Introduction to Human Sexuality and Healthy Relationships

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Agenda

• Introductions
• Warm-Up Scenarios
• Introduction to Human Sexuality
• Healthy Relationships
What is Your Comfort Level?

On a scale of 1 – 10, what is your comfort level when talking about sex, sexuality, sexual behaviors, etc.? 

[Emojis representing comfort levels from 0 to 10]
A person with a disability who you support told you she has a sexually transmitted infection (STI). She asked you not to tell anyone. A few days later, you overhear her talking about having unprotected sex with another person. What is your role? What do you do?
Relationship Scenario

There is a male police officer that patrols the neighborhood of a woman you support. The officer is very nice and is very helpful to people in the community. The female you support has expressed interest in the police officer. What is your role? What do you tell her?
Relationship Scenario

There is a man with a disability who you support. He has expressed his desire to be with other men – a decision that you support. One day as you are driving, you see him in a known area of male prostitution. What is your role? What do you do?
LET'S TALK...
What is Sexuality?

• What did your parents tell you about sexuality?
• What do your friends/coworkers say about sexuality?
• What does the media say/portray about sexuality?
  • Where do many people get information about sex?
• What do those in the disability community say about sexuality?
  • In your opinion, are these messages true?
• What is the most important sexuality message you can give to the people you support?
Sexuality is...

- Who we are as men and women
- Our perception of ourselves
- How we relate to others
- Expressing sexual interest
- Personal attitudes and feelings
- Unique to each person
- Pleasurable and responsible behaviors
- Includes a person’s morals and values
Sexuality...

- is about how a person feels about himself or herself
- is about what he or she does in private
- is about how he or she feels about others
- is about what he or she does with others

Scenario: Mike enjoys his private time. He likes hanging with his female friends, but has not expressed interest in finding a girlfriend. Yesterday evening, you knocked on Mike’s door to check on him. He was reading an adult magazine with naked women in it. What do you do?
Sexuality Can Be...

• Safe
• Responsible
• Risky
• Within the law
• Against the law

What are examples of the above?

Your Role:
How do you ensure that the people you support are making safe decisions?

What if someone makes “risky” decisions?
Sexual Behaviors

**Subtle**
- The way you walk
- The way you talk
- The way you dress
- The way you carry yourself

**Not So Subtle**
- Touching
- Caressing
- Kissing
- Hugging
- Sexual intercourse

What do these behaviors portray about a person and his/her sexuality?

How can you help the people you support to exhibit positive and safe sexual behaviors?

Mary Ann Carmody, RN, BSN • AASECT-Certified Sex Educator
Sexuality Myths...

• People with disabilities:
  • Are not sexual beings
  • Are innocent and childlike
  • Need protection from sexuality
  • Are not responsible
  • Can not solve problems
  • Are unable to make healthy decisions about sexuality
  • Always make mistakes when it relates to their sexual health
  • Are not good parents
  • Should not be sexually active

Your Role:
How do these myths make you feel?
How will you ensure that these myths are dispelled?
Sexuality Facts...

- People with disabilities:
  - Have sexual feelings and needs
  - Have questions and are curious
  - Have a right to have a relationship with whom they choose
  - Can view sexuality as a positive and pleasurable part of life
  - Have the right to have children

**Your Role:**

How will you promote sexuality in a proper and healthy manner to the people you support?
Access to Sexuality Education

- People with disabilities want access to sexuality education so:
  - They can learn about healthy relationships
  - They can make good decisions
  - They can choose the right person
  - They can make a relationship last
  - They can be safe
  - They can get accurate health information
  - They can have access to materials and resources
  - They can know their rights
  - They know how to protect themselves

**Your Role:**
How will you ensure that the people you support have access to sexuality information/resources?
Function and Anatomy

THE FEMALE ANATOMY
Slang Words for Vagina

• It is important to know and understand proper terminology for private areas of the body
• If someone’s private area is hurting or she was abused, it is important that the person can communicate with someone and get the help that is needed
• What are some slang words for vagina?
• How will you ensure that the women you support know and understand proper anatomy terminology? Strategies?
• How will you correct them if improper terminology is used?
Female Anatomy

- Uterus
- Egg (Ovum)
- Fallopian Tube
- Ovary
- Cervix
- Vagina
Function and Anatomy

THE MALE ANATOMY
Slang Words for Penis

• It is important to know and understand proper terminology for private areas of the body
• If someone’s private area is hurting or if he was abused, it is important that he can communicate with someone and get the help that is needed
• What are some slang words for penis?
• How will you ensure that the men you support know and understand proper anatomy terminology? Strategies? How will you correct them if improper terminology is used?
Male Anatomy

- Vas Deferens
- Bladder
- Seminal Vesicle
- Prostate Gland
- Foreskin
- Penes
- Urethra
- Scrotum
- Testicle
PERSONAL HYGIENE
Importance of Personal Hygiene

- What is personal hygiene?
- Why is personal hygiene important?
- What is your role in ensuring that personal hygiene is taken seriously?
- How can you help DSPs who assist people with disabilities in their personal hygiene needs?
Personal Hygiene Includes

- Body parts
  - Private parts
  - Underarms
- Clean clothes
- Hair
  - Wash
  - Comb/Brush
- Face
  - Wash
  - Shave
- Hands
  - Wash hands
  - Clean fingernails
- Teeth
  - Brush
  - Floss
  - Mouth rinse
- Feet
  - Wash feet
  - Clean socks
People with IDD & Personal Hygiene

• It is important to:
  • Support the needs of the people you support
  • Be patient
  • Help the person to determine the appropriate time for personal hygiene activities
  • Be specific about the benefits of good personal hygiene
  • Offer praise when necessary
People with IDD & Personal Hygiene

• Work with the person to establish a routine
  • Bathing
  • Brushing/flossing teeth
  • Combing hair, etc.
• Use pictures of photos of the person performing the hygiene task for emphasis
• Develop a daily personal hygiene check-list
• Ask the person how he/she feels about his/her self image

• Scenario: Joe met a young lady at his day program. He wants to take her out on a date to the movies. Joe has a habit of not bathing daily and sometimes has an odor. What can you do to help Joe prepare for his date?
Example of a Personal Hygiene Checklist

- Include:
  - Days of the week
  - Daily activities to complete
  - Pictures of activities
  - A place for the person to “check” for completion
- Reward people for a job well done!
  - Favorite activity
  - Words of praise
  - Favorite snack
TYPES OF RELATIONSHIPS
Types of Relationships

What are the different types of relationships?

- Strangers
- Friends
- Family
- Helping Professionals
- Professional Relationships (people you work with)
- Intimate Relationships

What do we do in these relationships?

- Strangers
  - Nothing
  - Speak (in passing)
- Friends
  - Hang out
  - Talk on the phone
- Family
  - Have family dinner
  - Go on vacation
- Helping Professionals
  - Ask for help
- Professional Relationships
  - Help with paperwork
  - Work on projects
- Intimate Relationships
  - Kiss
  - Sexual activities
Types of Relationships

• The following pictures can be used to help the people you support to make safe and healthy relationship decisions.

• On the following slides, let’s determine the type of relationship and discuss why it is that type of relationship. Some of the relationships depicted can fall into more than one relationship category.
Types of Relationships

- Intimate Relationship
- Family
- Friends
- Helping Professional
- Stranger
Types of Relationships

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- Family
- Friends
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Types of Relationships

- Intimate Relationship
- Family
- Friends
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- Stranger
Scenario #1

• Two people are walking towards each other. They make eye contact. They continue walking.

• What kind or relationship is this?
• Why?
Scenario #2

• Two people walk towards each other. They make eye contact and smile.
• Person 1: Hi there, where are you off to?
• Person 2: Just to the post office really quick. What about you?
• Person 1: I’m headed back to the office from lunch.
• Person 2: Cool, I will see you when I get back.
• Person 1 and Person 2: Bye.

• What kind or relationship is this?
• Why?
Scenario #3

• Two people walk towards each other. They make eye contact, smile, hug and kiss on the lips.
• Person 1: Where have you been? I’ve been trying to get in touch with you.
• Person 2: I’ve been busy with work and school.
• Person 1: Oh wow. I’ve really missed you. Maybe I can come by when you have some free time.
• Person 2: That would be great; let’s discuss a time. You owe me a date anyway.

• What kind or relationship is this?
• Why?
RELATIONSHIP CIRCLES
Relationship Circles

• A graphic way of showing people the different levels of familiarity to have with people that are known and unknown.

• Start by drawing a circle on a large piece of blank paper. Write the person’s name in the circle. Another option is to paste a picture of the person and put it in the circle. Tell the person that this is his/her personal space, his/her body and that only certain people can get real close to him/her. Draw lines out of the circle. Have the person tell you who can touch him/her; write that name on one of the lines. Ask the person why it is ok for this person to touch him/her.

• Continue with all of the lines

• Let’s try one
Family

Examples of Touch:
Intimate Relationship

Examples of Touch:
Examples of Touch:

Friends
Examples of Touch:

Helping Professionals
Strangers

Examples of Touch:
HEALTHY AND UNHEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS
Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships

Healthy
- Respect
- Trust
- Honesty
- Communication

Unhealthy
- Disrespect
- Distrust
- Dishonesty
- Lack of Communication
- Abuse

What other qualities are involved in healthy and unhealthy relationships?

If someone you support is being abused or is in an unhealthy relationship, what is your role?
Relationships

Healthy Relationships
- You feel good about yourself when you’re around your partner
- You do not control each other
- You communicate, share and trust each other
- You feel safe
- You like spending time together and also enjoy doing things apart
- You can be yourself
- You respect each other and each other’s opinions

Unhealthy Relationships
- You feel sad, angry or worried
- You feel controlled
- There is no communication
- You feel pressured to spend time together and feel guilty when apart
- You are turning into someone you are not
- There is no respect
- You are afraid
Healthy or Unhealthy?

• Calling someone a “r#tard” or “homo”
• Asking, “How are you?” and listening to the answer
• Telling a woman she is not smart
• Sending a card when someone is ill
• Asking to hold a date’s hand
• Laughing when someone makes a mistake
• Talking behind a friend’s back
• Apologizing for making a mistake
• Express jealousy over your mate’s friends and family
• Encourage your mate to explore his own interests

• Insist on getting your way
• Listen and compromise
• Always blame the other person
• Demand that someone do something you want to do
• Offer to do what your GF/BF wants b/c you chose last time
• Call a friend at work to check on him
• Feel comfortable with your mate spending time with friends
• Insist on going everywhere with your mate
FRIENDSHIP
Friendship

- What is a friend?
- Why are friendships important?
- Where can you meet potential friends?
- How do you let someone know you want to be friends?
- How did you meet your best friend?

How can you help the people you support to form lasting friendships/relationships?
FROM FRIENDS TO MORE THAN FRIENDS
Getting to Know You...

• How do you let someone know you are interested?
  • Flirt
    • How do you flirt?
    • What do you say?
    • What shouldn’t you say?
    • How do you know your flirting is working or not working?
  • Talk on the phone
    • What do you talk about?
  • Ask someone to join in on a group activity with you
    • What kind of activities?
  • Ask the person out on a date
    • What are some first dates ideas?
    • Who pays (tricky question 😊)?
What is Appropriate?

• Is it ok to date an underage person?
• Is it ok for a staff member to date a person with a disability that he/she works supports?
• Is it ok for a person with a disability to inappropriately touch a staff member?
Jack and Jill are friends. Jack really likes Jill and wants to take things further, but Jill is very “flirty”. She will often talk to other men and flirt with them. This upsets Jack, especially because he really likes Jill. What should Jack do? Is Jill behaving appropriately? What do you tell Jack? Jill?
Feeling Like You’re Interested

• How do you let someone know you are interested?
• How do you know if a person is interested in you?
• What about rejection?
  • How does it feel?
  • How can it be dealt with it?
• What if someone you support is rejected – what will you do to help him/her?
Mike and Regina have been talking on the phone for a week. They’ve seen each other once for coffee. Mike wants to see Regina more often, but Regina does not agree. Regina feels like Mike is moving too fast; she wants to take it slow and get to know Mike. What can Mike and Regina do to solve this problem? What do you tell Mike? Regina?
Together Forever...

So, you have found your soul mate – your true love – the cream in your coffee – the cheese in your macaroni. Life is good. Everything has been going great over the past few months. You are living your happily ever after UNTIL...

• What are some common arguments or disagreements?
• How do you know when to stay together or break up?
• Is abuse/violence in a relationship ok?
• What are examples of abuse/violence?
Pam and Mike have been married for 12 years. Over the years, Pam has been drinking heavily. When she drinks, she gets violent. Very often, Pam when Pam gets drunk she will argue with Mike and hit him. Mike does not want to tell anyone that his wife hits him because he feels like his manhood is at stake. Is Pam abusing Mike? What should they do? What do you tell Mike? Pam?
Fighting Fair

Do’s
• Calm down before talking with your mate
• Pay attention to what is being said
• Use “I” statements
• Keep a calm voice
• Listen
• Talk about what is bothering you
• Focus on fixing the problem

Don’ts
• Do not talk when you are angry
• Do not blame your partner
• Do not bring up old fights
• Do not hit anyone or anything
• Do not use abusive language
Breaking Up and Moving On

• When should you break up with your partner?
• How can you end the relationship on a positive note?

• Let’s take a look at the following scenarios and decide if the couples should break-up or not.
Ann and Declan have been in a romantic relationship for one year. They both enjoy eating out at least once a week. Recently, Declan lost his job and is unable to pay for their weekly outing. Ann is upset because she wants to go out, but can not because of the money situation. What can Ann and Declan do to solve this problem? What do you tell Ann? Declan?
Natalie and David have been dating for two weeks. One night when they were together, David asked Natalie if she wanted to have sex. Natalie said no. David got very upset with her and called her mean names. Is this a good relationship? What should Natalie do? David?
Joe and Sandy have been married for eight years. Lately, when Sandy gets a phone call, she excuses herself and goes to another room to talk. When Joe is around, she will hold her phone really close to her and type text messages to someone. She often hides her phone in her purse or keeps it in her pocket. When Joe comes around, she quickly closes her laptop. What do you think is going on? What should Joe do?
What is Your Comfort Level?

On a scale of 1 – 10, what is your comfort level when talking about sex, sexuality, sexual behaviors, etc.?
Resources

• Promotes positive self image for people with disabilities
  • www.beautyability.com
• Sex Toys for People with Disabilities
  • http://www.comeasyouare.com/
  • http://www.comeasyouare.com/sex-information/sex-and-disability/
• Contact Information

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