

A study of attitudes and experiences of sexual abuse of children and young people

2020, Justiitsministeerium



of Estonian young people aged 16–26 have been victims of at least one type of sexual abuse (sexual harassment and/or sexual violence) during their lifetime outside the Internet.

In both the 2015 and 2020 surveys, the corresponding experience in the age group of 16–19 was 32%.

In the event of the first or most unpleasant case of sexual abuse:



Have experienced sexual harassment **41%**
(30% of 16–19-year-olds in 2015)

In terms of sexual harassment, most have been exposed to unwanted touching (1/3) or someone has shown own genitals against their will.

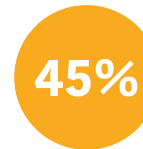
Have experienced sexual violence **28%**

- 1/5 have experienced kissing against their will
- 8% have been forced to have sex
- 7% have been forced to show their genitals
- 7% have been victims of an attempt at rape
- 6% have had to do oral sex
- and 4% anal sex against their will

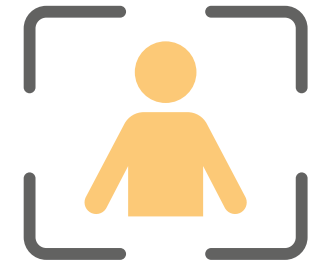
Nearly one-fifth of sexual abuse cases were seen or heard by someone. In three-quarters of these cases, the victim was a friend or acquaintance. In only **2% of cases**, someone who witnessed or heard the incident reported it to the police.

5% 16–19-year-olds who were forced to have sexual intercourse against their will based on the results of both the 2015 and 2020 surveys

Experiencing sexual abuse online in the last 12 months:



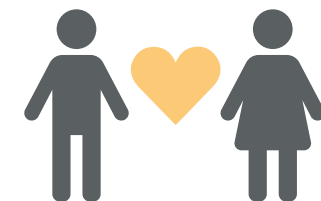
of 16–26-year-olds have experienced at least one type of sexual abuse online (20% of 16–19-year-olds in 2015)



Every 4th young person was asked to send pictures exposing themselves via the Internet against their will



1/5 of young people had been asked online about their intimate body parts or sexual experiences against their will

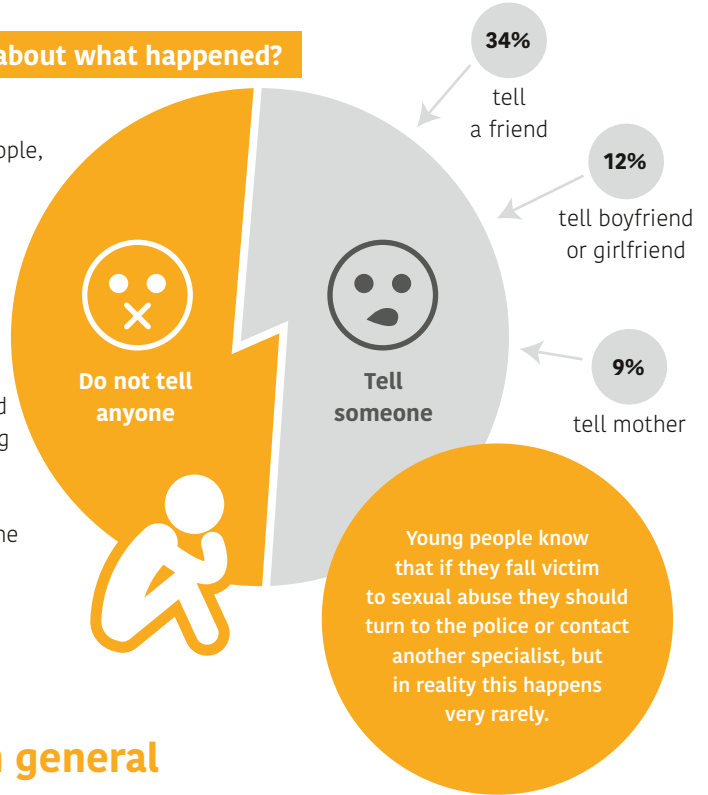


1/5 of young people had this conversation with someone whom they had met online and who had wanted to meet them for sexual purposes in an unpleasant way

Asking for help in the event of falling a real victim to sexual abuse

Why don't the victims talk about what happened?

- 1/2 According to 1/2 of young people, the incident was not serious enough to tell anyone
- 1/3 In 1/3 of the cases, the reason was shame
- 1/5 did not think at the time of the incident that what had happened to them was wrong
- 1/10 of the victims stated that they did not know anyone to talk to or turn to



Knowledge of help possibilities in general



Half of the respondents know at least one help possibility

57% of young people are aware of the sexual violence crisis support centres established in 2017

13% are aware of the existence of the Children's House established in 2017

Young people who have not experienced sexual abuse would most often seek help from the **police (57%)**, **friends (41%)** or their **mother (41%)** in case of abuse of themselves or a friend.

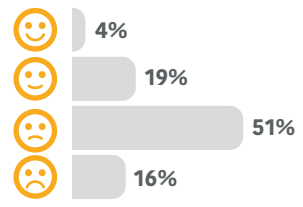
What do young people want to avoid sexual abuse?



Children and young people want and need more information to avoid abuse and to be more aware of the help possibilities than they are currently offered.



Most of them want to receive information from school (49%) and the prevention programs taking place at school (40%).



According to young people, the topics of sexual abuse are not discussed sufficiently with them – 4% considered it to be completely sufficient and 19% rather sufficient, while half (51%) of young people considered it rather insufficient and 16% considered it completely insufficient.



On average, young people who do not speak Estonian at home have received less information about the prevention of sexual and relationship violence both at home and at school.



Hillep, P. ja Pärnamets, R. 2020: Laste ja Noorte seksuaalse väärkohtlemise hoiakute ja kogemuste uuring. Eesti Uuringukeskus OÜ ja Norstat Eesti AS. Tellija: Justiitsministeerium.

just.ee/laste-ja-noorte-seksuaalse-vaarkohtlemise-uuring