

**A comparative descriptive study on adolescents presented to
Ragama and Anuradhapura Teaching Hospitals for
medico-legal examination with history of 'sexual activity'**

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Adolescents engaged in sexual activity are brought for medico-legal examination as they are minors. Though some have consented for sexual activity, it is not legally acceptable. The perpetrators include boyfriends, relatives, known persons and strangers. The 'boyfriend' group is unique as the consent is not obtained by illegal means.

Objective: To find out potential predisposing factors that contribute to 'consensual' or 'non consensual' sexual activity of adolescents and to find out how 'consensual' and 'non consensual' sexual activity affects sexual health of adolescents.

Methods: A retrospective descriptive study was done using records maintained at the offices of the Judicial Medical Officers of Ragama and Anuradhapura. The data was analyzed using SPSS statistical package.

Results: 202 and 154 victims examined between 2000 to 2006 at Ragama and Anuradhapura were analyzed. Male to female ratio was 1:10 in Ragama and 1:24 in Anuradhapura. The most vulnerable age group for sexual activity was 14-15 years. The majority of cases were from the low socio-economic strata. Vaginal intercourse was the most preferred sexual activity; the likelihood of an adolescent from Anuradhapura to have penetrative sex was 2.47 times more as compared to an adolescent from Ragama. Boyfriend was the assailant in 39% and 37% of cases in Ragama and Anuradhapura respectively. 63 % of victims from Ragama had eloped as compared to 19% from Anuradhapura. In both groups, nearly half of the cases had a relationship less than 6 months. An adolescent having sexual activity with a relative was 2.31 (95% CI 1.36-3.93) times greater in Anuradhapura as compared to Ragama. There were 18 and 16 pregnancies in Ragama and in Anuradhapura, respectively. 61 cases from Ragama had psychological symptoms and signs after the incident

Conclusions: Adolescents are more susceptible to engage in sexual acts around 14 years. Consented sexual activity with a boy friend resulting in legal action is a significant social problem. The high incidence of sexual activity with relatives and known persons indicate the vulnerability of adolescents to engage in sexual activity in their own environments.