



Teenage Attitudes to Sex and Relationships (TASAR)

Please circle the number that best describes what you think

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I think it's important for a girl to please her boyfriend	5	4	3	2	1
2. A boy should not tell his girlfriend what to do	5	4	3	2	1
3. When boys get really sexually excited they have to have sex	5	4	3	2	1
4. If a girl is raped when she is drunk she is partly to blame	5	4	3	2	1
5. If a friend told me they had been raped or sexually assaulted I would know where they could go for support	5	4	3	2	1
6. Good sex can only happen when both partners are up for it	5	4	3	2	1
7. When a girl says 'no' to sex she doesn't always mean it	5	4	3	2	1
8. If a girl sends her boyfriend a picture of herself it's OK for him to send it to his friends	5	4	3	2	1
9. If a friend was pestering, 'sexting' or sexually harassing someone I would tell them they should stop	5	4	3	2	1
10. Boys sometimes feel pressured to have sex when they don't really want to	5	4	3	2	1

11. I would think twice before laughing at a joke about rape	5	4	3	2	1
12. I wouldn't have sex just to please someone else	5	4	3	2	1
13. I understand how sexual violence and abuse can affect people	5	4	3	2	1
14. I know what the law says sexual violence is	5	4	3	2	1
15. I think young people my age should have education about sex and relationships	5	4	3	2	1

Note on the development of the Teenage Attitudes to Sex and Relationships (TASAR) scale

A wide variety of measures have been developed to assess attitudes towards gendered violence – physical and sexual - and other forms of interpersonal violence and coercion. Many focus on specific forms of violence against women, and some focus on particular dimensions of responses to violence such as attitudes and knowledge, empathy, or willingness to provide support or to intervene. Several measures provide more general, and relatively short, instruments with which to measure attitudes towards men's violence against women. There are also various measures of attitudes towards gender roles and gender relations. However, many of these are based on scales which are 30 to 50 years old and therefore may not always reflect contemporary gender relations. In addition, most have been developed in North America and contain language and assumptions which may be culturally specific.

In designing an evaluation of Rape Crisis Scotland's Preventing Sexual Violence initiative delivered in schools in nine areas of Scotland in 2013-2014 DMSS Research (www.dmss.co.uk) conducted a review of available measures of attitudes to sexual violence. We focussed on those that had been used to explore attitudes to 'date rape', consent and equality in male-female relationships and including some short and relatively recent measures of gender stereotyping which seemed appropriate to adolescents, such as those used by Foshee *et al.*¹. We were concerned to use a measure that would adequately reflect the core learning outcomes of the RCS Preventing Sexual Violence pack. The pack includes seven sessions, but pre-post measures were intended to be taken before and after *any* three workshop sessions,

¹ Foshee, V., K.E. Bauman, X.B. Arriaga, R.W. Helms, G.G. Koch, and G.F. Linder. (1998). An Evaluation of Safe Dates, an Adolescent Dating Violence Prevention Program. *American Journal of Public Health*, 88, pp. 45-50.

so we needed a measure that reflected knowledge and attitudes which were intended to be affected across the board and avoid those which were session specific.

We concluded that there was no suitable 'off the peg' solution and therefore designed a 15 item measure drawing on items previously used in a number of validated scales but adapted to reflect the specific intervention and context. The evaluation has therefore served to pilot this *Teenage Attitudes to Sex and Relationships Scale* (TASAR scale) and a revised version of the scale was one of the outputs of the evaluation.

The scale is a 5 item Likert scale composed of statements to which respondents are asked to respond to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with each statement:

Strongly agree *Agree* *Not sure* *Disagree* *Strongly disagree*

The scale includes three items which are intended to capture increases in young people's knowledge:

- *I know what the law says sexual violence is*
- *If a friend told me they had been raped or sexually assaulted I would know where they could go for support*
- *I understand how sexual violence and abuse can affect people*

One item asks for young people's views on whether people their age should have sex and relationship education:

- *I think young people my age should have education about sex and relationships*

The remaining 11 items are attitudinal statements as follows:

- *I think it's important for a girl to please her boyfriend*
- *A boy should not tell his girlfriend what to do*
- *When boys get really sexually excited they have to have sex*
- *If a girl is raped when she is drunk she is partly to blame*
- *Good sex can only happen when both partners are up for it*
- *When a girl says 'no' to sex she doesn't always mean it*
- *If a girl sends her boyfriend a picture of herself it's OK for him to send it to his friends*
- *If a friend was pestering, 'sexting' or sexually harassing someone I would tell them they should stop*
- *Boys sometimes feel pressured to have sex when they don't really want to*
- *I would not laugh at a joke about rape*
- *I wouldn't have sex just to please someone else*

The measure was initially piloted in Dundee with two groups of young people in different contexts (school and youth group). Cognitive testing was undertaken through group

discussions and a number of changes were made as a result of the young people's responses and feedback. Some items were removed and replaced e.g. *'It's OK for a boy to say no to sex'* was replaced with *'Boys sometimes feel pressured to have sex when they don't really want to'* and the term *'sexual bullying'* was replaced with *'sexually harassing'*. Also some modes of expression that young people had found confusing were simplified e.g. *'I would think twice before laughing at a joke about rape'* was changed to *'I would not laugh at a joke about rape'*.

The TASAR scale is freely available for use. The originators request that they are informed of the context and population with which it is being used and receive copies of any findings reported. They also appreciate any feedback on acceptability, appropriateness and sensitivity. Contact info@dmss.co.uk

Measures consulted in the development of the TASAR scale

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