

A Prospective Investigation of the Impact of Childhood Sexual Abuse on the Development of Sexuality

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The sexual attitudes and activities of 77 sexually abused and 89 comparison women (mean age = 20.41, $SD = 3.38$) were assessed 10 years after disclosure in a longitudinal prospective study of the long-term effects of childhood sexual abuse. Abused participants were more preoccupied with sex, younger at first voluntary intercourse, more likely to have been teen mothers, and endorsed lower birth control efficacy than comparison participants. When psychological functioning earlier in development was examined, sexual preoccupation was predicted by anxiety, sexual aversion was predicted by childhood sexual behavior problems, and sexual ambivalence (simultaneous sexual preoccupation and sexual aversion) was predicted by pathological dissociation. Findings also indicate that biological father abuse may be associated with greater sexual aversion and sexual ambivalence.