

A new study finds more than one in 10 Canadian kids have had sex by the age of 14 or 15.

The Statistics Canada survey finds 12 percent of girls and 13 percent of boys have had sex by that age. Young adolescents in Atlantic Canada and Quebec are more likely to have had sexual intercourse than those in Ontario and the western provinces.

The study finds that the onset of puberty, weak self-esteem, having tried smoking or drinking and not being overweight are significantly associated with early sexual activity in girls. For boys, a poor relationship with parents, low household income and having tried smoking are associated with early sexual activity.

Another study covering young Canadians aged 15-24 finds the likelihood of having sex rises as teens get older. At 15-17, 28 percent of those surveyed reported having sex. The figure was up to 65 percent for those aged 18-19. And it was 80 percent for those aged 20 to 24.

<http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/050503/d050503a.htm>