Sexuality Education for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities:

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PLISSIT Model - Jack Annon

The PLISSIT Model of Sex Therapy
(developed by Jack Annon)

P = Permission
LI = Limited Information
SS = Specific Suggestions
IT = Intensive Therapy
Permission

- To discuss sexual matters, ask questions
- To have sexual feelings (or not have them)
- To have sexual concerns addressed now or in the future
- To be sexual (or not be) in ways that are not harmful to self and others

Are you approachable?

...withholding Permission for inappropriate behaviors

- Behavior that is harmful in anyway to person or partner
- Nonconsensual
- Is socially unacceptable or illegal
  - Exhibitionism - sexual abuse
  - Harassment - indecent exposure
  - Voyeurism - consent laws
Limited Information - How to’s

- requires concrete instruction (vs. telling)
- visual strategies are critical
- Repetition & reinforcement over time
- Begin with language that makes sense for them.
- Use contrived teachable moments
- Chronological vs. developmental
- Begin with most immediate need

Collaboration is critical

Key supports

repetition
consistency
reinforcement

Parent
Who does what? Family Roles

- Acknowledge sexuality as aspect of being human
- Teach basic sexuality concepts (information sharer)
- Share values to those supporting their child (boundaries)
- Modeler
- Share with supports ways your child learns best
- Advocate for sex ed.
- Ask for help

Who does what? Professional Roles

- acknowledge sexuality as aspect of being human
  - Seed planters/normalizers
  - Model acceptance of child or adult as a sexual person
- Information Sharer
  - Teach & reinforce foundational concepts in settings outside the home
- Community/societal values & norms (vs. personal)
- Safety
- Assistance w/accessing community resources
Dual aspects of teaching sex. ed

<table>
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<tr>
<th>FACTS/EXPLANATION</th>
<th>BOUNDARIES/ SOCIAL CONTEXT</th>
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| Penis, vulva, butt, breasts are private body parts | - these body parts should always be covered in public places, public rooms  
- if you need to look at or touch these body parts you need to be in private  
- touching rules for others |
| A date is a planned get-together between two people who might like to be boyfriend/girlfriend (or are already boyfriend/girlfriend). | - Who is an appropriate dating partner?  
- When is it okay to date? |
| Once a month blood from inside your body will come out from an opening between your legs. This is called having a period. | - periods are private  
- if you need help you can talk to ________ at school and ________ at home |

How do you decide boundaries?

- Chronological age
- Same-aged peers
- Laws
  - Sexual harassment- employment story
  - Nonconsensual touching
- Universal values in sexuality education
  - All humans have dignity and worth
  - We all have a right to feel safe
  - We all deserve respect
Use Multi-Sensory Approaches

- More than talking (telling). . .
  - Seeing
    - visual strategies - demonstration
    - drawings - slides
    - photos - diagrams
  - touching
    - models - dolls
  - doing
    - role play
    - dramatic play
    - real life experiences

Language matters

- Use words they know or understand
- Fewer of them
- Avoid need for abstraction
Chronological vs. Developmental

- Developmental age helps determine “how” to teach
  - Clues for adaptations/modifications of info
  - Use what you know:
    - Expressive & receptive language levels
    - Reading level
    - Communication methods (how do you check learning)
    - Receptive/expressive language ability
    - Life experiences

- Chronological age determines “what” to teach
  - What is appropriate for chronological age
  - Societal norms, rules and expectations
  - “Teach to conservative norm” - Hingsburger

Repetition & Reinforcement

- Use everyday moments to review and reinforce
- Real or contrived teachable moments
- think of as “process” vs. “session”
- use life transitions to introduce or review info
- look for natural infusion sites in existing activities and services
Scarborough Approach for teaching students w/ cognitive disabilities

Prioritize teaching that supports:

- Social appropriateness
- Safety
- Independence

You can always add on information over time..
Example: menstruation

- Basics - social appropriateness/ independence
  - normalizing menstruation & hygiene
  - Understand privacy
  - How to use a pad
- Add
  - simple explanation of menstruation (what happens)
  - common symptoms and how to manage them
- Advanced
  - role menstruation plays in reproduction
  - pregnancy prevention

Sexuality Education is...

- Individualized and adapted based on:
  - age (expectations for that age)
  - communication abilities
  - care needs
  - developmental level (modifications)
  - environment (home vs. community)
Limited Information: Content

Teaching About the Body

- body rights & personal space
- correct terms for genitals
- societal rules for body parts
  - genitals are private body parts
  - need to be covered in public
  - masturbation (touching private body parts) is private
  - modesty
- self care/caring for the body
- functions of private body parts
Teaching About Privacy

- What is private?
- private body parts (modesty)
- private places
  - at home (places I can be alone and not seen)
  - in the community (rules)
  - ensure opportunities for privacy exist
- private talk/topics

Social Skills

- Key Concepts
  - identifying and expressing emotions
    - identifying feelings in self
    - identifying feelings in others
    - expressing negative emotions in healthy ways
  - relationship skills
    - social etiquette & manners
    - conversational skills
    - friendship & dating skills
Teaching Social Skills

- Task analysis
- Teaching Process (Bandura)
  - demonstration (modeling)
  - rehearse (role play)
  - corrective & positive feedback
- Social Stories (Carol Gray)
- Video self modeling
- Practice, Practice, Practice (transference)
  - safe settings (role play)
  - real life settings

Teaching About Relationships

- types of relationships
- Touch/affection/boundaries in relationships
  - relationship context
  - developmental context
  - body
- sexual attraction & crushes
- dating
- evaluating relationships- healthy or unhealthy?
- responsibilities of sexual expression in romantic relationships
Abuse Prevention – Key Concepts

- What is abuse?
- What does it look like? (behaviors that are against the law)
- Who are likely offenders?
- How to react if abuse is attempted or completed
- What to do when abuse occurs
- How to overcome reporting disincentives (i.e. bribes, threats)