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New Teen Sex Study Raises Difficult Issues

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The National Center for Health Statistics at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has released a massive research report on the sexual habits of Americans aged 15 to 44. The most interesting data concerns the teenagers. As reported in The Washington Post: *Slightly more than half of American teenagers ages 15 to 19 have engaged in oral sex, with females and males reporting similar levels of experience, according to the most comprehensive national survey of sexual behaviors ever released by the federal government.*

More: *The data also underscore the fact that many young people — particularly those from middle- and upper-income white families — simply do not consider oral sex to be as significant as their parents' generation does. "Oral sex is far less intimate than intercourse. It's a different kind of relationship," said Claire Brindis, professor of pediatrics at the University of California at San Francisco. "At 50 percent, we're talking about a major social norm. It's part of kids' lives."*

From The Los Angeles Times: *James Wagoner, president of Advocates for Youth, a reproductive health organization in Washington, D.C., said the study showed that society was undergoing a social transition, with women and girls becoming more sexually confident. "It calls into question the stereotype of boys as hunters and girls as prey," he said. "Something going on here is creating more balance between the sexes than we have seen before."*

This is just amazing — Mr. Wagoner seems to celebrate the fact that in our current "social transition," girls are "becoming more sexually confident!" Which is to say, of course, that the girls are catching up to the boys in terms of sexual expectation, aggressiveness, and demands. I guess that passes for moral progress at Advocates for Youth. As a quick look at their Web site reveals, this is not a group that advocates sexual abstinence until marriage for teens — not even close.

This was the subject of Monday's edition of The Albert Mohler Program. The full report, "Sexual Behavior and Selected Health Measures: Men and Women 15-44 Years of Age, United States, 2002," is available through the NCHS/CDC Web site.

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