

# Gen Z and Sexuality

**Question: Is it true that Gen Z have more knowledge about sexuality?**

**Ans:** Gen Z or the generation Z- are born between 1997 to 2012. This was the era when smart phones facilitated easy access to a wide variety of information. These youth definitely have more information about the structure and function of sexual organs, sexual health, gender identities- fluidity- sexual orientation, consent- relationships- boundaries, sexual rights, mental health links to sexuality. Sources of information can be social media, pornography, online forums, influencers and peers in the majority of the situations. However, the information may not always be accurate or complete. Too much or inaccurate information can cause confusion, anxiety, and self doubt. Social media and pornography can create unrealistic expectation and myths; affecting self esteem Thus although Gen Z are open and have ability to access information related to sexuality, transforming that into knowledge needs guidance, education from the professionals or trusted adults

**Question: How does Gen Z's understanding of sexuality differ from that of previous generations?**

**Ans:** As compared to the previous generations, there is a definite shift observed in how Gen Z look at Sexuality. The main differences are:

- Earlier age of starting sexual activity
- Changing views about virginity, less likely to view loss of virginity before marriage as shameful. Shame is still seen as a result of conflict with family or cultural values
- More ready to accept diversity (LGBTQ ), take it as normal part of life and ready to explore their own sexuality
- More comfortable to discuss the topic of sexuality, mainly with peers or online forums.
- Sexual intercourse is not seen as the central aspect of relationships. Studies show lower rates of sexual intercourse as compared to previous generations
- Increasing focus on personal pleasure ( masturbation, self



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body exploration)

- Prioritize emotional intimacy - compatibility- trust over physical intimacy
- Increasing awareness of consent and boundaries
- There is also increasing understanding about correlation between mental health and sexuality

**Question: Are there any positive effects of social media on the sexuality of today's youth?**

**Ans:** Social media includes platforms such as Instagram, you tube, short videos etc have a major impact on Gen Z's, they are like informal educators for them. Social media has mixed influence on Gen Z.

The key positive effects are

- Access to the information on sexual and reproductive health

- Increased understanding on consent, boundaries, safety in a relationship, connection between mental & sexual health
  - Increased awareness, and acceptance for diversity in sexuality ( LGBTQ)
  - Platform for expression, sharing, validation, gives feeling of community beyond the geographic limitation
  - Dating apps provide choices for finding a partner, facilitating online communications
- Social media has a definite contribution in transforming the subject of sexuality from that of secrecy to more of conversations, awareness.

**Question: How does social media harm the sexual beliefs of today's youth?**

**Ans:** Social media, porn often portrays sexuality in an unrealistic way. The key negative impacts are:

- Creating unrealistic expectations of ideal bodies, size- shapes of sexual organs , sexual performance standard, resulting in myths and dissatisfaction with body image. There is increase in demand of cosmetic procedures to prove oneself
- Create unrealistic expectations for a partner, which can result in sexual issues (ex: low sexual desire, problems in achieving orgasm, erection difficulties, relationship issues)
- Early and excessive exposure to porn often results in distorted views about sexuality
- Create pressure to appear sexually confident/ experienced even when they are not
- There can be a significant difference between the real person and his/her online image. Relationships established through online platform carries the risk of disapp.

