

## 2021 TENGA GLOBAL SELF-PLEASURE REPORT – Main Findings

### Sexual and Self-Pleasure Behaviors in the U.S.

Prepared by PSB Insights  
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**Overview:** The survey was fielded to N=1000 U.S. Adults aged 18-54 between April 14<sup>th</sup> and April 20<sup>th</sup>. To ensure a representative sample of the U.S. Adult population, fielding quotas were maintained and final data has been weighted in accordance with current population statistics on the basis of age, gender, ethnicity, and region of residence.

## RELATIONSHIPS AND HOUSEHOLDS

**Americans Choose Monogamy:** Nearly two-thirds of U.S. Adults 18-54 (64%) are married, legally partnered or in relationships while only about a quarter (27%) are neither dating nor in relationships. Overall, a minority of Americans are in open or non-exclusive relationships (6%), which translates to about 1 in 10 of those married and 8% of those in relationships. LGBTQ+ Americans are more likely to be in open relationships (11%\* vs. 6% total U.S. Adults).

**And the Nuclear Family Persists:** Slightly over a quarter of U.S. Adults 18-54 (27%) live with their spouse/partner and their children, while another 20% live with a partner only. Less than 1 in 5 U.S. Adults (18%) live alone, particularly men 18-34 (29%).

## MASTURBATION

**Most Americans Masturbate And The Few Who Don't Have Little Interest:** 86% of U.S. Adults 18-54 have ever masturbated, on par with 2020 figures (84%). Men are more likely to masturbate compared to women (90% and 82% respectively), especially men 25-34 and men 45-54 (94% each). Similarly, LGBTQ+ Americans are more likely to have masturbated compared to heterosexual Americans (91%\* vs. 85%). Of the 14% who do not masturbate, three-quarters (75%) have never considered doing so.

**Half of Americans Masturbate Regularly But Women Have Lost Steam This Year:** 52% of those who masturbate do so at least once a week, a small decline since 2020 (57%). While men masturbate more frequently than women do (67% masturbate weekly or more vs. 35% of women) their habits are consistent with last year (69%). Women are less likely to say they masturbate on a weekly basis than they were in 2020 (35% vs. 45%).

**Masturbation Satisfies Sexual Needs:** The top reason Americans masturbate is to “Satisfy sexual urges” (57%), in line with last year (59%). “To relax or relieve stress” (53% vs. 59% in 2020), and “To achieve sexual pleasure” (51% vs. 57% last year) round out the top three. Each of the other nine motivations tested were selected by less than one-third of the sample for both years.

**Adult Content Remains Paramount In Americans' Masturbation Routine:** 52% of those who masturbate view adult content while doing so (65% among men), followed by 40% who use their imagination or fantasize (42% among women). Gen Z are more likely to incorporate adult content into their masturbation routine (64%\*). Compared to men, women are much more likely to use an external vibrating sex toy in their routine (34% vs. 6% of men).

## SEX

**Most Americans Have Had Sex:** 89% of U.S. Adults 18-54 have had sex, with 13 partners on average. Gen Z is the least likely to have had sex (68%\*), while men 18-24\* claim the fewest partners (3). Among sexually active Americans, 52% have sex weekly or more, highest among Millennials (59%) and those in relationships, but not married (67%).

\*Findings from sub-audiences with an n-size below 150 should be considered *directional*, rather than decision-grade

**Sex Brings Pleasure And Satisfies Emotional Needs:** The top motivations for having sex are “To achieve sexual pleasure” (63% vs. 64% in 2020) and “To satisfy sexual urges” (62% vs. 65% in 2020). “To feel emotionally connected to my partner” rounds out the top three (49% vs. 54% in 2020) and, as in prior years, is of larger importance among women (55% vs. 44% of men).

## ATTITUDES AROUND SEX AND MASTURBATION

**Americans are Satisfied With Their Sexual Lives:** Three-quarters of U.S. Adults 18-54 agree with statements that indicate sexual satisfaction:

- 79% agree (37% strongly): *I'm satisfied with the quality of my orgasms*
- 77% agree (41% strongly): *I'm satisfied with my emotional connection with my partner*
- 76% agree (36% strongly): *I'm satisfied with my masturbation frequency*
- 75% agree (34% strongly): *I'm satisfied with the frequency of my orgasms*

**...But Some May Desire More Attentive Partners:**

- 70% agree (36% strongly): *I'm satisfied my partner(s) attention to my sexual needs*

**Masturbation Improves Personal Well-Being:** Most U.S. Adults 18-54 attribute positive impact to masturbation:

- 75% agree (33% strongly): *Masturbation improves my mood*
- 75% agree (30% strongly): *Masturbation helps me manage my stress*
- 74% agree (33% strongly): *Masturbation improves my sleep*
- 72% agree (29% strongly): *Masturbation is a form of self-care or “therapy” for me*
- 71% agree (29% strongly): *Masturbation improves my happiness*

In particular, Millennials, LGBTQ+ Americans\* and Current Sex Toy Users hold the most positive views of masturbation.

Slightly over half of U.S. Adults 18-54 have a weekly self-care routine (55%), and among them, 50% include masturbation. However, among those who do not, the desire is limited (41% would not include masturbation as part of their weekly routine). This is truer among women (46%).

**...But Fewer Consider That Masturbation Helps Their Image:**

- 51% agree (18% strongly): *Masturbation improves my body image*
- 57% agree (20% strongly): *Masturbation improves my self-confidence*
- 59% agree (21% strongly): *Masturbation improves my sex appeal*

**Taboos Around Masturbation Should Be Lifted:** Nearly three-quarters of U.S. Adults 18-54 agree that “Society would benefit if people were more open in discussing sexual topics like masturbation” (71% agree; 31% strongly), consistent with 2020 (73% agree; 32% strongly).

**However, Fewer May Want To Take That First Step:** 60% of U.S. Adults 18-54 feel comfortable talking about masturbation with their close friends or partners (28% strongly agree). Millennials (65% agree), LGBTQ+ Americans (72% agree) and Current Sex Toy Users (72% agree) are most likely to report openness to talking about masturbation.

**Americans Would Rather Give Up Masturbation Than Sex:** While U.S. Adults 18-54 tend to be broadly masturbation-positive, they would rather give up masturbation (65%) than sex (35%) for a month, especially among those in monogamous marriages or relationships (70%).

**Americans Listen To The Weeknd Or Marvin Gaye When Masturbating Or Having Sex:** While few Americans listen to music while having sex or masturbating (29% among those who have ever masturbated or had sex) both classic and contemporary acts make an appearance.

\*Findings from sub-audiences with an n-size below 150 should be considered *directional*, rather than decision-grade

**Jennifer Aniston and Angelina Jolie Are Prominent In Americans' Sexual Fantasies:** Similar to music, relatively few Americans fantasize about celebrities while having sex or masturbating (25% among those who have ever masturbated or had sex). Among those who do, these well-known actors show up in Americans' imaginations.

## SEX TOYS

**Incidence Of Sex Toy Use Rose This Year, Driven By Women:** 54% of U.S. Adults 18-54 report ever having used a sex toy, a slight increase from 2020 (50%). Women drove this uptick, two-thirds of whom report ever having used a sex toy (66%) compared to 58% last year. Overall, most women have tried sex toys compared to 42% of men, and are more likely to be current users (48% vs. 33% of men).

Millennials and Gen Xers are most likely to have ever used a sex toy (57% each), while those aged 18-24 (Gen Z) are the least experienced (40%). In line with their openness around other sexual behaviors, LGBTQ+ Americans are the most likely to have ever tried a sex toy (69%\*).

Relationship status is not a significant driver of sex toy usage, with similar rates of use among those married (58%), in a relationship (58%) and those who date but are not in a relationship (57%). Perhaps counterintuitively, those not in relationships and not dating are *less* likely to report having ever used a sex toy (42%), partly because they tend to over-index 18-24 (32% vs. 19% in the sample overall).

**While Frequency Of Use Remains Consistent To Last Year:** 30% of sex toy users report using their toys weekly or more vs. 33% in 2020.

**Sex Toy Use Is Highly Enjoyable And A Mostly Solo Activity For Women:** The vast majority of sex toy users (86%) report enjoying them, with this perception tracking with frequency of use (71% of Infrequent sex toy users report enjoyment, compared to 96% of Monthly users and 98% of Weekly users).

Nearly half of sex toy users (46%) report using them mostly to pleasure themselves (65% among women). Less than one-in-five (19%) report mostly using sex toys to pleasure a partner, climbing to 44% among men.

**Vibrators and Dildos Are the Best-Known And Most Used Sex Toys:** Given the female-driven nature of sex toy use in the U.S., it is unsurprising that the top product categories are penetrative vibrators (63%), dildos (61%) and non-penetrative vibrators (56%). Sex dolls rank #4, which 51% of U.S. Adults 18-54 are aware of. In line with awareness, 60% of sex toy users have used a penetrative vibrator, followed by non-penetrative vibrators (51%) and dildos (46%). Although men also report having used these products, they are more likely to have tried cock rings (32%) and masturbation sleeves (28%) compared to women (20% and 7%, respectively).

**Americans Are Open To Buying A Sex Toy In The Future:** 70% of U.S. Adults 18-54 are open to the idea of buying a sex toy on the future (vs. 69% in 2020), highest among current sex toy users (93%) and those who have never used but have considered trying (87%\*). As with other sexual behaviors, Millennials and LGBTQ+ Americans report the most interest (74% and 79%, respectively). Openness to purchase is lowest among Gen Z (64%).

## BRAND AWARENESS AND PREFERENCES

**Awareness Of The TENGA Brand Is Consistent To Last Year:** Overall, 11% of U.S. Adults 18-54 have heard of the TENGA brand, driven by higher awareness among men (15% vs. 8% of women). This is consistent to last year (12%) despite the context of a different competitive set.

\*Findings from sub-audiences with an n-size below 150 should be considered *directional*, rather than decision-grade

Fleshlight is the best-known male sex toy brand, with 34% of total U.S. Adults 18-54 reporting having heard of it (44% among men). Purchase intent tracks with awareness. Fleshlight ranks #1, with 42% of those who are open to buying sex toys choosing this brand.

Only 4% of U.S. Adults 18-54 are aware of the iroha brand (vs. 7% last year), with low awareness levels across demographics. None of the female sex toy brands tested generated past 20% awareness, with Womanizer at #1 at 17%, followed by We Vibe at 16%. These two brands also report the highest purchase intent among those who are open to buying sex toys (28% for We Vibe and 26% for Womanizer).

**Adult Content Remains An Important Source Of Product Awareness:** Those aware of TENGA or iroha report having first heard of them on an adult content site (19%\* vs. 13% in 2020), followed by browsing an online specialty retailer (12%\* vs. 6% in 2020).

## SEX EDUCATION

**Most Americans Received Sex Education:** Overall, 70% of U.S. Adults 18-54 report having received sex education in school as a child or teenager (vs. 67% in 2020). Gen X (64%) lags somewhat behind Millennials (73%) and Gen Z (76%) on this metric.

**There Is Widespread Agreement On What Topics To Cover:** Broadly, 9-in-10 Americans agree that sexual education should cover male and female anatomy, puberty, consent, sex and relationships, pregnancy, sexual health and STIs, and contraception. In general, Gen X is most likely to agree that these topics should be covered.

- *Male and Female Anatomy: 92%*
- *Puberty: 92%*
- *Sexual consent: 91%*
- *Sex and Relationships: 91%*
- *Pregnancy: 91%*
- *Sexual health and sexually transmitted infections (STIs): 90%*
- *Contraception: 90%*

**While Other Topics Are Perennial Controversies:** Nearly a quarter of U.S. Adults 18-54 disagree that gender identities (24%) or abortion (23%) should be covered in sex education. Compared to other generations, Gen X is more likely to disagree that gender identities should be a topic (26%), while women are more likely than men to disagree about abortion (26% vs. 21%).

## MASTURBATION AND SEX TOYS IN QUARANTINE

**A Majority Of Americans Have Been Under Quarantine or Lockdown During The Past Year:** 76% of U.S. Adults 18-54 have been under some kind of self-quarantine or lockdown in the past year, with nearly 2-in-5 (39%) spending most to all of the year under these circumstances. Americans have generally weathered the COVID-19 pandemic with the existing members of their household.

- 73%\* of those who live alone also isolated by themselves
- 90% of those who live with only a partner isolated with that partner
- Those not dating and not in a relationship were most likely to quarantine alone (39% vs. 18% total U.S. Adults who have been under lockdown)

**Masturbation Provided A Lifeline During Quarantine:** 42% of U.S. Adults 18-54 who masturbate report that they have been masturbating *more often* than before (49% among men and 32% among women), and highest among Gen Z (62%\*). Among Americans who masturbate

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and have been under lockdown, over two-thirds (68%) report that masturbation acted as a form of self-care during quarantine.

**Quarantine Spurred Sex Toy Purchases Motivated By Stress Relief And Free Time:** 28% of sex toy users bought a *new* sex toy in the past year, most often to use for themselves (49%).

Although most of these buyers appear to be existing users, rather than first-timers, directionally Gen Z was most likely to have purchased a toy for the first time (20%\* vs. 9% of overall sex toy users). Among those who have used sex toys in the past year and have been under quarantine or lockdown, motivations for using sex toys included:

- “To help me cope with stress, anxiety or uncertainty” (37% overall, 49% among women)
- “I had more free time” (37% overall, 45%\* among Gen Z)
- “I was bored” (29% overall, 42%\* among Gen Z)