We used the Sexunzipped questionnaire in an online trial of the Sexunzipped website and interviewed 22 trial participants afterwards. Interviews with young people early in the questionnaire development process helped to refine the wording of questions which were not understood, or which were difficult to answer. The optional comment boxes provided on the online questionnaire solicited useful feedback: comments indicated that young people liked the online format and the inclusivity of the response options, and found the content and range of the questions interesting and thought-provoking. Participants gave suggestions for additional response options (for example ‘maybe’ or ‘not sure’), and for additional clarification of terms used within questions (for example what actually constitutes ‘sex’). Participants also provided additional details to the multiple-choice responses in the questionnaire, suggesting a desire from participants for their answers to be understood in context.

Interviews with young people conducted after participating in the Sexunzipped online trial indicated that young people enjoyed participating in the online sexual health research, and gave honest responses since they felt their responses were important.

Plain English Summary

Our team developed a website for sexual health promotion for young people (Sexunzipped.co.uk), and wished to measure the impact of the website in an online trial. The website aims to give young people the tools to make informed decisions about their sexual wellbeing. The involvement of young people was essential to the success of this project, since the aim was to develop an outcome questionnaire which was easily understood and relevant to young people aged 16 to 20. We offered incentives of £10 to £15 for participation.

Young people were involved at three points in this project:
1) We interviewed 12 young people recruited through sexual health clinic settings, and asked them to comment on the wording and relevance of proposed sexual health questions.
2) We developed and launched the Sexunzipped questionnaire online. 394 young people were recruited via Facebook, offered an incentive to fill in the questions, and were invited to write optional free-text comments after each set of questions.
3) We used the Sexunzipped questionnaire in an online trial of the Sexunzipped website and interviewed 22 trial participants afterwards.

Interviews with young people early in the questionnaire development process helped to refine the wording of questions which were not understood, or which were difficult to answer. The optional comment boxes provided on the online questionnaire solicited useful feedback: comments indicated that young people liked the online format and the inclusivity of the response options, and found the content and range of the questions interesting and thought-provoking. Participants gave suggestions for additional response options (for example ‘maybe’ or ‘not sure’), and for additional clarification of terms used within questions (for example what actually constitutes ‘sex’). Participants also provided additional details to the multiple-choice responses in the questionnaire, suggesting a desire from participants for their answers to be understood in context.

Interviews with young people conducted after participating in the Sexunzipped online trial indicated that young people enjoyed participating in the online sexual health research, and gave honest responses since they felt their responses were important.