

News release

INTIMACY IS AS IMPORTANT AS SEX - JUST THINKING DIFFERENTLY COULD SAVE OUR SEX LIVES - SAYS RELATE CAMBRIDGE

New figures show that less than half of South East adults are sexually satisfied

Less than half of adults who live in the South East said they are satisfied with their sex life (42%)* and 54% said they have not had sex in the last month**, according to new figures from a UK-wide survey by charities Relate, Marriage Care and Relationships Scotland.***

Relate Cambridge - which provides a range of counselling services, including sex therapy - provides a safe environment for people to talk about sex, which is very beneficial. There is often so much pressure on couples to have 'amazing sex' that they can end up avoiding it altogether. This is the message in the new *Relate Guide to Sex and Intimacy*, out now, which says just thinking differently about sex can work wonders for our sex lives.

Elaine Taylor, Relationship Counsellor at Relate Cambridge said: "It's sad that so few people in this area are sexually satisfied. Noticing what *is* going well, rather than dwelling on problems, is quite difficult when we are bombarded with messages about how sex 'ought' to be". Elaine went on to say "What constitutes a satisfying sex life can vary wildly from one person to the next, so working out what feels right for you is a great starting point".

Relate Cambridge's ideas for thinking differently about sex

Reassess what sex is: People may feel concerned if they haven't had sex in the past month but there are plenty of other ways to feel connected. The *Relate Guide to Sex and Intimacy* can help people get the most from their sex lives in a way that works for them.

Find your sexual balance: It's often difficult to fit sex into busy lives, but worrying about it makes it less likely to happen. Sometimes, a reassuring cuddle or a tender touch may be all you have time for or need and some that's enough. It's what works for both of you that matters.

Bear in mind spontaneity isn't essential: People who come to Relate often say they want to bring spontaneity back to their sex lives but sex is rarely truly spontaneous and busy people have to plan for intimacy.

A cuddle in front of the kids: In the past, parents were often taught to avoid showing physical affection in front of the kids but it actually reassures them that you are happy and connected as a couple.

[The Relate Guide to Sex and Intimacy](#)

The Relate Guide to Sex and Intimacy by Cate Campbell is published by Vermilion on the 6th August 2015, priced £9.99. This book has been receiving a lot of media attention which has so far resulted in a

double page spread in [The Times](#) and a plug in [The Guardian](#), with pieces soon due out in The Telegraph's Stella Magazine and The Sun.

The guide, written by Psychosexual Therapist Cate Campbell and published by Vermilion recommends ways to relieve the pressure while revving up the pleasure. Covering the lifespan of relationships, the book suggests a new way of thinking about sex which allows a more relaxed approach to sexual expression and improved intimacy. Packed with expert insight and exercises, quizzes and case studies, it covers every sexual eventuality. Whether you have physical issues or have just lost your sexual spark, the book will be as relevant in your 80s as it is in your 20s.

Relate Cambridge offers information, advice and counselling for all stages of your relationships, including counselling for couples and Sex Therapy to improve sexual satisfaction and increase intimacy. For further information about our work, call us on 01223 357424 or visit www.relatecambridge.org.uk.

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*Figures are for those answering 'Fairly satisfied' or 'Very satisfied' and exclude those who answered 'Prefer not to say'. Across the UK as a whole, 45% said they were satisfied with their sex life.

**Figures exclude the minority of participants who answered 'Prefer not to say' or 'Not applicable - I have never had sex'. Across the UK as a whole, 51% said they had not been able to have sex in the last month.

***The figures are taken from *The Way We Are Now 2015* - an annual study by Relate, Marriage Care and Relationships Scotland of the relationships of over 6000 people (aged 16+) across the UK, of which 850 are from the South East. It will be published in full on 1st September. The online survey was carried out by YouGov. Responses were gathered between 27 March and 7 April 2015. All figures are based on Relate analysis of data provided by YouGov Plc. The results were weighted to make the data more representative of the population (of UK adults aged 16+) in terms of age, gender, region and country, and an indicator of social class (based on census information). The data featured here was analysed using STATA 13 with individual weights attached to all sample members. Therefore direct replication of the statistics featured—here using the tables due to be published by YouGov may be subject to rounding errors. Analyses generally excluded those who did not answer questions or for whom the question was inapplicable. Any inaccuracies or errors in the further analyses of these data are the sole responsibility of Relate.

Notes to editors:

- Relate champions the importance of strong and healthy relationships as the basis of a thriving society.
- Relationships are under increasing pressure - breakdown costs the UK an estimated £46bn each year.
- Relate provides impartial and non-judgmental support for people of all ages, at all stages of couple, family and social relationships.
- Over a million people every year access information, support and counselling from Relate but it's clear many more would benefit from Relate services.
- Relate's couple counselling work delivers an estimated £11.40 of benefits for every £1 spent.
- Relate's services extend beyond relationship counselling to family counselling, counselling for young people, sex therapy and informal courses and workshops and are offered through a network of around 1,500 counsellors across the country.
- Relate Cambridge celebrated its 70th birthday this year.
- For more information and advice visit: www.relate.org.uk.