

Online and offline sexual risk behaviors related in teens

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Although a minority of adolescents are at high risk for online sexual risk behaviors, these teenagers appear to also be at risk for offline sexual risk behaviors, according to research published online Nov. 5 in *Pediatrics*.

(HealthDay)—Although a minority of adolescents are at high risk for online sexual risk behaviors (OnSRB), these teenagers appear to also be at risk for offline sexual risk behaviors (OffSRB), according to research published online Nov. 5 in *Pediatrics*.

Susanne E. Baumgartner, of the University of Amsterdam, and colleagues conducted a four-wave [longitudinal study](#) involving 1,762 Dutch adolescents aged 12 to 18 years to determine the prevalence of OnSRB and OffSRB, establish whether these behaviors are related, and identify risk factors.

The researchers identified three developmental pathways for OnSRB: 70.2 percent were at no risk, 23.7 percent were at moderate risk, and 6.1 percent were at [high risk](#). For OffSRB, two pathways were identified: a no-risk pathway, including 90.6 percent of participants, and increasing pathway, including 9.4 percent of youth. The two behaviors were related and there were common predictors identified for both, including gender, sensation seeking, and low [educational level](#).

"Only a minority of adolescents shows sustained high OnSRB. This group is likely to consist of low-educated, high-sensation-seeking adolescents who spend more time communicating on the Internet and come from less cohesive families," the authors write. "These same adolescents are also more likely to engage in OffSRB. Preventions should focus on these adolescents."

More information: [Abstract](#)
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