105 Capel Street, Dublin 1  
[www.outhouse.ie](http://www.outhouse.ie)

The Meath Primary, Camden  
Clinic, Heytesbury Street, Dublin 8  
[www.sticlinicdublin.ie](http://www.sticlinicdublin.ie)

Charter Medical Group, Smithfield,  
Dublin 7  
[www.chartermedical.ie](http://www.chartermedical.ie)

## Leinster

Carlow District Hospital, STI Clinic,  
Athy Road, Carlow  
(051) 842646

Portlaoise STI Clinic, Midlands  
Regional Hospital, Laois  
(t) 086 859 1273

Louth County Hospital, GUM  
Clinic, Dublin Road, Dundalk, Co  
Louth  
(087) 824 1847

Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital,  
Drogheda, Co Louth  
(087) 824 1847

The Red Door Project, St. Mary's  
School Convent, Dublin Road,  
Drogheda, Co Louth  
(01) 873 3799 (HIV Ireland)

## Munster

Mid Western Regional Hospital,  
Ennis, Co Clare  
(061) 482 382

South Infirmary, Victoria  
University Hospital, Old Blackrock  
Road, Cork  
(021) 496 6844

Youth Health Services, Penrose  
House, Penrose Quay, Cork  
(076) 108 4150

Sexual Health Centre, 16 Peter's  
Street, Cork  
[www.sexualhealthcentre.com](http://www.sexualhealthcentre.com)

University Hospital Limerick,  
Dooradoyle, Limerick  
(061) 482 382

GOSHH Rapid HIV Testing,  
Redwood Place, 18 Davis Street,  
Limerick  
[www.goosh.ie](http://www.goosh.ie)

Mid Western Regional Hospital,  
Nenagh, Co Tipperary  
(061) 482 382

South Tipperary General Hospital,  
Clonmel, Co Tipperary  
(051) 842 646

Waterford Regional Hospital,  
Waterford City  
(051) 842 646

Tralee General Hospital, Tralee,  
Co Kerry  
(021) 4966 844

## Connaught

University College Hospital,  
Infectious Disease Clinic,  
Newcastle Road, Galway  
(091) 525 200

Portiuncla Hospital, Ballinasloe,  
Co Galway  
(090) 964 8372

Mayo General Hospital, Humbert  
Way, Castlebar, Co Mayo  
(094) 902 1733

Mayo University Hospital,  
Westport Road, Co Mayo  
(094) 902 1733

Sligo Regional Hospital, GUM  
Clinic, The Mall, Co Sligo  
(071) 917 0473

## Ulster

Letterkenny General Hospital,  
GUM/STI Clinic, Co Donegal  
(074) 912 3715

Monaghan General Hospital, GUM  
Clinic, Co Monaghan  
(086) 824 1847

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

## Terms and Meanings

Traditionally people tended to think about sexual orientation as either straight, gay or bisexual, and that everyone fits neatly into one of these categories. However, sexual orientation, expression and identity is far more complex and is best talked about with an inclusive and open mind. Youth workers should be aware of the terminology:

**Bisexual:** Someone who is attracted to people of the same gender and also to people of other genders.

**Cisgender:** Someone who is not transgender or non-binary.

**Dysphoria:** The distress or discomfort a person experiences as a result of their gender identity not matching the sex they were born with.

**Gay:** Someone who is mainly attracted to people of the same gender.

**Gender Expression:** How we portray our gender to the world. Gender can be expressed through mannerisms, grooming, physical characteristics, social interactions and speech patterns.

**Gender Fluid:** Is a non-binary gender identity. Gender fluid individuals experience different gender identities at different times.

**Gender identity:** Our deeply felt internal experience of our own gender.

**Heterosexual/Straight:** Someone who is attracted to people of a different gender.

**Intersex:** People who are born with variations in their sexual anatomy or their hormonal patterns, variations that are not seen as fitting in with typical male or female bodies.

**LGBTI+:** Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans+ and intersex people.

**Non-binary:** People whose gender identity is not exclusively male or female. Some non-binary people use they/them pronouns.

**Pansexual:** Someone who could be attracted to any person, regardless of their gender.

**Pronouns:** Words used to refer to someone when their name isn't used. They usually suggest a person's gender, although some people prefer, or identify with, neutral pronouns. Common pronouns include her, she, him, he, they, them

**Sexual Orientation:** Sexual and romantic attraction.

**Transgender:** People whose gender identity differs from the sex they were given at birth. Trans+ includes non-binary people.

Source: [www.belongto.org](http://www.belongto.org) & [www.teni.ie](http://www.teni.ie)

# NATIONAL AGENCIES

## Include your local referral and support agencies.

### **HIV Ireland**

A voluntary organisation working to improve conditions for people living with or affected by HIV and AIDS. They also offer education and training services to organisations that work with key population groups at risk of HIV, hepatitis, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and poorer sexual health outcomes.

[www.hivireland.ie](http://www.hivireland.ie)

### **Irish Family Planning Association**

Sexual health provider, with services in the area of contraception, pregnancy counselling, abortion care, sexual and reproductive health services & training. <https://www.ifpa.ie/Sexual-Health-Services>

### **My Options**

HSE Information and support service on all pregnancy and abortion services. [www2.hse.ie/unplanned-pregnancy/](http://www2.hse.ie/unplanned-pregnancy/)

### **National Youth Health Programme**

Provides health promotion / education support and training service to youth organisations.

[www.youthhealth.ie](http://www.youthhealth.ie)

### **ReachOut**

Online youth mental health service, helping young people through tough times

[www.reachout.com](http://www.reachout.com)

### **Sexualwellbeing.ie**

Website exploring sexual health and wellbeing, including resources for professional and parents.

<https://www.sexualwellbeing.ie/>

### **SpunOut.ie**

Youth information website created by young people, for young people providing easy access to relevant, reliable, and non-judgemental information.

[www.spunout.ie](http://www.spunout.ie)

### **Squashy Couch**

Squashy Couch is an Adolescent Health Service based in Waterford, for 14-19 year olds.

(t) 051-859004

### **Youth Work Ireland**

National federation of 21 Member Youth Services who work with and for young people to support them have their voices heard, develop their potential and strengthen communities in Ireland through the provision of quality youth services.

[www.youthworkireland.ie](http://www.youthworkireland.ie)

# YOUTH INFORMATION CENTRES

## Youth Information Centres in Ireland

### **Clare**

Ennis Youth Information Bureau  
[www.clareyouthservice.org](http://www.clareyouthservice.org)

### **Cork**

YMCA Cork  
[www.ymcacork.net/](http://www.ymcacork.net/)  
West Cork Youth Information Centre  
(t): (023) 884 4009

### **Donegal**

Letterkenny Youth Information Centre  
[www.donegalyouthservice.ie](http://www.donegalyouthservice.ie)

### **Dublin**

Clondalkin Youth Information  
Dun Laoghaire Youth Information Service  
<https://youthinfo.crosscare.ie/our-services/>

### **Galway**

Youth Information Centre Ballinasloe  
[www.youthworkgalway.ie](http://www.youthworkgalway.ie)

### **Kerry**

Killarney Youth Information Centre  
Tralee Youth Information Centre  
[www.kdys.ie](http://www.kdys.ie)

### **Kildare**

Kildare Youth Information Centre, Naas  
[www.kys.ie](http://www.kys.ie)

### **Kilkenny**

Kilkenny Youth Information Centre  
[www.ossoryyouth.com](http://www.ossoryyouth.com)

### **Limerick**

Limerick Youth Information Centre  
[www.limerickyouthservice.com](http://www.limerickyouthservice.com)

### **Monaghan**

Castleblaney Youth Information Centre  
Carrickmacross Youth Information Centre  
[www.ywimonaghan.ie](http://www.ywimonaghan.ie)

### **Sligo**

Sligo Youth Information Centre  
[www.ncycs.ie](http://www.ncycs.ie)

### **Tipperary**

Clonmel Youth Information Centre  
<http://www.waterfordinfo.com/wyic/>  
Tipperary Youth Information Centre  
Thurles Youth Information Centre  
[www.youthworktipperary.ie](http://www.youthworktipperary.ie)

### **Waterford**

Dungarvan Youth Information Centre  
Waterford Youth Information Centre  
<http://www.waterfordinfo.com/wyic/>

### **Westmeath**

Athlone Youth Information Center  
[www.youthworkmidlands.org](http://www.youthworkmidlands.org)

### **Wexford**

Wexford Youth Information Centre  
[www.fdys.ie](http://www.fdys.ie)

### **Wicklow**

Bray Youth Service  
<https://youthinfo.crosscare.ie/our-services/>



# REFERENCES

B4U Decide - Relationships and Sexual Education: Resource Materials for Youth Workers, NYCI, HSE & Crisis Pregnancy Programme, 2010

Better Outcomes Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children & Young People 2014-2020, Department of Children & Youth Affairs, 2014

Healthy Ireland: A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing, 2013-2015, Dept. of Health

LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy 2018-2020, Department of Children & Youth Affairs, 2018

National Sexual Health Strategy 2015-2020, Department of Health, 2015

National Youth Strategy 2015-2020, Department of Children & Youth Affairs, 2015

Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in Primary and Post-Primary Irish Schools - A Research Paper, Dr. Seline Keating, Professor Mark Morgan, Dr. Bernie Collins, 2018

Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male, Alfred Kinsey, 1948

Sexual Behaviour in the Human Female, Alfred Kinsey, 1953

Sexually Transmitted Infections in Ireland 2017, Health Protection Surveillance Centre, 2018

Sexually Transmitted Infections Among Young People in Ireland 2017, Health Protection Surveillance Centre, 2018

Talking About Sexual Health, Brief Intervention Tool, NSW Health

The Youth Worker's Role in Young People's Sexual Health: A Practice Framework, Youth Studies Australia, V.28, N4, M. Janssen & J Davis, 2009

What to Expect at an STI Clinic, Spunout, [www.spunout.ie/health/article/what-to-expect-at-an-sti-clinic](http://www.spunout.ie/health/article/what-to-expect-at-an-sti-clinic)

# YOUTH WORK IRELAND MEMBERS

## [www.youthworkireland.com](http://www.youthworkireland.com)

**Canal Communities Regional Youth Service**

[www.ccrys.org](http://www.ccrys.org)

**Carlow Regional Youth Service**

[www.carlowrysblog.wordpress.com](http://www.carlowrysblog.wordpress.com)

**CDYS Youth Work Ireland**

[www.cdys.ie](http://www.cdys.ie)

**Clare Youth Service**

[www.clareyouthservice.org](http://www.clareyouthservice.org)

**Donegal Youth Service**

[www.donegalyouthservice.ie](http://www.donegalyouthservice.ie)

**FDYS Youth Work Ireland**

[www.fdys.ie](http://www.fdys.ie)

**KDYS**

[www.kdys.ie](http://www.kdys.ie)

**Kildare Youth Services**

[www.kys.ie](http://www.kys.ie)

**Limerick Youth Service**

[www.limerickyouthservice.com](http://www.limerickyouthservice.com)

**Ossory Youth**

[www.ossoryyouth.com](http://www.ossoryyouth.com)

**Waterford & Sth Tipperary Community Youth Service**

[www.wstcys.ie](http://www.wstcys.ie)

**Youth Work Ireland Cork**

[www.ywicork.com](http://www.ywicork.com)

**Youth Work Ireland Galway**

[www.youthworkgalway.ie](http://www.youthworkgalway.ie)

**Youth Work Ireland Laois**

[www.ywilaois.com](http://www.ywilaois.com)

**Youth Work Ireland Longford**

[www.lcrl.ie](http://www.lcrl.ie)

**Youth Work Ireland Louth**

[www.facebook.com/  
YouthWorkIrelandLouth](http://www.facebook.com/YouthWorkIrelandLouth)

**Youth Work Ireland Meath**

[www.youthworkirelandmeath.ie](http://www.youthworkirelandmeath.ie)

**Youth Work Ireland Midlands**

[www.youthworkmidlands.org](http://www.youthworkmidlands.org)

**Youth Work Ireland Cavan Monaghan**

[www.ywimonaghan.ie](http://www.ywimonaghan.ie)

**Youth Work Ireland North Connaught**

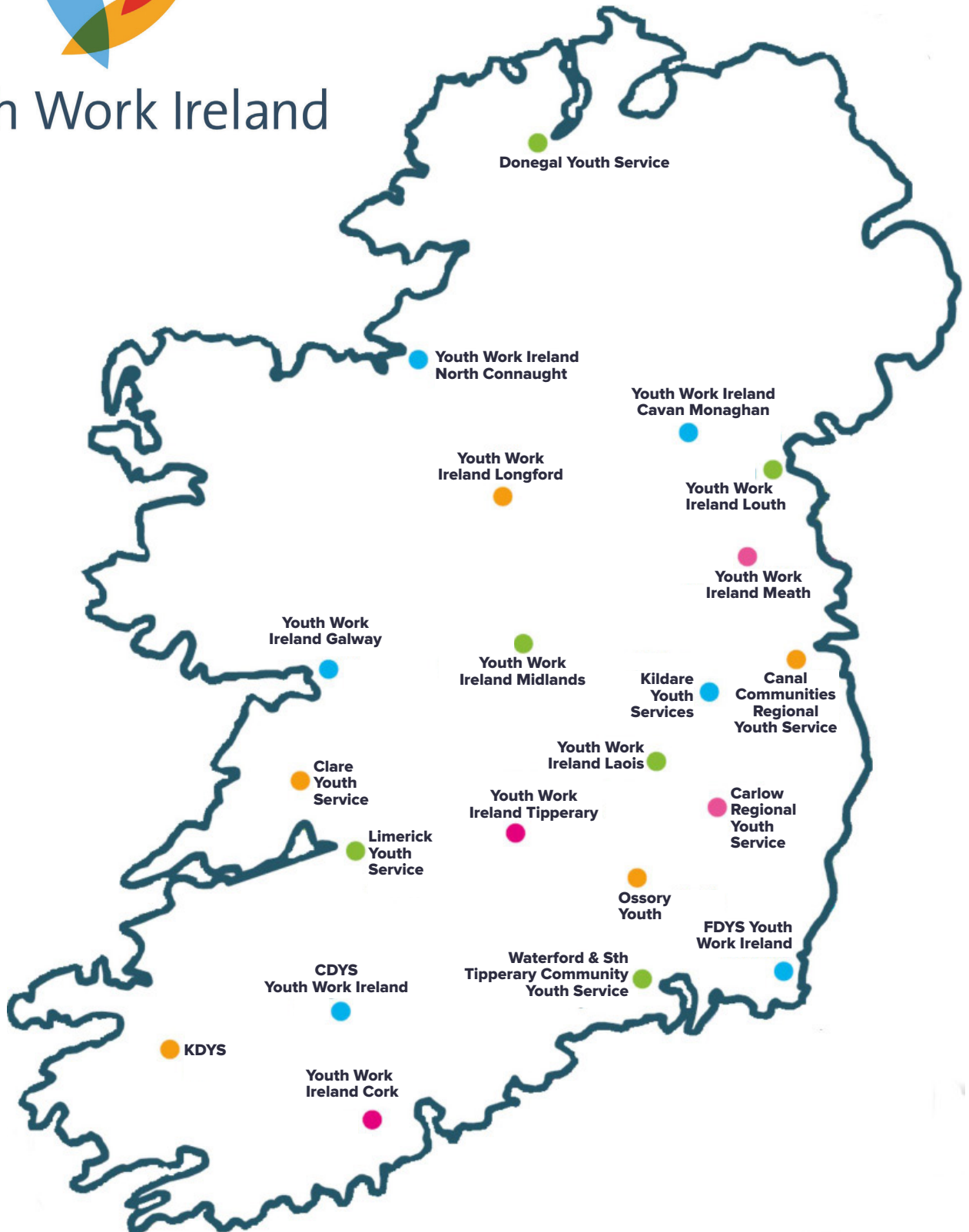
[www.ncycs.ie](http://www.ncycs.ie)

**Youth Work Ireland Tipperary**

[www.youthworktipperary.ie](http://www.youthworktipperary.ie)



# Youth Work Ireland



[www.youthworkireland.ie](http://www.youthworkireland.ie)



Youth Work Ireland