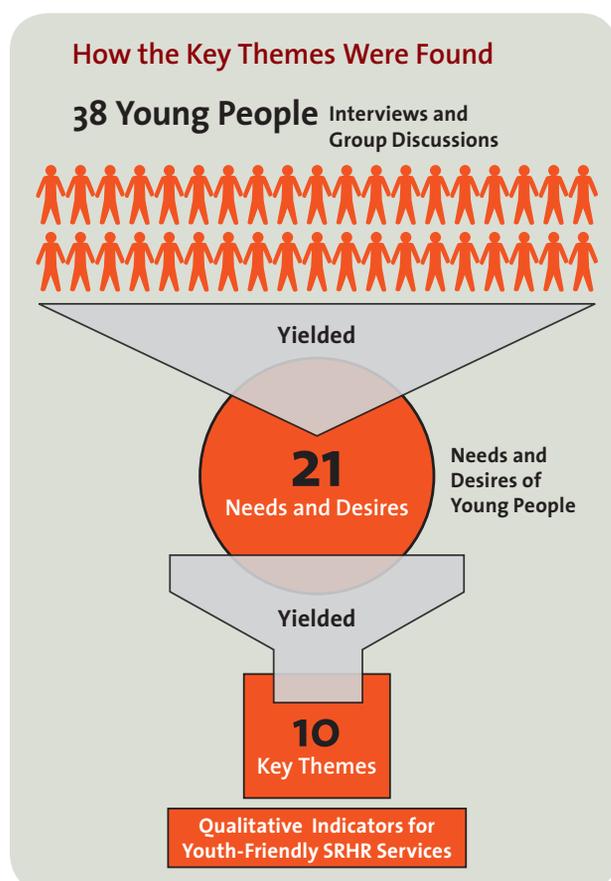




Colourful, Flexible, Rights Based

That Is How Young People Want Out-of-School Sexuality Education Services To Be

Between May and September 2011, interviews and group discussions were conducted in two German cities on behalf of pro familia with 38 young people aged between 11 and 22. The aim was to collect their views on out-of-school sexuality education and counselling services. The results of the preliminary analysis of the interview data were discussed by interviewees and other young people during the subsequent group discussions. The interviews and group discussions yielded 21 needs and desires of young people regarding out-of-school sexuality education and counselling services. These needs and desires are the basis of the ten key themes and the numerous qualitative indicators that emerged from the project. The qualitative indicators are understood as practical requirements or recommendations. They can serve as a guide for the design and delivery of youth-friendly services in the area of sexuality and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). The indicators are addressed to all those working to advance youth-friendly SRHR services – be they professionals in sexuality education training and practice, or policy makers.



Research Project Flowchart

10 Key Themes

1. Services at Times that Suit Young People

From the point of view of the young project participants, SRHR services should be consistently tailored to young people's free time. In other words, they should also be available in the evenings and at weekends.

2. Surroundings Should Be Appealing and Convey Esteem: Rooms Play a Major Role

The interviewees and group discussion participants attach great importance to the aesthetics, design, and functionality of the venues because they convey messages of high or low esteem and are ultimately an expression of the degree of respect in which young people are held.

3. Receive Young People in a Flexible and Open Way – Even Without an Appointment and in Groups

Young people should not be turned away when they arrive without an appointment. Counselling centres should react flexibly to spontaneous visits from individuals or groups and maintain sufficient personnel and service capacity to cater for them. Because the telephone is an important medium for young people, they value direct-dial telephone consultation services.

4. Respect and Protect Young People's Privacy in a Sensitive and Competent Way

The young project participants stress that their right to privacy and, in particular, their desire for distance, should be respected and protected. The offerings – especially the group offerings – in which they participate should not convey the implicit message that they have already had, or wish to have, sex. It is of great importance to them to be able to trust that the services are offered in a professional environment in which confidentiality is practised in a consistent and sensitive way.

5. Right to Information and Knowledge about Sexuality and Contraception Highly Valued

Young people claim their right to access knowledge and information about contraception and sexuality. Some project participants came into conflict with parental expectations when they availed of sexuality education services. However, they emphasise their desire – and the necessity – to acquire such competencies in order to be able to have a good relationship with their future partners. Young female participants whose familial context requires that they refrain from sex before marriage describe this norm as a compass for their daily lives. However, they interpret the norm in an enlightened way, stressing their right to access knowledge about sexuality and contraception, and expressing a desire for services that provide such knowledge.



6. SRHR Offerings Arranged Through the School: Yes! – But Only if Voluntary and Rights Based

The young project participants welcome the fact that SRHR offerings are arranged through the school. When offerings are part of the school programme, it saves young people having to justify their participation to others (including critical parents), gives them a sense of security, and reduces their hesitancy.

At the same time, however, they want the offerings to be voluntary. This was particularly emphasised in connection with concern that rights to privacy and confidentiality might not be protected. The voluntary nature of the offerings should be conveyed and realised in a credible and professional way.

7. Advance Information about Services on the Internet

High-quality advance information about the services is very important to young people, and they want to be able to find it on the Internet. They need detailed descriptions of the services, the professionals, and the venues. Because they wish to have a clear picture of what is ahead of them, visual materials – including videos – are very important, as are images of the venues and the professionals.

8. Free Condoms and Pregnancy Counselling a Priority Need

One of the priority needs of the young people is to be able to obtain free condoms and pregnancy counselling at the counselling centre. Therefore counselling centres should issue condoms to young people free of charge and should be prepared to offer spontaneous support and counselling in case of pregnancy.

9. Long-Term Continuity of Services and Personnel Essential

Trust in the offerings – and (especially) in the persons who deliver them – is of great importance to young people. This trust is built up over the years through positive experiences on the part of the individuals themselves and their friends and siblings. Therefore the long-term continuity and funding of youth-friendly services must be ensured. The services must be anchored in the city and in cooperation with schools, youth centres, etc., and they must be well known.

10. Desire for Participation – Role Switching

The young project participants expressed the desire to convey their thanks or appreciation to the professionals or the institution. This can be interpreted as a desire for a partial switch, or perspective change, from the role of taker to that of active giver. However, suitable opportunities to realise this desire are lacking.

SAFE II

A Project for the Enhancement of the Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights of Young People in Europe

The interviews and group discussions were carried out within the framework of a qualitative research project. It was part of the Sexual Awareness for Europe (SAFE II) project, which was conducted between 2009 and 2012 by the International Planned Parenthood Federation European Network (IPPF EN) in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO)/Europe and with financial support of the European Commission. Fourteen European NGOs – all of them IPPF EN member associations – participated in SAFE II. The aim of the project was to enhance the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) of young people in Europe. The right of young people to high-quality and youth-friendly SRHR services is of central importance in this regard. It is a right to which pro familia and the IPPF are committed, and to which pro familia's research project was devoted.

Young project participants in two cities, May–September 2011

	total	female	male
Total number of young participants in interviews and/or group discussions	38	26	12
Interview participants	31	21	10
Participants in two group discussions	17	13	4



For information on the activities of the International Planned Parenthood Federation, visit

www.ippfen.org



Further information and the research report are available at:

www.profamilia.de/forschung

Imprint

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