

Yes, YES, YESSS Just Like That

Featuring:

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The Pleasure Project

7.13.22



**THE
CHOICE
AGENDA**





**Thank you
for being
here**

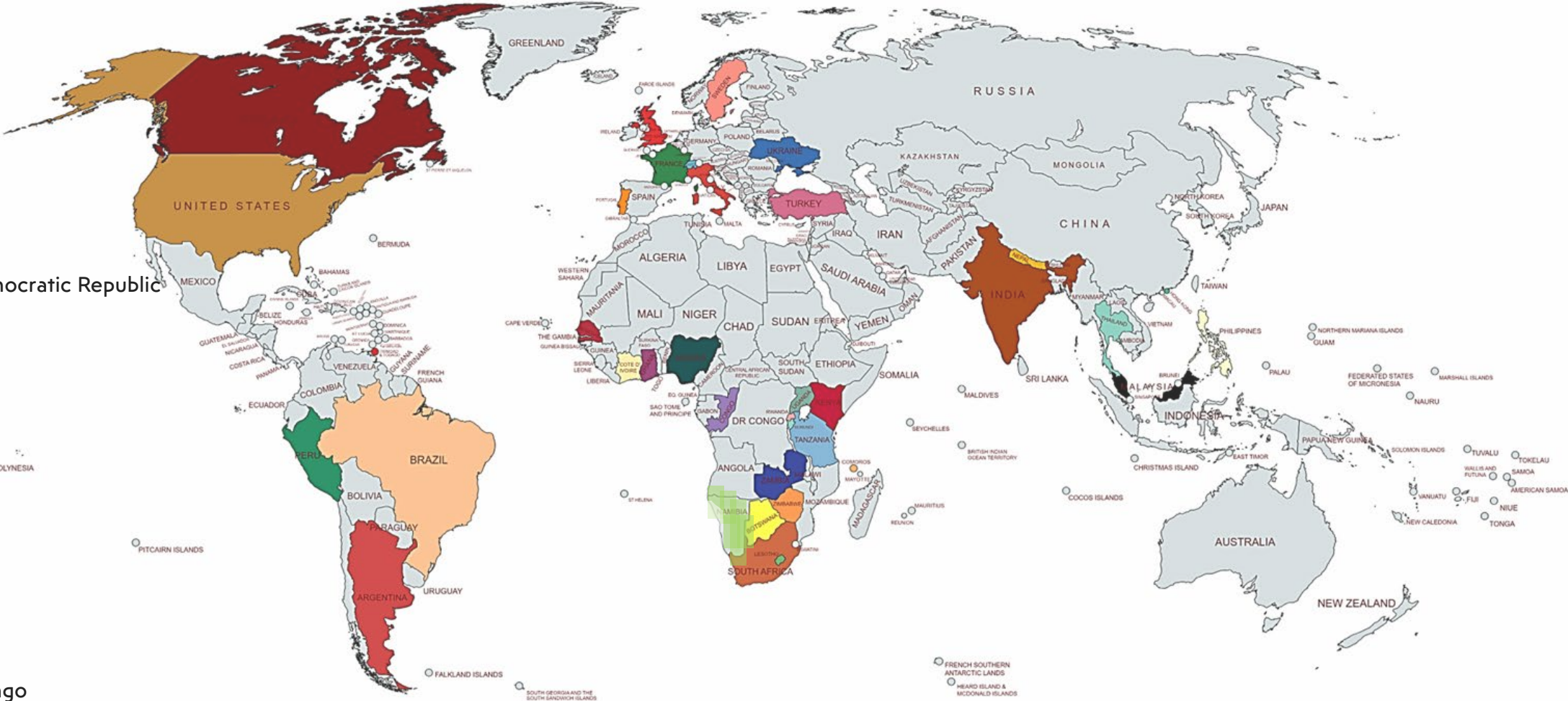
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- Qs after each preso,
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- We will share links to recording
and slides in follow-up email
- You can access webinar resources here:
 - www.avac.org/choice-agenda
- Please comment, ask questions,
share info/resources in the chat
- Raise hand to speak on camera



Registrants from 39 countries

- Argentina
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- Brazil
- Burundi
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- Comoros
- Congo
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Eswatini
- France
- Ghana
- Hong Kong SAR
- India
- Italy
- Kenya
- Lao People's Democratic Republic
- Lesotho
- Malaysia
- Namibia
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- Peru
- Philippines
- Portugal
- Rwanda
- Senegal
- South Africa
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- Tanzania
- Thailand
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- Turkey
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Kingdom
- United States
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe



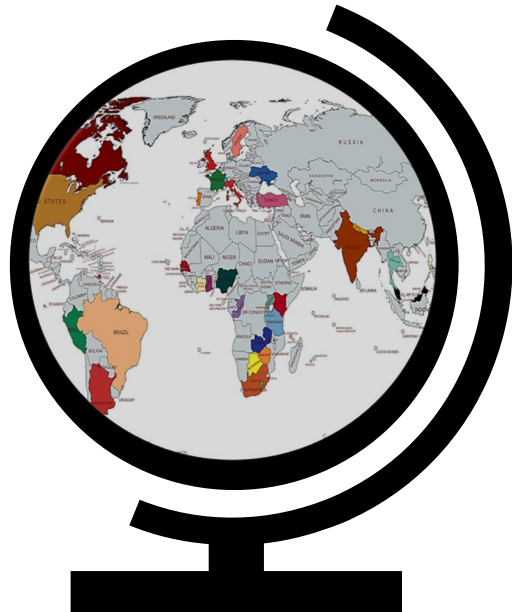
Where are you zooming in from today?



yes

yes

yes



- Being blunt
- Encourage use of lubrication
- Putting condom on dildo using mouth
- Sexual health goal setting in PrEP consult
- Sex positive risk reduction interventions for adolescents. young adults
- **Recognize pleasure as an important aspect of human sexuality, reduce stigmatizing language**
 - “Pop it to block it” social media campaign promotes fun, pleasurable sex life through prep use
 - Sex toy donations for incentives at outreach events
 - Martha Sexpert mag full of pleasure-filled tips
- **Foster stigma-free environment, without shame**
- Currently working on social marketing campaign to this effect
 - Lube wrestling with vibrator and Fleshlight prizes

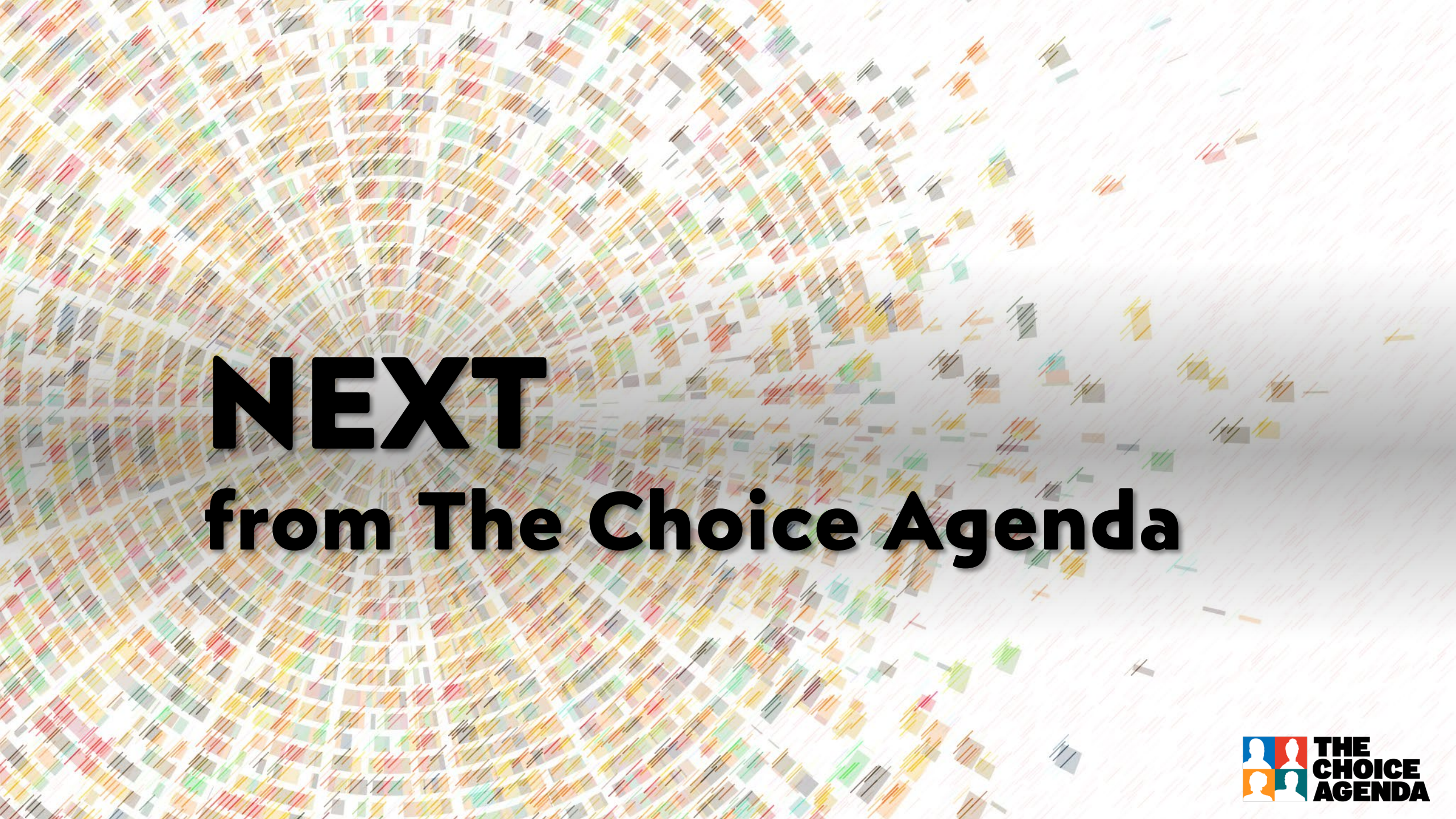
Please leave examples, links in the chat

thepleasureproject.org/the-pleasure-principles

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Organisations who endorse the Pleasure Principles





NEXT

from The Choice Agenda

Faster, Smarter and More Equitable

Accelerating Roll Out and Uptake of CAB for PrEP

Monday, August 8, 2022

- 9:00am – 10:30am ET
- 1:00pm – 2:30pm GMT
- 15:00 – 16:30 SAST

Register:

tinyurl.com/cabla4prep



Speakers

- Rachel Baggaley, WHO
- Caroline Carnevale, NY Presbyterian
- Monica Gandhi, UCSF
- Mitchell Warren, AVAC
- US Aprelude (CAB) user



Monday, August 8, 2022

Register: tinyurl.com/cabla4prep

Are you on the TCA list?

529 and counting

discover

discuss

debate

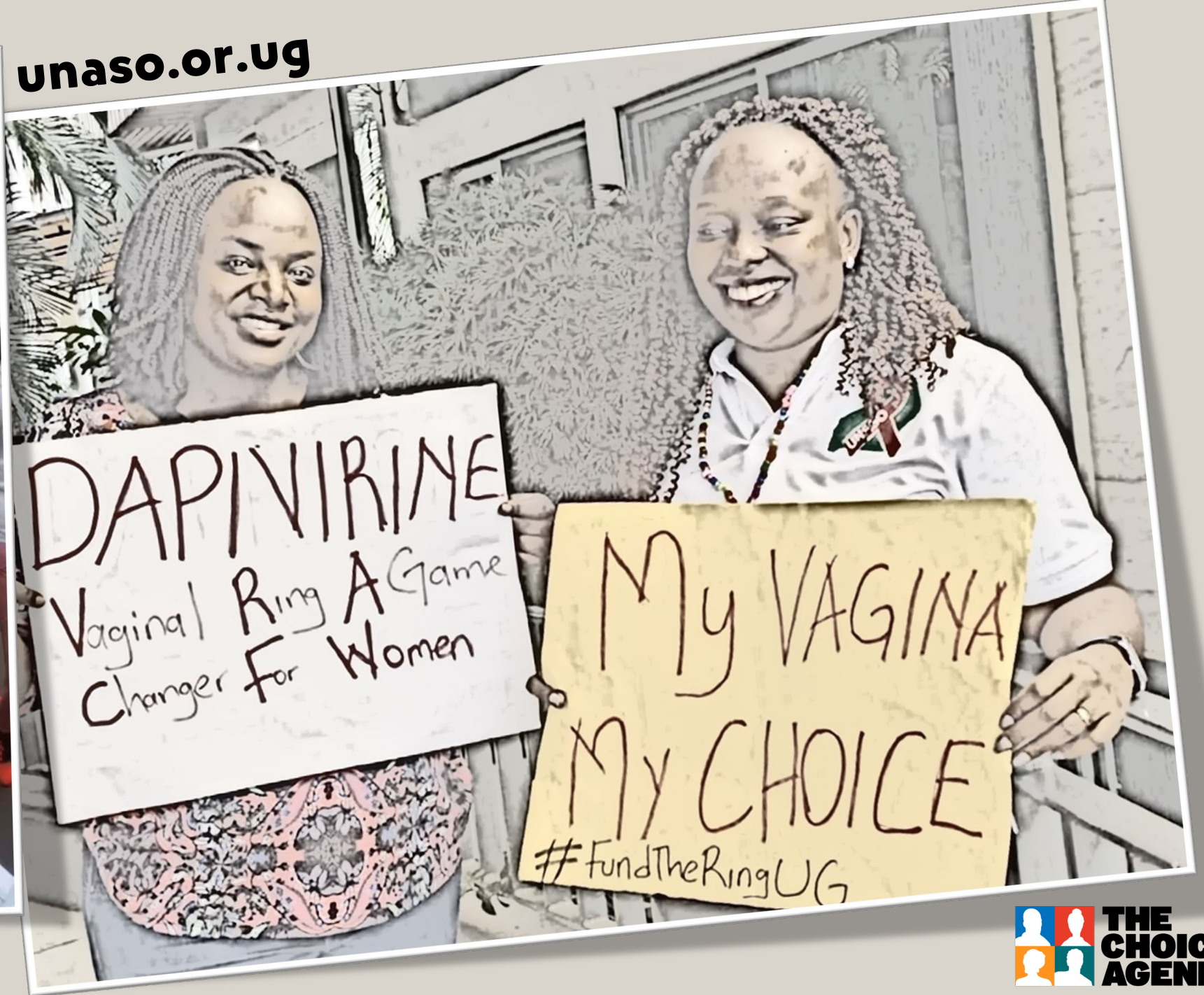
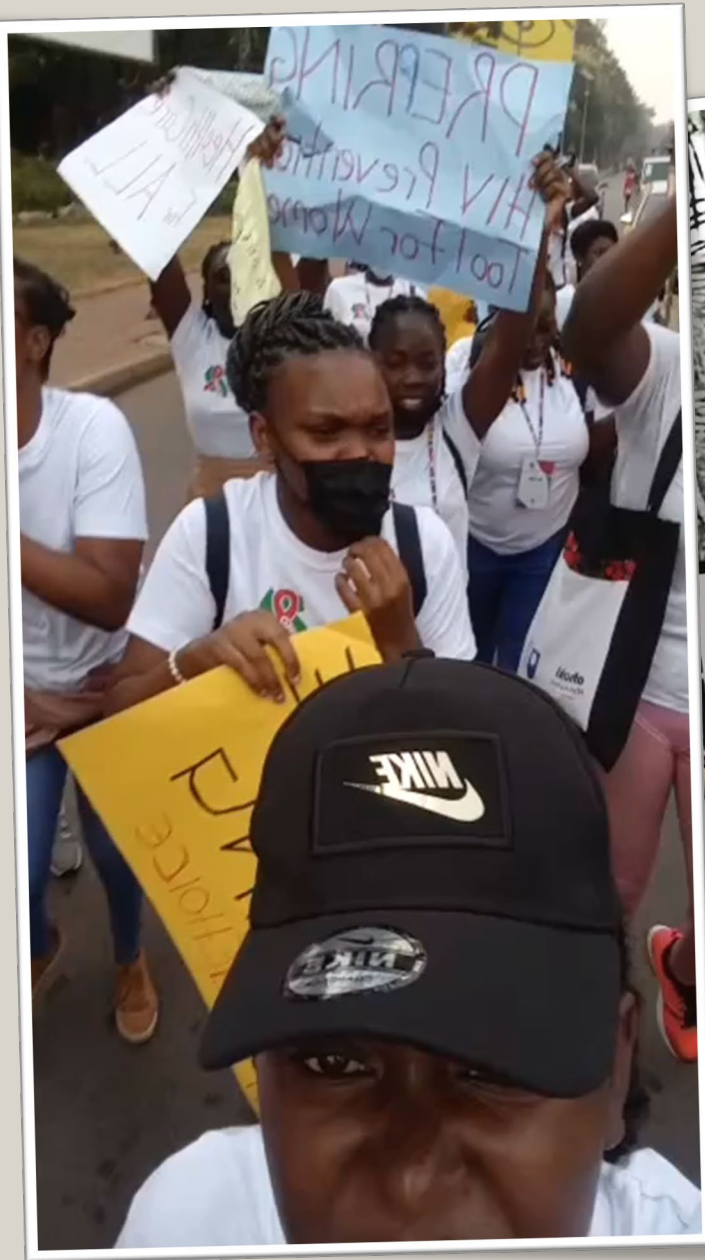


HIV prevention research - a new forum for advocacy on the latest



Send an e-mail to jimberlypickett@gmail.com to join

unaso.or.ug





just like that

Putting sexy into safer sex since 2004

#TheChoiceAgenda
#PleasureMatters





Describe your most pleasurable sexual experience.

Consider the following:

Who were you with?

e.g. By yourself, your partner, a stranger?

Where were you?

e.g. On a day off, a beach, the kitchen table.

What other things made it so memorable?

e.g. We talked all night!

Was the experience part of something else?

e.g. Honeymoon, holiday fling.

What happened?

e.g. They looked so hot at the bus stop I couldn't stop looking over...

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good safe sex

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#PleasureIsProgress

Why is Important ?

‘Global efforts cannot disaggregate the essence of human sexuality into components, addressing some and ignoring others.....

Instead, efforts must be made to engage with sexuality as an aspect of a whole person with attention to sexual pleasure. Sexual pleasure is a missing link between informed decision-making and sexual health’

WAS Technical document to accompany Sexual Pleasure Declaration – in press, International Journal of Sexual Health, 2021



Why is Sexual Pleasure Important ?

- ✓ Research in many cultures has found **pleasure is a fundamental reason people have sex**
- ✓ **Sex can improve your health** – solo and/or partnered sexual activity is associated with improved health, longevity, immunity, pain management, self-esteem and a reduction in stress
- ✓ Pleasure can be an **indicator of empowerment – or a reduction in the female/gender pleasure gap**
- ✓ **Pleasure-inclusive sexual health interventions may be particularly effective with vulnerable populations who have experienced trauma .**
- ✓ **Pleasure Empowerment & Sexual Health can challenge stereotypes that reinforce damaging norms** that masculinity is enhanced by sexual pleasure and femininity is diminished by it
- ✓ Can help **protect people's sexual rights**
- ✓ **Pleasure and Sex Positivity** has been a part of **faith, belief and historical and pre-colonial narratives**



**World Health
Organization**

“The possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences not merely absence of disease”

GUTTMACHER-LANCET COMMISSION
ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

**HEALTH
+
RIGHTS**

“Rights of individuals to have safe and pleasurable sexual experiences”

Pleasure-based approach:

Defined by **the pleasure project.**

“one that celebrates sex, sexuality and the joy and wellbeing that can be derived from these, and **creates a vision of good sex built on sexual rights.** It focuses on sensory, mental, physical and sensual pleasure to enable individuals to understand, consent to, and gain control over their own bodies and multi-faceted desires. **Well-being, safety, pleasure, desire and joy are the objectives of a programme with a pleasure-based approach.** This approach measures empowerment, agency, and self-efficacy by whether or not an individual has been enabled to know what they want, and can ask for it, and request this of others, in relation to their sexuality, desires and pleasure.”



Pleasure Inclusive Sexual Health improves SRHR outcomes – 3 key reviews of evidence

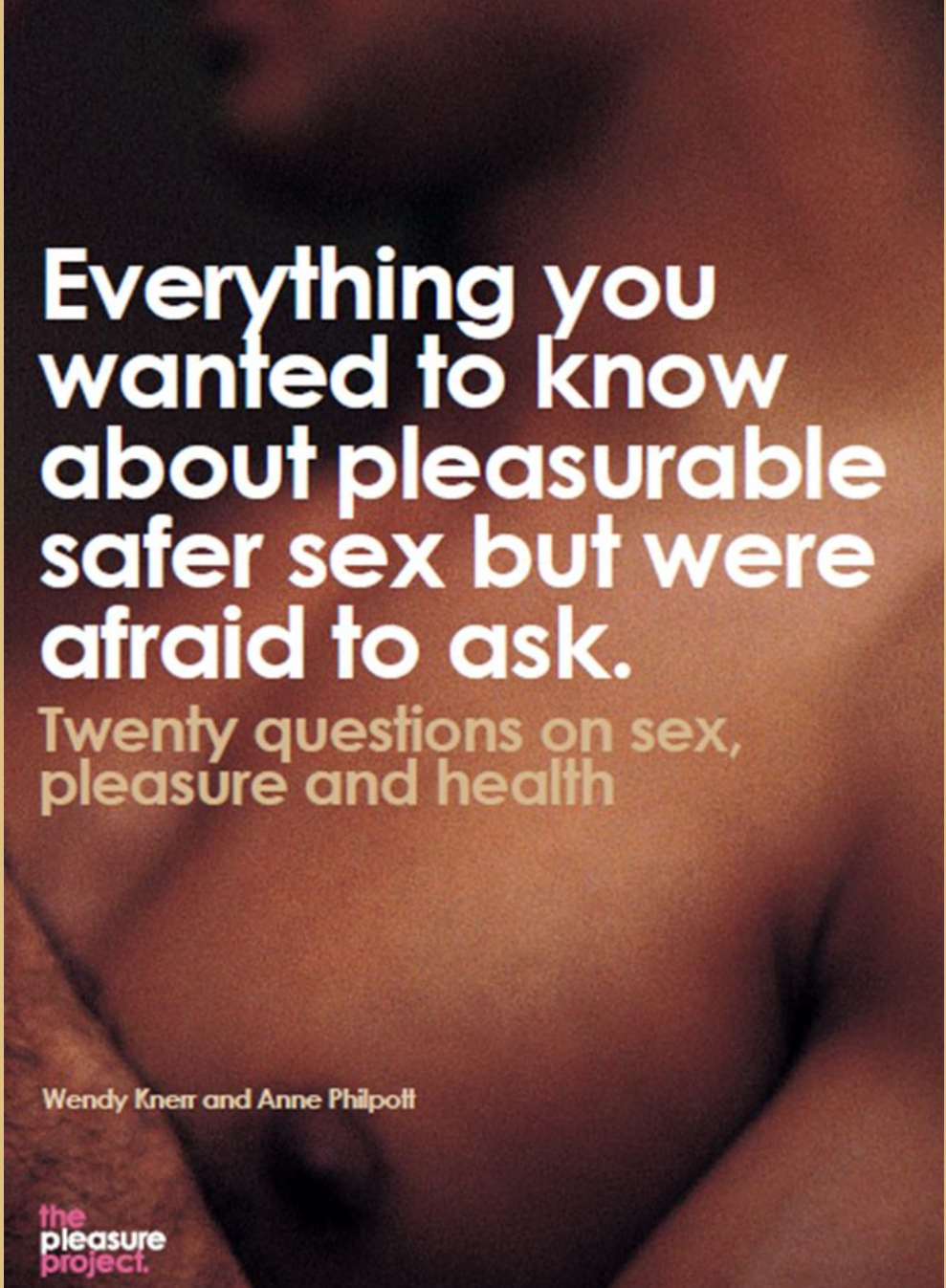
2006 – Meta-analysis of 21 studies of erotic safer sex promotion against standard care [*Scott- Sheldon et al*]

2008 – Literature Review in the form of 20 Questions summarising evidence [*Knerr and Philpott*]

2020 – Systematic Review and meta-analysis of evidence from 2005-2020 WHO, The Pleasure Project, University of Oxford [*Philpott et al, in press 2021*]

In summary limited but robust evidence for;

- ♥ Reduces risk taking
- ♥ Increases condom use
- ♥ Increase sexual self efficacy/confidence




Everything you wanted to know about pleasurable safer sex but were afraid to ask.

Twenty questions on sex, pleasure and health

Wendy Knerr and Anne Philpott

the
pleasure
project.



Do positive attitudes to sex correspond to positive attitudes to safer sex?

Quick and dirty answer:
Yes – the more positive people are about sex and sexuality (and their right or ability to experience sexual pleasure), the more confident they seem to be about practicing safer sex.

“**People with a positive view of their own sexuality are more likely to protect themselves than those less comfortable with their sexuality.”**

– Higgins and Hirsch, 2007

A 1988 review of research from Canada, Hong Kong, India, Israel, and the USA found that people with positive (“erotophilic”) attitudes to sex and sexually explicit materials were more likely to use contraception consistently than people who were characterized as sex-negative (“erotophobic”) (Fisher et al., 1988). In other words, people with a positive view of sex and sexuality are more likely to protect themselves than those who are less comfortable.

A study in the 1970s and 1980s found that college-aged American women with more positive attitudes towards sexuality were more consistent users of contraception, while those reporting feelings of guilt related to sex and sexuality were less likely to use contraception effectively or at all (Gerrard, 1982). A similar result with regard to condom usage was found among men who have sex with men. Rosser et al. (2000) found a reduction in internalized ‘homonegativity’ (or homophobia) in the group receiving a sex-positive intervention; this group had greater

acceptance of their own sexuality, and greater consistent condom use at 12 months than the control group. And a 2006 study found a positive association between a woman’s belief that she is entitled to sexual pleasure, and her confidence in both discussing and knowing how to use condoms (Horne and Zimmer-Gembeck, 2006).

A detailed study with teenage girls in the USA found that those with a more positive view of sexuality were more assertive, and knowing what it felt like to want sex meant that some girls could more easily say no to unwanted sex (Folman, 2005).

Despite this evidence that attitudes about sex and sexuality influence safer-sex practices, few evaluations of sex education and HIV prevention interventions consider the qualitative aspects of people’s sexual experiences, such as how willingly people engage in sex and whether they experience pleasure (Robinson et al., 2002; Cherry et al., 2006; Haberland, 2007).

Systematic review and meta-analysis 2022

Do **SRHR** interventions which incorporate **sexual pleasure** improve relevant health outcomes (as compared with 'usual' SRHR interventions)?

SRHR = contraception + HIV

Sexual pleasure = any mention of pleasure, eroticization, satisfaction

Comparison = 'usual' care or control



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PLEASURE IN SEXUAL HEALTH LEADS TO GOOD SAFE SEX



THE CURRENT MODEL OF SEXUAL HEALTH FOCUSES ON PREVENTION OF ILL-HEALTH, FEAR AND DEFICIT BASED APPROACHES TO HEALTH

WE FIND EVIDENCE THAT PLEASURE CAN HAVE POSITIVE EFFECTS ACROSS DIFFERENT INFORMATIONAL, MOTIVATIONAL, BEHAVIOURAL AND KNOWLEDGE-BASED ATTITUDES AS WELL

SEXUAL HEALTH INTERVENTIONS THAT INCLUDE PLEASURE INCREASE CONDOM USE AND IMPROVE SEXUAL HEALTH

THE PLEASURE PROJECT DEFINITION OF PLEASURE BASED SEXUAL HEALTH IS ONE THAT CELEBRATES SEX, SEXUALITY AND THE JOY AND WELL-BEING THAT CAN BE DERIVED FROM THESE, AND CREATES A VISION OF GOOD SEX BUILT ON SEXUAL RIGHTS

PLEASURE IS IMPORTANT TO PEOPLE AND TO THEIR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING.

A PLEASURE-INCLUSIVE APPROACH HAS SIGNIFICANT AND POSITIVE (AND ACCELERATED) IMPACT FOR CONDOM USE/HIV REDUCTION. PLEASURE INCLUSIVE SEXUAL HEALTH AND SEX EDUCATION SAVES LIVES

SEXUAL PLEASURE IS THE PHYSICAL AND/OR PSYCHOLOGICAL SATISFACTION AND ENJOYMENT DERIVED FROM SHARED OR SOLITARY EROTIC EXPERIENCES, INCLUDING THOUGHTS, FANTASIES, DREAMS, EMOTIONS, AND FEELINGS. (WAS SEXUAL PLEASURE DECLARATION)

ABSTINENCE



CURRENT SEX EDUCATION IS DEFICIT FOCUSED OR HIGHLIGHTS WHAT PEOPLE SHOULD AVOID, NOT WHAT THEY WANT TO GAIN FROM THEIR SEX LIVES - THE ASSET APPROACH

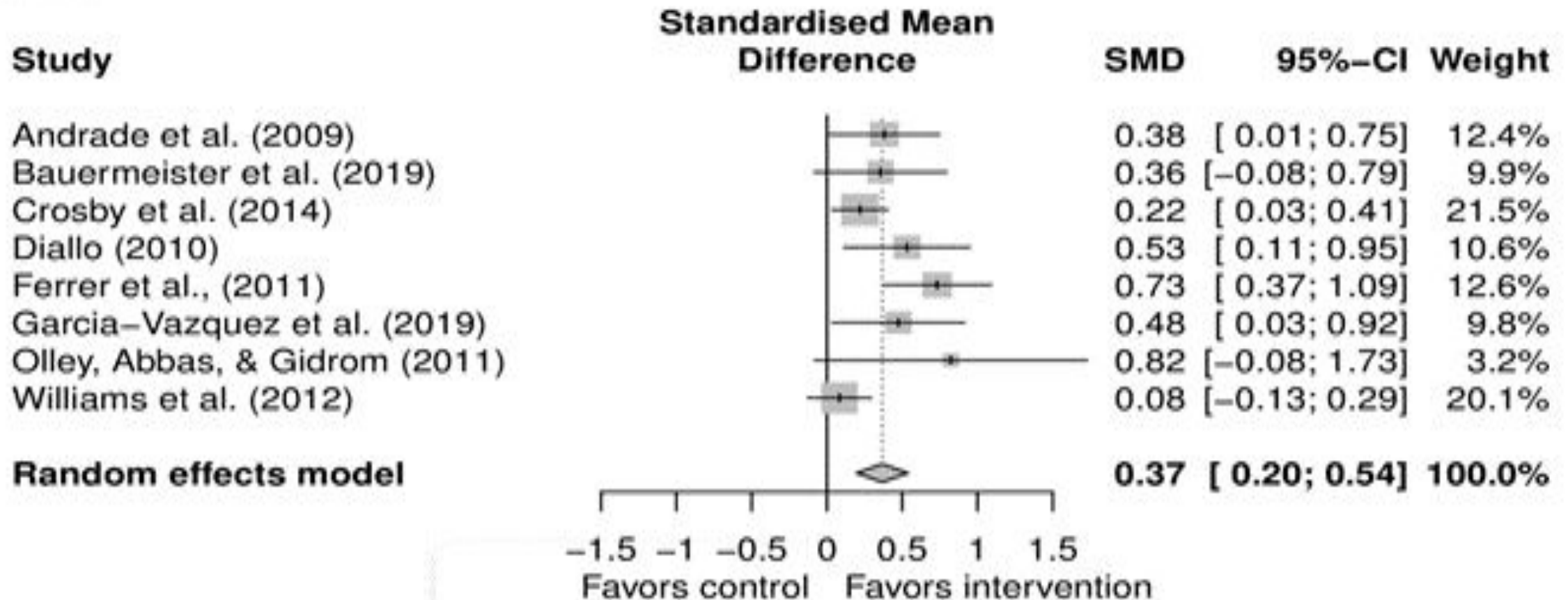


ILLUSTRATED BY
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Results: Meta-analysis

‘Significant and positive effect on condom- use’
for pleasure inclusive sexual health’



7825 articles screened –
33 studies included

Interventions have
focused on 'at-risk'
populations and HIV/STI
reductions

Among included
interventions, spectrum of
'pleasure-inclusivity'

Prelim. Obs: a spectrum of 'pleasure-inclusivity'

Vast majority – no mention of pleasure



Borderline/Low

Overall disease-
prevention and/or sex-
negative approach

Few/no mentions of
sex positivity

Attempts to dispel
myths around safe sex
hindering enjoyment

E.g. "Condoms don't
have to stop pleasure"



Medium

Often still disease-
prevention approach,
but could also be
embedded in an
'empowerment'
approach

Intervention includes
components that
eroticize condom use
or safer sex

E.g. "The advisor
encouraged men...to
experience condoms
as being compatible
with sexual
pleasure...and to
equate condom use
with an investment in
the men's future.



High

Pleasure and/or sex-
positivity approach,
determines choice,
wellbeing and pleasure
as core values

Includes multiple
direct and clear
mentions of pleasure



Results:

Future SRHR work should incorporate pleasure



World Health Organization

the pleasure project.

THE CASE FOR HER

PLOS ONE

RESEARCH ARTICLE

What is the added value of incorporating pleasure in sexual health interventions? A systematic review and meta-analysis

Mirela Zaneva¹, Anne Philpott^{2*}, Arushi Singh², Gerda Larsson³, Lianne Gonsalves⁴

1 University of Oxford, Oxford, United Kingdom, **2** The Pleasure Project, United Kingdom and India, **3** The Case for Her, Stockholm, Sweden, **4** UNDP-UNFPA-UNICEF-WHO-World Bank Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction (HRP), Department of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Research, World Health Organization, Geneva, Switzerland

Quantitative evidence:
Moderate, positive, significant
effect for condom use

Gaps remain:
Women, heterosexual people,
members of the general
population underrepresented

Remaining questions:
Dose-response effects

Qualitative evidence:
Improvements for motivational,
informational, attitude related
outcomes

Methodological improvements:
Wider adoption of more varied
measures, including biological
markers

Take home message:
Future SRHR work should
consider ways to incorporate
pleasure



DECLARATION ON SEXUAL PLEASURE

In recognition that sexual pleasure is a fundamental part of sexual rights, sexual health, and sexual well-being, the World Association for Sexual Health:

AFFIRMS that:

Sexual pleasure is the physical and/or psychological satisfaction and enjoyment derived from shared or solitary erotic experiences, including thoughts, fantasies, dreams, emotions, and feelings. Self-determination, consent, safety, privacy, confidence and the ability to communicate and negotiate sexual relations are key enabling factors for pleasure to contribute to sexual health and well-being. Sexual pleasure should be exercised within the context of sexual rights, particularly the rights to equality and non-discrimination, autonomy and bodily integrity, the right to the highest attainable standard of health and freedom of expression. The experiences of human sexual pleasure are diverse and sexual rights ensure that pleasure is a positive experience for all concerned and not obtained by violating other people's human rights and well-being.¹

DECLARES that:

1. The possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences free of discrimination, coercion, and violence is a fundamental part of sexual health and well-being for all;
2. Access to sources of sexual pleasure is part of human experience and subjective well-being;
3. Sexual pleasure is a fundamental part of sexual rights as a matter of human rights;
4. Sexual pleasure includes the possibility of diverse sexual experiences;
5. Sexual pleasure shall be integrated into education, health promotion and service delivery, research and advocacy in all parts of the world;
6. The programmatic inclusion of sexual pleasure to meet individuals' needs, aspirations, and realities ultimately contributes to global health and sustainable development and it should require comprehensive, immediate and sustainable action.

URGES all governments, international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, health and education authorities, the media, private sector actors, and society at large, and particularly, all member organizations of the World Association for Sexual Health to:

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Official Journal of the World Association for Sexual Health



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How do you
love yourself?

Answer at
#pleasurewave



LOVE
YOURSELF



EMBRACE
LEARNING



TALK
SEXY



BE
FLEXIBLE



THINK
UNIVERSAL



RIGHTS
FIRST



BE
POSITIVE

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good safe sex

The Pleasure Principles

Pleasure-based Sexual Health

These Pleasure Principles are designed to act as a guide and inspiration to support people and organisations to embark on the journey towards a sex-positive, pleasure based approach to sexual health. The Pleasure Principles aim to help inspire and guide you as a pleasure activist, propagandist or practitioner.

LOVE YOURSELF

To build a pleasure-inclusive world, love yourself. Show kindness to yourself and others. Collaborate with and promote other pleasure champions.



EMBRACE LEARNING

There is a growing body of evidence about the impact of pleasure positive approaches on sexual health. Use this knowledge to spread sex positivity.



TALK SEXY

Pleasure-positive messaging communicate positively & effectively. Adopt evidence-based pleasure-inclusive language and imagery across your media and mediums.



BE FLEXIBLE

Be adaptive in your approach to each unique context and culture. Recognise that pleasure-based sexual health is possible for all.



THINK UNIVERSAL

Everyone has the ability to experience pleasure. Recognise individual differences and identities, and ensure everyone is included in pleasure-based sexual health.



RIGHTS FIRST

Sexual rights and human rights are core to a person's sexuality. These are the building blocks of pleasure-based sexual health.

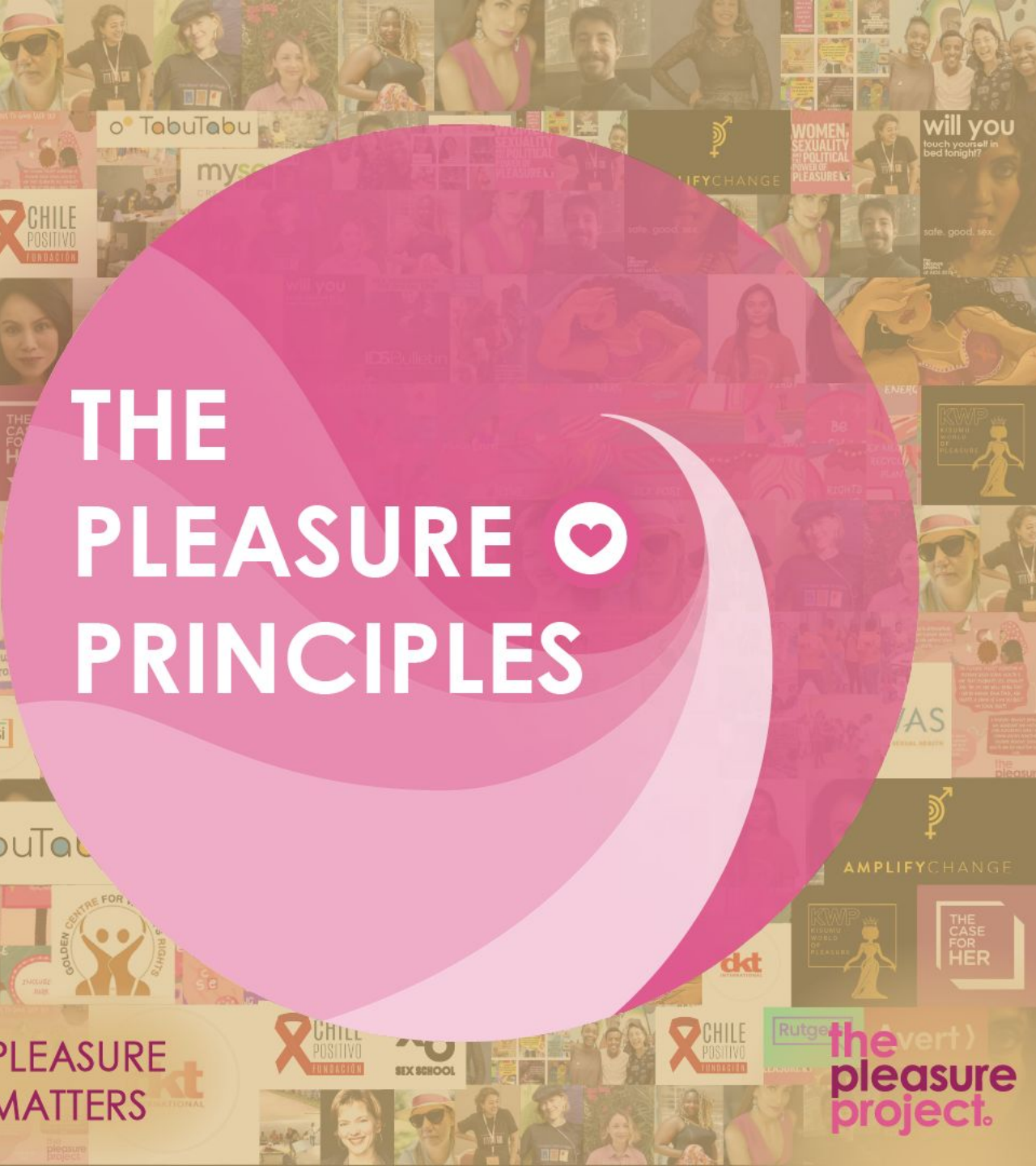


BE POSITIVE



Core to all the Pleasure Principles is being sex-positive. Remember, when you feel safe and are safe, sex can be very good for you.

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THE PLEASURE PRINCIPLES



ENJOY THE PLEASURE WAVE.

PLEASURE MATTERS

the pleasure project

the pleasure project

PLEASURE MATTERS

Promising Practices: The Global Mapping of Pleasure

The Global Mapping of Pleasure

A showcase of people and resources who promote pleasure and sexy safe sex in the public health world.
Come join the pleasure movement and add yourself to the map, if you promote pleasure safely.



Promising Practices:

International Planned Parenthood Federation,
Africa Region



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**The Pleasure
Principles**
Pleasure-based
Sexual Health

Thank you

**the
pleasure
project.**

**the
pleasure
project.**

good safe sex

The Research Says Yes, YES, YES - Just Like That

The Great Challenge: Pleasure as a portal to an inclusive SGRD in health and education professionals' practices

João Alves, MD, PhD
Dois Arco-Íris Projetos
University of Minho
CEFI/FACEFI



dois arco-íris
projetos



Universidade do Minho



Sexual health, sexual rights, sexual pleasure and wellbeing

Health and education: a way to promote pleasure and sex positivity and to achieve higher levels of well-being and mental health.



Express authentic selves

Increase capacity for intimacy and sexual autonomy

The collapse of limited, hierarchical models

Move away from reductionist binary constructs of gender

Creation of:

Pleasure-based models of sexuality encompass the wealth and breadth of human desire and experiences.



Prejudice and Stigma Costs

- Homosexuals have 4 times more chances to commit suicide.
- Transsexuals have 10 times more chances to commit suicide.
- Brazilians transexuals life expectation is 37 years old.
- Social and economic world price:
 - 32 billion dollars per year.
- Decreases public funds



Friendly and Competent Contexts

- Friendly contexts:
 - Inclusive and committed to equity and social justice,
 - Reduce prejudice and stigma.
- Competent contexts:
 - Intensify such issues,
 - More effective in this reduction.
- Competent professional practices are associated with:
 - Reduction of disparities present in minority groups
 - Discussions about the necessary differences for effective actions.



Health and Education Cultural Competence

Favors:

- Democratic, participatory, and progressive practice
- Promotion of human rights and inclusion

Incorporates:

- Inclusive knowledge and practices - cognitive, behavioral and relational

Aims to achieve:


- Awareness
- Sensitivity
- Competence
- Domain

(Costa et al, 2017).



LGBTQ+ HEALTH and EDUCATION:
Potential of a Continuing Training Program in Inclusive Sexuality for Health and Education Professionals

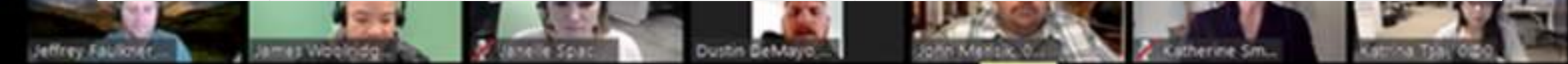
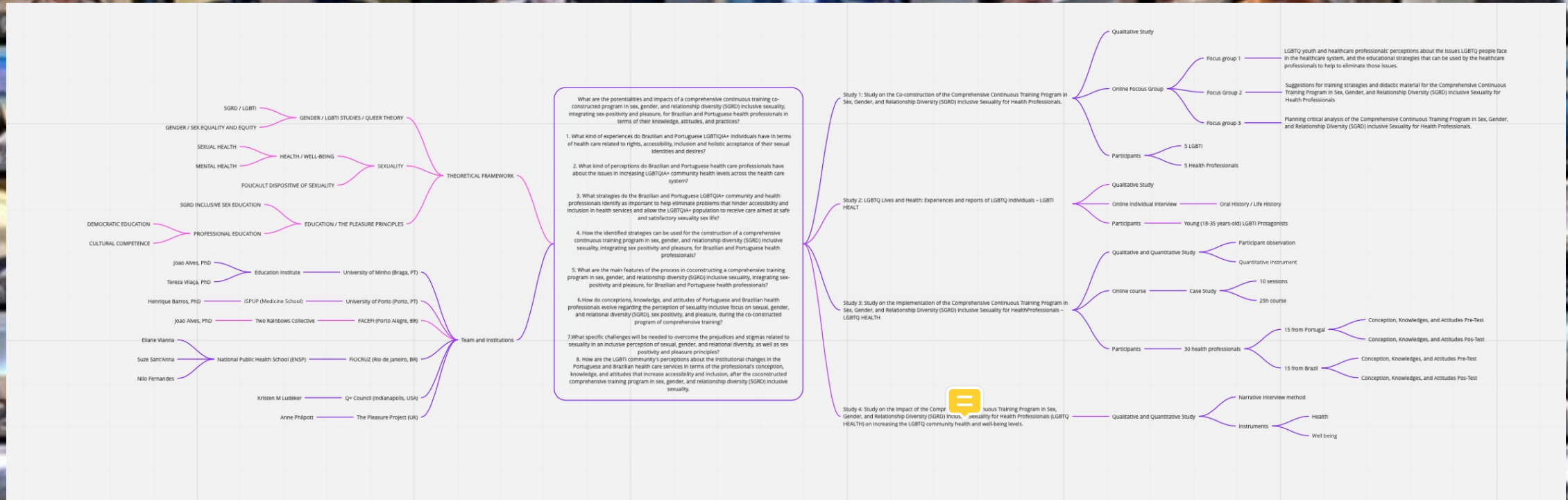
LGBTQ+ SANTÉ et ÉDUCATION :
Potentiel d'un programme de formation continue en sexualité inclusive pour les professionnels de la santé et de l'éducation



What are the potentialities and impacts of a comprehensive continuous training co-constructed program in sex, gender, and relationship diversity (SGRD) inclusive sexuality, integrating sex-positivity and pleasure, for Brazilian and Portuguese health professionals in terms of their knowledge, attitudes, and practices?

LGBTQ+ HEALTH and EDUCATION: Potential of a Continuing Training Program in Inclusive Sexuality for Health and Education Professionals

LGBTQ+ SANTÉ et ÉDUCATION : Potentiel d'un programme de formation continue en sexualité inclusive pour les professionnels de la santé et de l'éducation



LGBTQ+ HEALTH and EDUCATION:
Potential of a Continuing Training Program in Inclusive Sexuality for Health and Education Professionals

LGBTQ+ SANTÉ et ÉDUCATION :
Potentiel d'un programme de formation continue en sexualité inclusive pour les professionnels de la santé et de l'éducation

- **The training course is based on case studies and designed to use remote learning**
- **Analyses**
 - **The trainees' production**
 - **Pre and post-test on Sexuality, Sexual Well-Being, and LGBTQ-Inclusive Sexuality Education**

LGBTQ+ HEALTH and EDUCATION:
Potential of a Continuing Training Program in Inclusive Sexuality for Health and Education Professionals

LGBTQ+ SANTÉ et ÉDUCATION :
Potentiel d'un programme de formation continue en sexualité inclusive pour les professionnels de la santé et de l'éducation

- **The training course was based on case studies and designed to use remote learning**
- **Invisibility**
- **Sexual diversity had less attention in the sexuality education content at all education levels
it only changed when there were situations of prejudice against LGBTQ students committed by
teachers, school staff, fellow students, and youth themselves.**
- **Absence of sex positivity view and pleasure principles**

**LGBTQ+ HEALTH and EDUCATION:
Potential of a Continuing Training Program in Inclusive Sexuality for Health and Education Professionals**

**LGBTQ+ SANTÉ et ÉDUCATION :
Potentiel d'un programme de formation continue en sexualité inclusive pour les professionnels de la santé et de l'éducation**

- **Low rates of scholarly and health**
- **Lesbian, Gays, Bisexuals, Transvestites, Transexuals and Intersexuals Brazilian Association (2016) - 73% of transvestites and transexuals usually abandon or evade school.**
- **LGBTQIA+ inequity in health care**
- **Absence of LGBTI+ profile data in the census survey**
- **The disregard for issues related to LGBTI+ health in the health courses curriculum**
- **Creation of access hindrance by the bureaucratization**
- **Assistance inequality**
- **Heterosexist professional attitudes**

**LGBTQ+ HEALTH and EDUCATION:
Potential of a Continuing Training Program in Inclusive Sexuality for Health and Education Professionals**

**LGBTQ+ SANTÉ et ÉDUCATION :
Potentiel d'un programme de formation continue en sexualité inclusive pour les professionnels de la santé et de l'éducation**

- **The digital classroom community promoted relevant discussions and facilitated trainees' engagement to build thought-provoking topics. – pleasure, well-being and mental health**
- **The course increased the knowledge, consciousness, and sensibility of the LGBTQ students' needs, and how to support them, reinforcing the importance of this training.**

EDUCATE YOURSELF

Thank you!

Merci!



www.joaoalves.com.br



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[psiquiatrajoaoalves](https://www.youtube.com/psiquiatrajoaoalves)



PLEASURE AND PREP: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF STUDIES EXAMINING PLEASURE, SEXUAL SATISFACTION, AND PREP

CHRISTINE M. CURLEY
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT
JULY 13, 2022

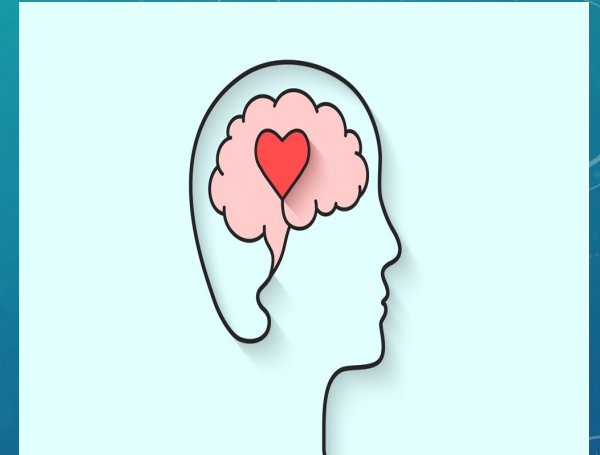
A BIT ABOUT ME...

- <https://www.businessinsider.com/college-as-an-adult-what-its-like-2019-8>
- My research interests...

PLEASURE AND PREP: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF STUDIES
EXAMINING *PLEASURE, SEXUAL SATISFACTION,*
AND *PREP*

SEXUAL SATISFACTION IS ...

- Separate from sexual function and relationship satisfaction (Apt et al., 1996; Fallis et al., 2016; Stephenson & Meston, 2010)
- “An individual’s subjective evaluation of their sexuality” (Rehman, Fallis & Beyers, 2013, p. 25)
- “Personal evaluation of the positive and negative dimensions of one’s sexual relationship(s)” (Lawrence & Byers, 1995, p. 268).



SYSTEMATIC REVIEW: ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN SEXUAL SATISFACTION AND MEASURES OF WELL-BEING

- Sexual Satisfaction is associated with *higher*:
 - Subjective Well-being
 - Life Satisfaction
 - Psychological Well-being
 - Longevity
- Sexual Satisfaction is associated with *lower*:
 - Anxiety
 - Depression
 - Physical Symptoms*

EXAMINING COMFORT WITH SEXUALITY, SEXUAL SATISFACTION, MOTIVATIONS FOR SEX, AND BARRIERS TO SEXUAL EXPRESSION

3 studies: Spring 2021, Fall 2021, Spring 2022, undergraduates and graduates, diverse sample (race/ethnicity, sexual); age 18-29

- Higher Comfort with Sexuality > significantly related to lower Depression and Anxiety
- Higher Sexual Satisfaction > significantly related to lower Depression



SYSTEMATIC REVIEW: BACKGROUND CONCEPTS

■ PrEP Intervention Focus:

- HIV Prevention
- HIV Risk Reduction
- Adherence

(Chou et al., 2019; Holt et al., 2019; Peng et al., 2018; Yi et al., 2017)



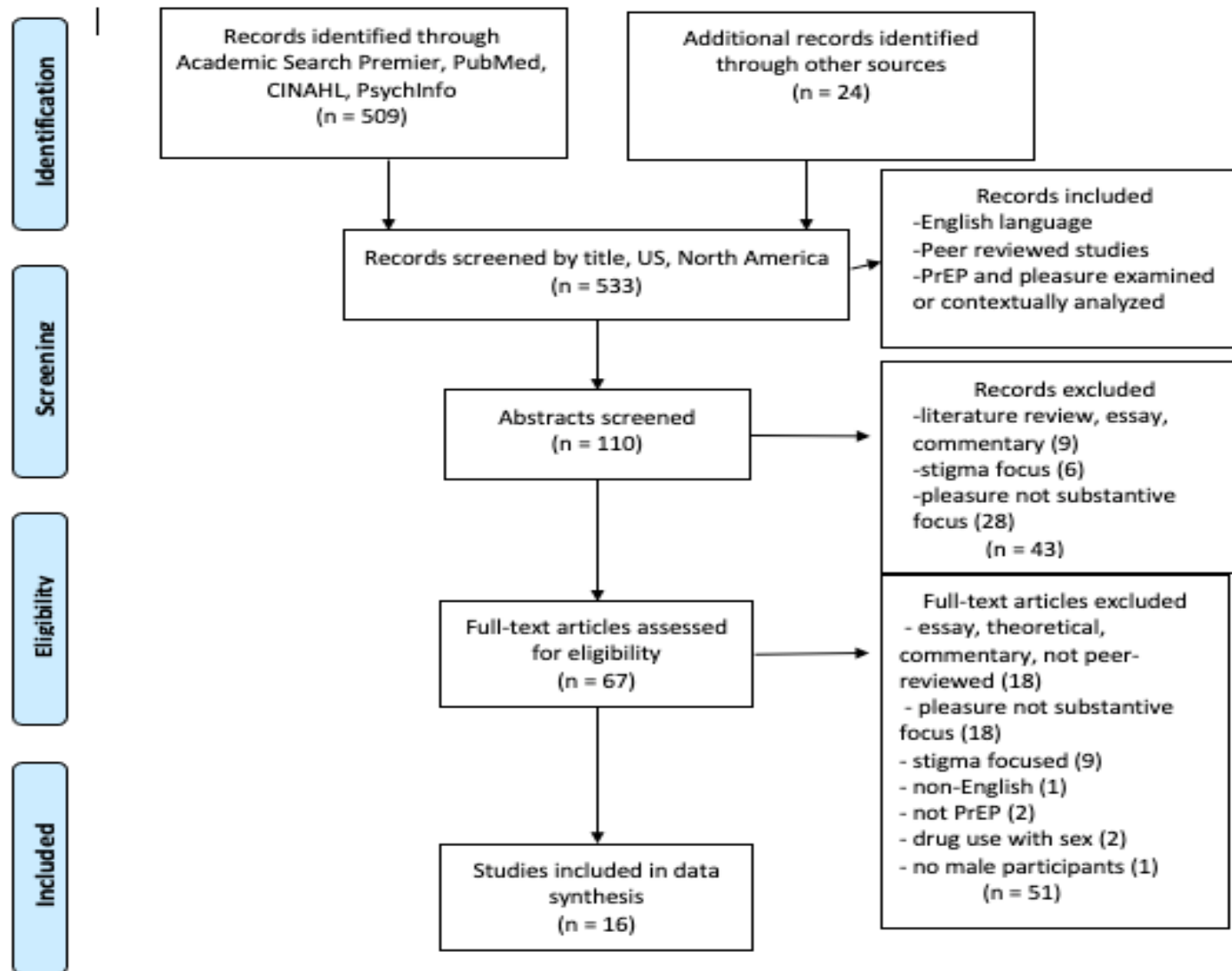
■ Sexual Motivations for PrEP:

- Increased Physical Pleasure
- Increased Sexual Intimacy
- Increased Sexual Opportunity
- Reduced Sexual Anxiety

(Ranjit et al., 2019, 2020; Zimmerman et al., 2019)

- PrEP interventions rarely discuss sexual pleasure, despite substantial research evidencing an association between sexual satisfaction and overall subjective and psychological well-being, quality of life, life satisfaction, and physical health.
- (Diamond & Huebner, 2012; Flynn, et al., 2016; Laumann et al., 2006; Rosen & Bachmann, 2008; Stephenson & Meston, 2015).

Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram of Studies Examining Pleasure, Sexual Satisfaction, and PrEP



STUDY CHARACTERISTICS

- 3 Quantitative, 10 Qualitative (interview, focus groups, text analysis), 3 Mixed
- Studies conducted in 7 countries: United States, Canada, France, Uganda, England, Australia, and Belgium
- 2658 unique participants; 2612 men (2 identified as transgender); 43 women; 3 transgender women
- Racially diverse participants (11); Black (2); no reported race or ethnicity information (3)
- 16 Studies majority GMSM
- Only 2 studies examined both partners in a couple; (5) partnered MSM

FINDINGS: PLEASURE FOCUSED THEMES

What PrEP Has Taken Away

- PrEP as Reducing Sexual Anxiety and Fear
- PrEP as Removing Barriers to Physical Closeness

What PrEP has Added

- PrEP as Increasing Intimacy
- PrEP as Increasing Sexual Options

THEME: PREP AS REDUCING SEXUAL ANXIETY AND FEAR

“You know, sexuality is your core,
and it only makes
sense that when that’s freer – I
kind of refer to it as
a second coming out”

“Who wants to be intimate with
somebody and be in a state of
terror? You know? You’re
not giving your all”

PrEP can transform “sex = risk” to “sex = pleasure”
(da Silva-Brandao & Iannini, 2020).

“Sex allowed to be
enjoyable again.”

THEME: PREP AS REMOVING BARRIERS TO PHYSICAL CLOSENESS

Couples in committed relationships referred to PrEP as allowing them to return to "live sex"

Sex on PrEP was seen as "more natural" providing deeper sensation than sex with condoms

Condoms are experienced as "totally different from skin" (skin being preferred)

Sexual "fulfilment as opposed to frustration".

NOTE: Risk Compensation (more CAS) - may not be as high as feared > Risk Assessment viewed by some as a Choice

THEME: PREP AS INCREASING INTIMACY

“[I]t’s also just not having a condom on – it’s just so much more intimate that I’m actually giving my body to somebody and letting them cum inside me”

PrEP allows greater physical and psychological intimacy.

PrEP as a sign of commitment to a partner.

Person in committed serodiscordant relationships more likely to use PrEP to improve intimacy.

Intimacy interference motivations predicted willingness to adopt PrEP

THEME: PREP AS INCREASING SEXUAL OPTIONS

PrEP is a “get out of jail free card” (making [me] feel sexier as a partner.”

“Sex isn’t meant to be something you’re ashamed or fearful of . . . now that I can have bareback sex again, it’s just fantastic. Sex has been liberating again thanks to PrEP”

"Equality of access to healthy sex that straight people already have"

Sexual empowerment expressed by MSM on PrEP, allowing individuals to define their own levels of acceptable risk and to responsibly practice safety in the context of sexual behaviors.

DISCUSSION

- Sexual health should encompass both positive and pleasurable sexual experiences for all genders and all sexual identities
- PrEP impacts relationship dynamics: trust, intimacy, sexual freedom
- Associating PrEP with pleasure as opposed to risk could help reduce HIV stigma and stigma toward MSM
- Fears of rampant risk compensation by persons on PrEP may be overstated



Photo Credit:
prep4love.com

DISCUSSION: POST REVIEW STUDIES

Marcus et al. (2021) - online survey of 7,639 sexually active respondents

- PrEP users reported higher sexual satisfaction generally, with higher scores on specific components such as sexual sensations, sexual presence, and sexual variety.

Montgomery et al. (2021) - clinic-based study of PrEP users in Providence and Boston

- Sexual satisfaction scores significantly increased for MSM after PrEP uptake

Puppo et al. (2020) - focus group study of 38 PrEP users conducted in France

- participants expressed increased sexual quality after being on PrEP

Zimmerman et al. (2021) - interviews of 64 participants who were part of AMPrEP demonstration project

- PrEP users experienced more sexual diversity and sexual quality (although some persons reported increased preoccupation with sex and drug use)

Van Dijk et al. (2021) - survey of PrEP users in the Netherlands

- Psychological benefits of improved sexual quality and sexual expression after PrEP uptake

IN CASE SOME OF YOU ARE INTERESTED...



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https://open.spotify.com/show/00hycPBlEfgwXmBGOzMPu0?si=D2R9XN5zTyehEW4SMiFlkQ&dl_branch=1

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Pleasure and PrEP: A Systematic Review of Studies Examining Pleasure, Sexual Satisfaction, and PrEP

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ABSTRACT

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is an effective form of Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) prevention for people at potential risk for exposure. Despite its demonstrated efficacy, PrEP uptake and adherence have been discouraging, especially among groups most vulnerable to HIV transmission. A primary message to persons who are at elevated risk for HIV has been to focus on risk reduction, sexual risk behaviors, and continued condom use, rarely capitalizing on the positive impact on sexuality, intimacy, and relationships that PrEP affords. This systematic review synthesizes the findings and themes from 16 quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods studies examining PrEP motivations and outcomes focused on sexual satisfaction, sexual pleasure, sexual quality, and sexual intimacy. Significant themes emerged around PrEP as increasing emotional intimacy, closeness, and connectedness; PrEP as increasing sexual options and opportunities; PrEP as removing barriers to physical closeness and physical pleasure; and PrEP as reducing sexual anxiety and fears. It is argued that positive sexual pleasure motivations should be integrated into messaging to encourage PrEP uptake and adherence, as well as to destigmatize sexual pleasure and sexual activities of MSM.



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