

**SEX IS AN
INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILL**

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Mainella,
Independence
First

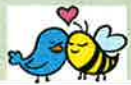
INTRODUCTIONS

- What is your name?
- What center are you from?
- Why did you come to this session?
- How did YOU learn about sex and sexuality?




IT IS MY HOPE THAT WHEN YOU LEAVE TODAY, YOU WILL...

- Gain an understanding that people with disabilities are sexual beings and think about the different types of sexuality that encompasses
- Gain knowledge about WHY it is so important to acknowledge sexuality in human beings
- Understand the way disability can affect sexuality and vice versa
- Think about ways your Independent Living Center or your work can incorporate sexuality/relationship education for your consumers
- Gain tools and resources to bring sexuality and relationship education to your center and your work



WHAT IS SEXUALITY

■ I am going to give you a **REVOLUTIONARY** idea



Sex is not bad!

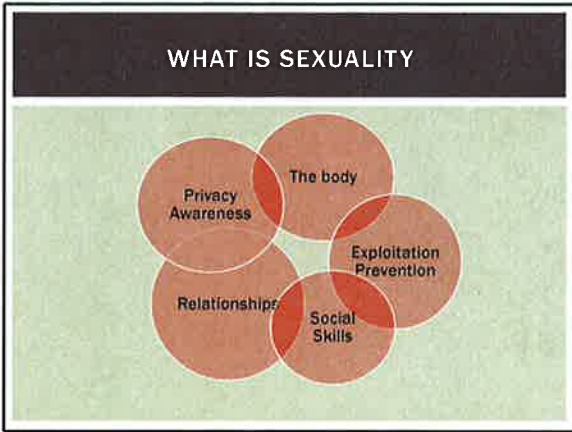


**WHAT SEXUALITY IS...
(AND WHAT SEXUALITY IS NOT)**

- Sexuality is not just about "doing" something that is sexual in nature
- Sexuality is not just about private parts
- Sexuality and sexual feelings is not immoral or bad

- Sexuality IS broad and complex
- Sexuality is part of who we are as men and women and individuals
- Sexuality is biological, encompassing our entire body and develops throughout the entire lifespan

- Sexuality, like disability, is **NATURAL!**

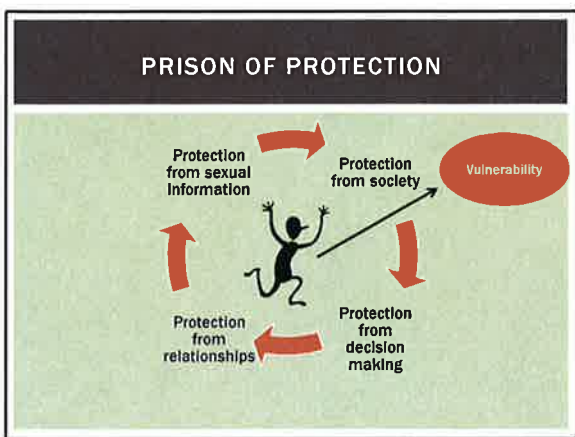


- ### DISCUSSION TIME
- The body and privacy
 - Exploitation prevention
 - Relationships and social skills

- ### THE BODY & PRIVACY
- Care for the body
 - Body changes
 - Body image
 - Societal rules for bodies
 - Personal care and the body
 - Access to privacy
 - Names and anatomy for private body parts
 - Functions of body parts, including private body parts
 - Body changes (either in puberty or disability related)
-
- The photograph shows a woman sitting in a wheelchair, wearing a dark top and shorts. A dog is sitting next to her. The text 'This is what disability looks like' is at the top, and 'Fucking Awesome' is at the bottom.

EXPLOITATION PREVENTION

- Boundaries in relationships
- Relationships and Body rights
- Personal Care and Body rights
- Children with disabilities are three times more likely to be victims of sexual abuse (children with developmental and mental health disabilities even higher)
- Adults with disabilities are also more likely to be victims of sexual abuse
- People with disabilities are systematically denied access to basic information about sexual health and relationships
- Dependency on others for long term care, social isolation and attitudes can make people more vulnerable to abuse





RELATIONSHIPS AND SOCIAL SKILLS

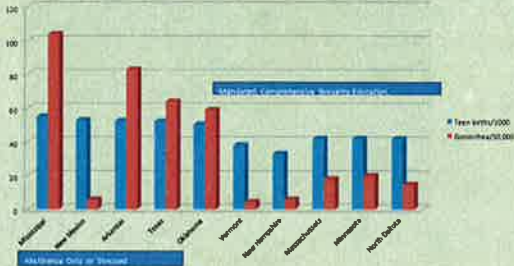
- Types of relationships and boundaries in those relationships
- Learning assertiveness
- Identifying and expressing emotions
- Dating and attraction to others
- Self-esteem



SEXUALITY EDUCATION: WHAT WE KNOW

- Parents are the best sexuality educators for their children (We, as ILCs, can encourage parents to talk about this)
- Information about sex and sexuality is EVERYWHERE. If people are not receiving a sexuality education either through their families, faith-based communities, ILCs or school, they are receiving it from their peers and the media.
- Talking about sex and sexuality does not increase the likelihood that it will occur. ACTUALLY, young people who receive comprehensive sexuality education are more likely to abstain or delay sexual experiences

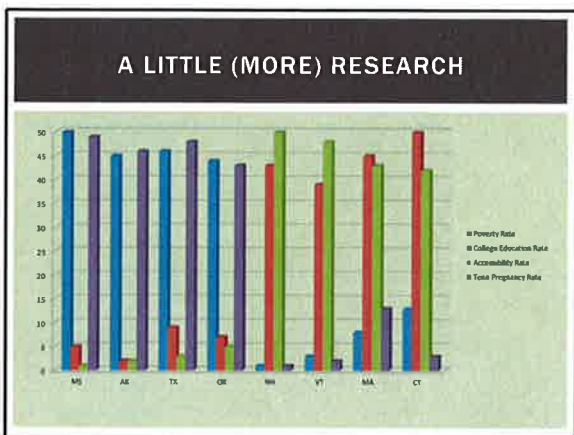
A LITTLE RESEARCH



Country	Abstinence Only or Partial (%)	Comprehensive Sexuality Education (%)
Argentina	~55	~105
Australia	~55	~10
Canada	~55	~85
France	~55	~65
Germany	~55	~65
Ireland	~40	~10
New Zealand	~35	~10
Netherlands	~45	~25
Singapore	~45	~25
South Africa	~45	~25

SEX EDUCATION AND IDEA

- Policy regarding sexuality education varies throughout the states but includes such things as:
 - Puberty
 - Reproduction
 - Pregnancy Prevention
 - STD prevention
 - HIV/AIDS awareness
 - Healthy Relationships
- Policy regarding Individuals with Disabilities and education does not include access to sexuality education
 - Less than half of students with emotional or cognitive disabilities are included in regular education 80% of the time. Meaning, if sex ed IS taking place, they may not even be in the room.



FEARS ABOUT TEACHING SEXUALITY

General fears

- If we talk about it, they'll do it
- Showing pictures of anatomy
- Morality-based fears
- Not knowing what to say

Fears about teaching people with disabilities

- Accessibility
 - How do we make it accessible?
- Guardianship
 - Do guardians have a say in sexual decisions?
- Consent
 - How to know if someone can give consent

WE NEED ACCESS

- Youth in general participate in lower risk behaviors when given access to information about sexuality

Let's Break The Cycle!!!

The diagram illustrates a cycle of three interconnected factors: 'Poverty', 'Lack of Education', and 'High Risk Behavior'. Arrows connect them in a clockwise direction, forming a continuous loop. An arrow points from this cycle to a red box labeled 'Unplanned/Unintended Consequences'.


WE NEED ACCESS

- Youth with disabilities have the right to be in on the conversations about sexuality that do take place in schools.
- People with disabilities (like ALL people) are sexual beings and if someone doesn't provide this information it will be sought elsewhere

GUARDIANSHIP

- Just having a guardian does not mean that a person cannot consent to sexual activity
- If a person is deemed incapable of consent to sexual contact, or are a high risk of abuse, relationships and what happens within will be decided on a case by case basis.
- There is no place in a court guardianship order that deals with this
- A person who has capacity to consent has a constitutionally protected right to consent to engage in knowing and voluntary sexual behavior.
- However, sexual contact with a person who lacks capacity to consent is abuse.

IS THE SCHOOL HOUSE THE PROPER PLACE TO TEACH RAW SEX?



50

OR IS THE INDEPENDENT LIVING CENTER THE PROPER PLACE ...

If so, how and why should we do it? (and by "do it", of course I mean "teach")

INDEPENDENCEFIRST AND SEX ED

- High School Curriculum
 - Boundaries and Personal Space
- GirlsFirst
- Boyz2Men
- Safe Relationships Safe Places
- Parents Matter
- Making Proud Choices






OTHER TOPICS

- Puberty
- Hygiene
- Assertiveness
- Conflict Resolution
- Anger management
- Boundaries and Personal Space
- Dating




WHAT TO USE?

- Making Proud Choices and Parents Matter
- Sexuality Education for adults with developmental disabilities
- S.A.F.E. (Safety awareness for empowerment)
- Teaching children with down syndrome about their bodies, boundaries and sexuality
- Getting to the HEART of Intimacy
- The Ultimate Guide to Sex and disability
- Making Sense of Sex
- The Rules of Sex
- Circles
- FLASH

MODIFICATIONS / ADAPTATIONS

- Captioning in videos
- Large print
- Suction cups on bottoms of models if using
- Using a lot of pictures and hands-on activities
- Repeat, repeat, repeat
- Biologically and age appropriate information in a cognitively appropriate way
- Assistive technology for learning (condom demonstration models; latex and scent free equipment)



GET CREATIVE

- Aprons
- Video
- Role play
- Putting Info like the menstrual cycle, steps for using a condom etc.. On large paper and have students line up for more visual understanding
- Let students use slang words so that everyone is on the same page in discussion
- Use pictures
 - When showing public v private
 - Types of relationships
 - Social skills cues




WHAT IT MEANS TO BE SEX POSITIVE

- Consensual
- Un-Exploitive
- Honest
- Mutually pleasurable
- Protected



- What can sex-positivity mean for people with disabilities?

WHAT DOES SEX POSITIVITY MEAN FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES?



- Physical Disabilities
- Cognitive Disabilities
- Mental Health
- Cross-disability

SEXUALITY AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ACROSS THE WORLD

- Canada
 - Come as you are
 - Accessible sex toy workshop
 - Pleasure ABLE Manual
- Germany & Switzerland
 - qualified sexual accompaniment and assistance
- United Kingdom
 - Allow people to use funding to hire a personal assistant who's sole responsibility is helping with sexual needs.



ACCESSIBLE

- **Echo Handle**
 - Ergonomic grip handle
 - Extra long for limited dexterity or difficulty with reach
- **G-Force**
 - Made from harder silicone for more stability
 - Ergonomic grip handle
 - Can be used alone or with partner
- **Pelt Paddle**
 - Oval shape, soft edges make it easier for people with visual impairments to use
- **Other adaptations**
 - Cuffs for wrist attachment
 - Harness for dildos and vibrators
 - "Hands Free" kit
 - Caregiver set up
 - Love bumpers and other pads



LOVE LOUNGE



TILT



MORE LOVE LOUNGE

OTHER RESOURCES

- **General Sex Ed Resources**
 - Flash:
<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/personal/famplan/educators/FLASH.aspx>
 - Planned Parenthood
- **How to kiss**
 - www.links2love.com
- **How to use a condom**
 - <http://teachingsexualhealth.ca/teacher/resources/demonstrationvideoos.html>
- **Self Stimulation Resources**
 - www.jackinworld.com and www.clitical.com

FINAL THOUGHTS

- People with disabilities are sexual
- Sexuality is a natural part of being human
- Sexuality is all encompassing
 - The body
 - Privacy awareness
 - Social Skills
 - Relationships
 - Exploitation prevention
- Teaching sexual health can help individuals with independent living in general
- Even if you don't teach classes, being approachable and askable with this topic is a great step

QUESTIONS/THOUGHTS?



Wait! I have a question!!!!

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