

The truth about sex: Teen boys lie about it

Young men defy other stereotypes in survey, though

By Sharon Jayson
USA TODAY

Teenage boys and young men may talk a lot about sex, but often the only ones listening are their peers.

Now, an online survey of 1,200 guys ages 15 to 22 gives them a clear voice.

And the girls are listening.

"Everybody thinks they just want to have sex — that it's all about getting it on," says Ann Shoket, editor in chief of *Seventeen* magazine, which commissioned the survey in partnership with the non-profit National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy for the magazine's March issue, out next week.

"They're not going to turn down some great hot hookup," Shoket says. "But at the same time, they're looking for some relationship."

Although the magazine's focus was

on sexual respect, the online survey by TRU, a Chicago-based youth market research company, asked 42 questions about sex and relationships, including attitudes and sexual history. Of the 1,200 teen and young adult males who completed the survey in November, 300 each were ages 15-16, 17-18, 19-20 and 21-22.

Among the findings:

- ▶ 45% said they were virgins.

- ▶ 60% said they had lied about something related to sex; 30% lied about how far they have gone; 24% lied about their number of sexual partners; and 23% claimed not to be a virgin when they were.

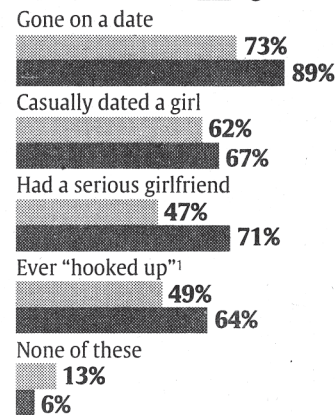
- ▶ 57% of sexually active respondents said they had had unprotected sex.

- ▶ 78% agreed there was "way too much pressure" from society to have sex.

"People watch shows like *Jersey Shore* and *Real World* or listen to music that makes it a big deal. People are surrounded by it," says Jake Helgenberg, 17, a high school junior from Pali, Pa., who is studying ballet in New York City and was among the survey

Guys and dating

■ Ages 15-18 ■ Ages 19-22



1 — The survey defines "hooked up" as a "no-strings attached, no expectations" intimate physical encounter, which may or may not include sex.

Sources: TRU for *Seventeen* magazine and National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy

By Veronica Salazar, USA TODAY

respondents.

Keenan Cooks, 19, of Boston, a sophomore studying communication arts at Marymount Manhattan Col-

lege in New York City, also participated in the survey. He says guys lie about sex "to appear like they're the man — they have some type of clout and they're a player."

They may not be as experienced as they suggest, and, "if they are, they have to stretch it," he says. "They'll say 'experienced' to a female but not how many they've had to make her think she's special."

Other survey findings:

- ▶ 51% said having sex before marriage was acceptable in their family.

- ▶ 53% said they had had a conversation with a parent about preventing pregnancy.

- ▶ 66% said they could be happy in a serious relationship that didn't include sex.

Despite discussion of hookups, friends "with benefits" and other sexual openness, the survey found a double standard for guys and girls: 53% of guys said having lots of hookups makes them popular, but 71% said it makes girls less popular.

"Girl can't do what a guy does and be thought of the same way," Cooks says.