

Good sex in peri-menopause linked to positive mindset in childhood

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A University of the Sunshine Coast survey of almost 500 women from 10 countries has identified a link between positive self-belief in childhood and sexual well-being in the transition to menopause.

In the study, [women](#) with a positive sense of self developed from [early childhood](#) reported higher [sexual function](#) and satisfaction in both pre- and peri-menopause.

Psychologist Colleen Tully-Wilson, who led the UniSC study, said the findings could inform therapy and interventions for pre- and peri-menopausal women experiencing poor sexual well-being.

"These findings also promote the World Health Organization's definition that women's sexual health is about well-being, not just the absence of disease," said Tully-Wilson.

"This is something women want to talk about but are rarely asked. Sexual well-being is just as important for overall health of women as it is for men."

Conducted as part of her UniSC Master of Psychology (Clinical), the [research](#) has been published in the *International Journal of Applied Positive Psychology*.

UniSC adjunct lecturer in [clinical psychology](#), Dr. Andrew Allen, who supervised the study, said little previous research had focused on the relationship between positive self-concept, sexual well-being, and possible differences in menopausal status for women.

"Better understanding of these connections can help the practice of psychology to improve women's lives," said Allen.

Tully-Wilson said the findings indicated that coping responses learned from an early age could be used in all sorts of positive ways in later life.

"While the idea may seem commonsense, this exploratory study helps fill an evidence gap for women's sexual health throughout their different

stages of life," she said.

The research did not confirm similar links in post-menopausal women.

"Further longitudinal research would be needed to establish reasons or causations," she said.

More information: Andrew Allen et al, Early Adaptive Schemas and Sexual Wellbeing in Women: Exploring Differences in Menopausal Status, *International Journal of Applied Positive Psychology* (2023). [DOI: 10.1007/s41042-023-00100-x](https://doi.org/10.1007/s41042-023-00100-x)

Provided by University of the Sunshine Coast

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