DATING, RELATIONSHIP & SEX EDUCATION SURVEY

65%

received NO meaningful guidance from their parents about dating or sex

Conversations at home matter

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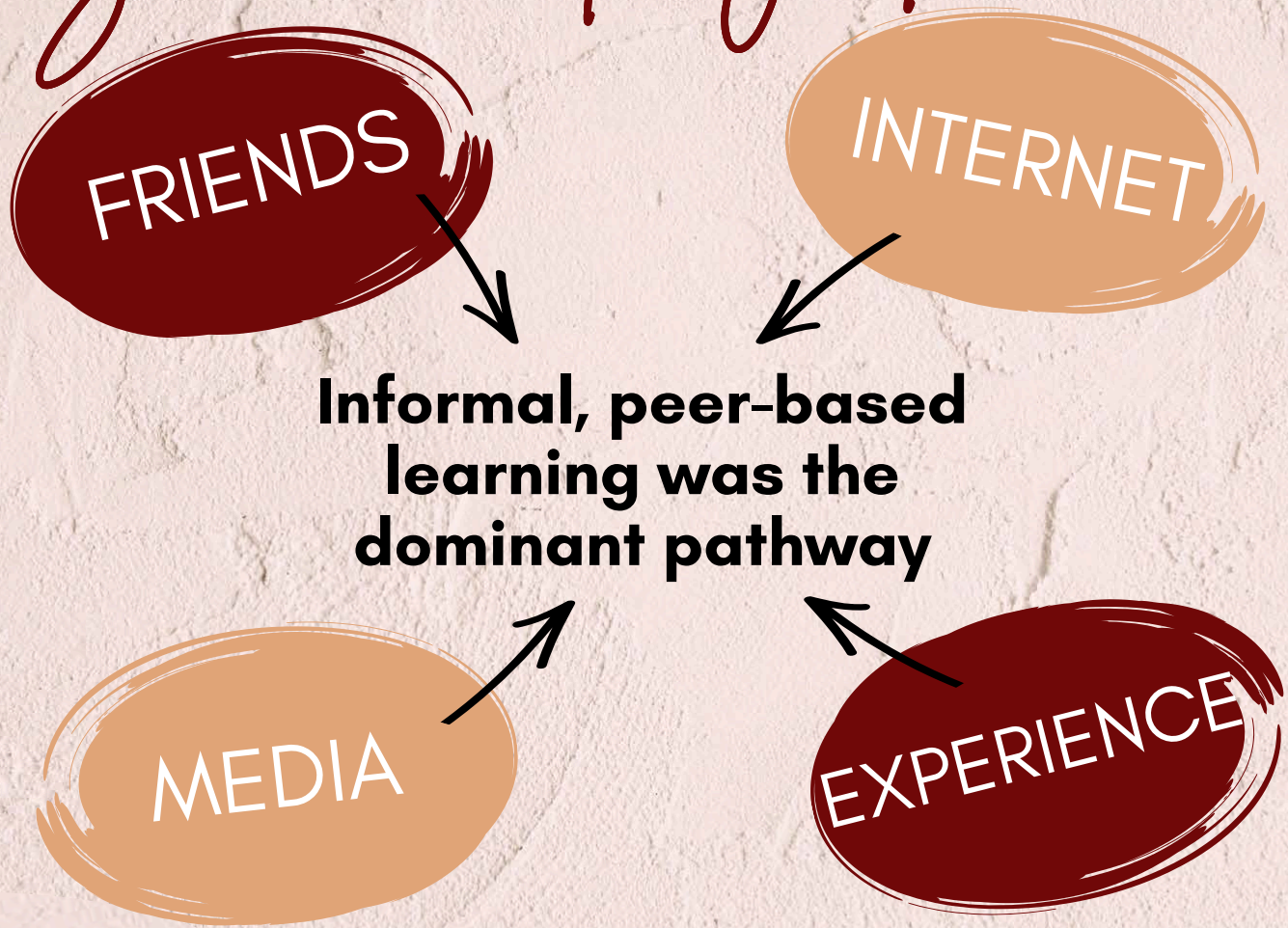
So who taught us?



Formal sex education was rare or insufficient

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Unprepared

Many respondents described confusion, pressure or regret while navigating dating and relationships.

Many wished someone had talked openly to them earlier

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What they want

Respondents want better education and support for the next generation including:

- OPEN CONVERSATIONS
- EARLY EDUCATION
- SAFE SPACES
- LESS TABOO

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Young people are ready to learn.

ARE WE READY TO TEACH?

More openness. More education. More support.

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DATING, RELATIONSHIPS & SEX EDUCATION SURVEY

RESULTS

What respondents told us about parental guidance, learning sources and the need for open conversations

This report summarises responses collected from the Dating, Relationships & Sex Education Survey. The findings describe this group of respondents and should not be treated as population-wide prevalence estimates.

THE BIG PICTURE

Three themes stand out. Most respondents did not receive meaningful guidance from parents about dating or sex. Many described confusion, pressure or regret in navigating relationships without support. At the same time, respondents strongly want future generations to have better education, open conversations and safe spaces to learn.

60–65% **reported receiving no meaningful parental guidance about dating or sex.**

The survey also shows that where guidance was given, it was often moral or restrictive — such as “no sex before marriage” or “be careful” — rather than practical education.

1. PARENTAL GUIDANCE WAS LIMITED

Type of parental guidance	How commonly reported
No guidance	~60–65% / majority
Moral warnings (“No sex before marriage”)	Common
Safety advice (“Be careful”)	Common
Boundary-setting	Moderate
Practical sex education	Rare

The pattern suggests that many young people were given rules or warnings without enough information to help them understand dating, sexuality, boundaries and healthy relationships.

2. MANY FELT UNPREPARED

Respondents described how limited guidance affected their early relationships and understanding of sex.

Experience	How commonly reported
Feeling unprepared	Very common
Confusion navigating dating	High
Pressure from peers or partners	Frequent
Regret about early decisions	Frequent
Positive reflections / learning later	Present

Many respondents expressed regret or wished they had received more open conversations while growing up.

3. SO WHO TAUGHT US?

For those who received little or no parental guidance, learning often came from informal sources.

Learning source	How commonly reported
Friends	Very common
Personal experience	Very common
Internet	Common
Movies / media	Common
School	Limited

PEERS + EXPERIENCE

Informal, peer-based learning was the dominant pathway. Formal sex education was rare or insufficient.

4. THE EMOTIONAL IMPACT

The effects described by respondents extended beyond simply not knowing the facts.

Reported impact	How commonly reported
Regret	High
Confusion	High
Pressure	Moderate
Positive growth	Present

Many respondents said they wished they had been taught more openly and earlier.

5. LEARNING CAME LATER

Most respondents reported becoming sexually educated later in life, often through marriage, personal experience, friends and mistakes. Formal sex education was described as rare or insufficient.

MARRIAGE	**EXPERIENCE**
FRIENDS	**MISTAKES**

6. WHAT GOT IN THE WAY?

Respondents identified cultural and family barriers that made healthy conversations harder:

- Taboo around sex and dating
- Fear of judgement
- Shame or embarrassment
- Lack of open communication
- Restrictive upbringing

For many, silence around sex created confusion and fear.

7. WHAT RESPONDENTS WANT FOR THE NEXT GENERATION

The strongest recommendations were practical and clear.

Recommendation	Strength of response
Open conversations	Very high
Safe spaces for discussion	Very high
Early education	High
Workshops and awareness programs	High
Removing taboo	High
Modern tools — visual aids, podcasts	Moderate

Respondents are not asking parents or communities to do less. They are asking them to do more: more openness, more education and more support.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR FAMILIES & COMMUNITIES

The results point to an opportunity to strengthen trust and create clear, safe pathways for learning and discussion. A supportive environment is not one that assumes young people will simply “figure it out”. It is one that listens, teaches and guides.

START EARLIER

Open, age-appropriate conversations can begin before young people are forced to learn through peers, media or mistakes.

PRACTICAL PRIORITIES

- Open, honest conversations at home
- Early, age-appropriate education
- Community workshops
- Safe spaces where young people can ask questions
- Modern, culturally sensitive resources

YOUNG PEOPLE ARE READY TO LEARN.
ARE WE READY TO TEACH?

The strongest message from respondents is not a rejection of parental or community guidance, but a call for more openness, more information and more support. Families and communities have an opportunity to create environments where dating, relationships and sex are no longer taboo, and where young people can be heard, supported and educated.

More openness. More education. More support.