
ID/DD & Sexuality/Puberty

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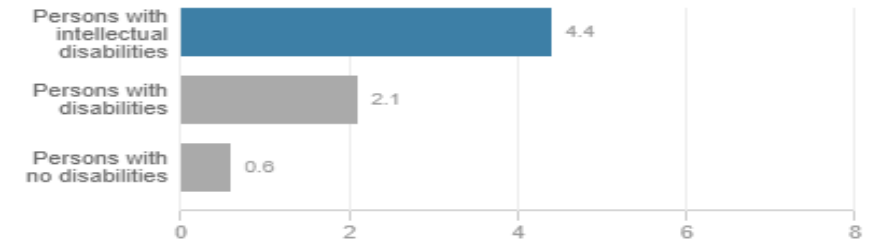
Some Quick Facts

- Data suggest that any individual with ID is **seven times more likely** to experience sexual assault than someone with out ID (Byrne, 2017; Shapiro, 2018)
 - 12 times more likely if that individual identifies as female
- Prevalence increases from mild to severe levels of intellectual disability and decreases in profound levels.
- Most prevalent abuser profiles are often a peers, caregivers, and/or family members

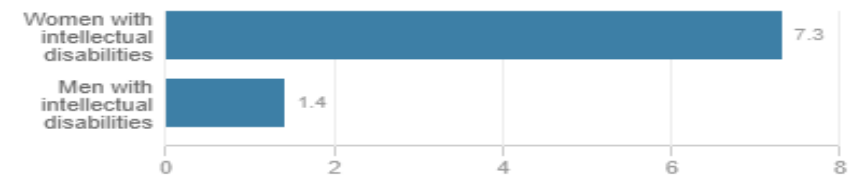
Sexual Assault Rates Among People With Intellectual Disabilities, 2011-2015

The rate of rape and sexual assault against people with intellectual disabilities is more than seven times the rate against people without disabilities. Among women with intellectual disabilities, it is about 12 times the rate.

RATE PER 1,000 PEOPLE



RATE PER 1,000 PEOPLE WITH AN INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY, BY GENDER



Notes

Based on the noninstitutionalized U.S. residential population age 12 or older

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Special Tabulation



ID/DD and Sexuality/Puberty

Overview

- What is sexuality?
 - set of behaviors characterized by physical, emotional, and social interactions (Breuss and Greenberg, 1984)
 - More than just sexual acts/behaviors – its understanding who you are as a person and the way we feel about our body
- How does it develop
 - Puberty
 - Genetics and neuro-endocrinal factors
 - Psychological/Social
 - Individual temperaments and attraction
 - Peers and Parents
 - Cultural/Religious/Societal/Political influences

ID/DD and Sexuality

Overview

- Education
 - Formally happens in adolescence ... then formally stops
 - Individual and environmental experiences continue, often allowing individuals to form their own unique understanding(s)
 - **Lack of education for individuals with ID/DD**

WHY?!?

ID/DD and Puberty

Sex Ed for ID

- Historical ableist and infantilized view of individuals with ID
 - Embarrassed
 - Neglected
 - Institutionalized
 - Penalized
 - Sterilized
- Educations Gaps
 - Lack of empirically valid methods for teaching this topic
 - Lack of training for caregivers/staff
 - General embarrassment about the topic

ID/DD and Sexuality

Rights vs Risk

- Challenging dynamic that often impedes education and supports
 - Lack of decision-making capacity
 - Lack of experience and skills
 - often lead to restrictions that impede the ability to gain these experiences and skills
 - Concerns about sexual exploitation and other negative consequences (e.g. jail, loss of placement, etc)
- How do we balance?



ID/DD and Sexuality

Meeting the need

- There is no specific model or approach that is empirically validated and recommended to support individuals with ID in their sexuality journey
- Complicated balance of:
 - Protection
 - Empowerment
 - ***Comprehensive, individualized education based on patient's needs and level of functioning***
- Very important to promote positive attitudes about sexual expression for the patient
 - Caregivers and staff are essential to this by having an accepting and positive attitude about these topics when they come up
 - The more comfortable and safe a patient feels with you, the more apt they are to discuss and share

ID/DD and Sexuality/Puberty

So what do I do?

- Know your professional and personal scope
- Start with the basics!
 - Can the individual:
 - Name and identify basic body parts by their correct name
 - What about slang terms?
 - Demonstrate a basic understanding of that body part's function?
 - Complete basic personal hygiene routines related to sexual/reproductive health
 - More than cleaning up. Should also include self-examination pending the individuals age and level of functioning
 - These topics are often overlooked



ID/DD and Sexuality

Okay, so now what...

- Private vs Public
 - What does this mean, where does it apply, what does it apply too?
 - Parts of one's body
 - Location, location, location
 - Specific behaviors/actions (not always intimate ones!)
- Arousal and masturbation
 - Sexual feelings, thoughts, touching
 - The sequence of events
 - Masturbation
 - To teach or not to teach...
 - Understand cultural/religious dynamics
 - Pornography
 - Appropriate and safe searches
 - Avoiding exploitation



ID/DD and Sexuality/Puberty

The finer, more complex details

- Know your professional and personal scope
- Orientation and identity
 - Different types of sexual orientations
 - Difference between sex and gender
- Relationships
 - What are healthy sexual relationships and what can they look like?
 - More than just monogamous
 - Communication and boundaries

ID/DD and Sexuality/Puberty

- Exploitation and Abuse
 - Topics that should be intertwined throughout the education process
 - Understanding the role of emotions with these topics and the population we are working with
- Consent
 - Tricky topic
 - Strong understanding and focus on this
 - Legal definition(s)
 - Often complicated but tend to focus on age, capacity, freely given, clearly communicated