

Addressing Sexual and Non-Sexual Mistakes Before They Lead to Serious Consequences



State of the Art Conference

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Introductions

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Who is in the room?
What brought you here?

Statistics

- Several relevant studies indicate that both children and adults with I/DD are four times more likely to be sexually abused as children and adults without identified disabilities.

(Health Promotion for Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, (Violence, pp. 210-215). (AAIDD, 2005).)

- 68% to 83% of women with developmental disabilities will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime.

(Murphy N.A., Elias E.R., Sexuality of children and adolescents with developmental disabilities. Pediatrics. July 2006.)

- Less than half will seek assistance from legal or treatment services

(Murphy N.A., Elias E.R., Sexuality of children and adolescents with developmental disabilities. Pediatrics. July 2006.)

Statistics (continued)

- Abuse tends to happen more frequently, last longer, and involve a larger number of perpetrators.

(Wright State University. "Abuse Within the Disability Community". L. Colvin, J. Williams, PsyD, J. Williams. 2015)

- 97-99% of abusers are known and trusted by the victim.

(Balderian, N (1991). "Sexual abuse of people with developmental disabilities". *Sexuality and Disability*. 9 (4): 323–335. doi (4): 323–335. doi:10.1007/BF01102020

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexual_abuse_and_intellectual_disability)

Culture of Compliance

- Children and adults with disabilities are denied the right to say no to a variety of everyday choices.
- They are taught to acquiesce and are rewarded for it.
 - “Be a good girl.” or “Be a good boy.”
 - You must do as you are told. Obey your teachers, caregivers, staff, camp counselors, coaches, religious leaders, ...all adults, and NEVER, EVER TELL THEM “NO”.

Opportunities to Choose

- It is not always easy to make a choice.
- For many individuals with intellectual impairments, the right to decide has been taken away.

Yet, the freedom to make decisions--even decisions that have adverse consequences--is fundamental to personal autonomy and self-determination.

Experience. Self-exploration. Expression.

Everyone makes mistakes.

“What do you first do when you learn to swim? You make mistakes, do you not? And what happens? You make other mistakes, and when you have made all the mistakes you possibly can without drowning – and some of them many times over – what do you find? That you can swim? Well – life is just the same as learning to swim! Do not be afraid of making mistakes, for there is no other way of learning how to live!” ~

Alfred Adler

Lack of Knowledge about their own body

- Many school systems do not have a formal curriculum or students with disabilities are excluded.
- Limited - *and often incorrect* - information about their bodies, including names of body parts, or how a woman gets pregnant.
 - “It’s in the water.”

Lack of Understanding of what is private and what is public

- When someone is dependent on others for assistance with ADL's it is difficult for them to understand the concept of privacy.

Is the individual considered vulnerable to exploitation and/or sexual abuse? YES NO
(If yes, please describe why)
[REDACTED] doesn't understand the difference between
medical treatment and sexual touching

- Multiple caregivers are usually involved. The person must adjust to whoever arrives at the door.

People with I/DD can be easily influenced and often have not been taught assertiveness skills

- Some cannot speak.
- Others are difficult to understand.
- Many need to learn to speak up for themselves and that it is OK to say “NO.”



Individuals with I/DD are

- Credible and gullible
 - Something that we might automatically assume as not true, individuals with I/DD will.
 - Difficulty comprehending a statement or claim (credibility) of situations as well as the behavior of being tricked or manipulated (gullibility)

Sexual messages are everywhere!

- Many have confused expectations about what is adult sexual behavior, yet want to be seen as mature and capable.
- The internet is often where children and teens go for information on sex.



There is difficulty applying the appropriate degrees of trust to relationships.

- If everyone they meet is a “friend”, they are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.
- There is confusion about the difference between acquaintances, friends, and helpers.
- Poor judgment is often ever-present.



Students' Rights

“People with developmental disabilities have the right to information about their body and safe sexual expression according to their individual capacity to learn.”

— Lucille M. Duguay, Established the Oak Hill Center for Relationship & Sexuality Education

Limited insight into their own behavior and the effect on others

- They may try to be what they see on TV and in movies. Scripting from movies and TV shows provides dialog that is used in real life.
- Some think they need to do sexual touching to get or keep a girlfriend or boyfriend.

Students' Rights

- The right to be treated with respect.
- The right to have healthy relationships.



Knowledge is power.

- Knowledge must not be assumed.
- Students must be taught what they do not know.
- Students have a right to this information.

Students need to know

- The difference between public and private.
- His or Her whole body is private.
- Each person has the absolute right to say who does and does not touch their body.

Students need to know

- What is RIGHT touch
- What is WRONG touch
- Encourage your child to trust their gut!

- If it feels wrong, it is wrong.
- Don't keep bad secrets.
- Always tell, even if you are told not to.



Students need to know

- (Real!) Names of body parts.
- How a baby is made.
- How to prevent pregnancy.
 - “I had a condom in my purse.”
- What STI’s are and how to stay safe.



Students need to know

- Components of a healthy relationship.
- Warning signs in a relationship.
- Friendship is a relationship too! You must be a friend to have a friend.
- “If a relationship does not make you feel good about yourself it is not healthy.”



Students need to know

- What sexual abuse is.
- Abuse happens.
- People you know and trust could hurt you!
- Abuse is often perpetrated by someone known and trusted.

Students need to know

- Sexual mistakes
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual acts that are against the law
- What Sexting is and what to do if you receive one
 - The act of sending sexually explicit messages, photographs, or videos
- Your state laws
 - child pornography, sexting, cyber bullying, etc.



It is NEVER too late to start!

Best Pedagogical Practices

- Continually assess for understanding by asking direct questions, such as “**tell me what that word means**”, or “**what is the important message for you**”, etc.
- Always assess for judgment. Use real life scenarios and act out situations asking, “**what would you do if...**”.
- Grab teachable moments. Examples, anyone?
- Use pictures if possible
- Repeat, repeat

Best Pedagogical Practices

Do not “beat around the bush.” Do not use metaphors.

Be explicit.

“Henry, do not swear!!”

Vs.

“Henry, you cannot say \$#!+.”

Explicit Curriculum

The workbook series reinforces essential concepts of healthy relationships; respect, trust, consent, commitment, right touch, and responsibility.

Men & Women: The Awesome Facts of Life

Ten Tips for Healthy Relationships

All About Attractions and Safe Dating

Take 3 Steps to Women's Health

Take 3 Steps to Men's Health

I Can Protect Myself

Say No! To Sex Abuse and Sexual Mistakes

Explicit Curriculum

SAY *NO!* TO SEX ABUSE AND SEXUAL MISTAKES

A workbook on safe relationships for adults with developmental disabilities



Say *NO!*

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By Lucille Martin Duguay, LCSW

The Center for Relationship & Sexuality Education
A program of Oak Hill

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Expected and Unexpected Behaviors

	Expected	Unexpected
Family Member		
Friend		
Acquaintance		
Helpers		
Stranger		

Trust

- Built over time
- After you know someone very well
- The right to be treated with respect
- The right to have healthy relationships

Safety Net

- People that are there for you when you need them
- People you can trust
- People that can help you solve problems

Mistakes

- Some sexual
- Some nonsexual
- All have consequences
- All can be a learning experience

University Expectations

Students with disability are required to follow the Student Code of Conduct at University.

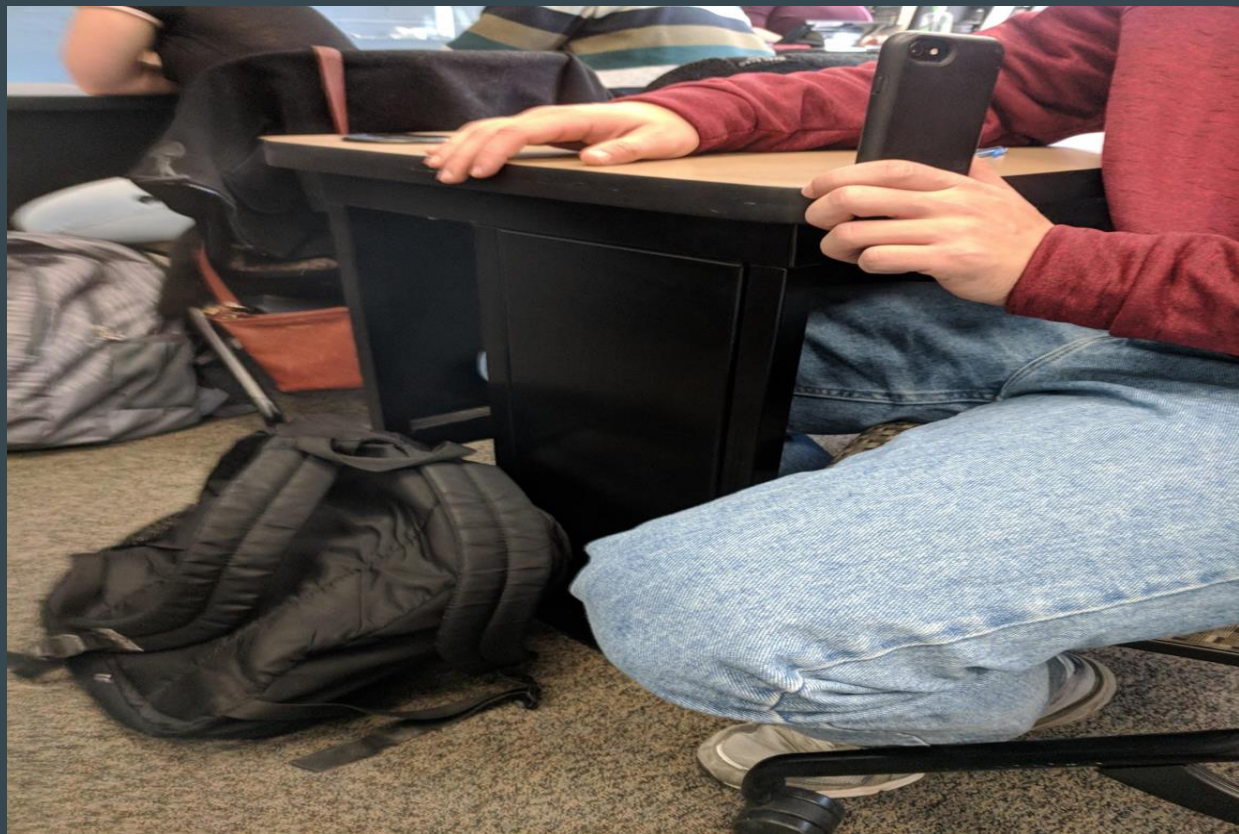
Mason LIFE--3 stages

- Stage 1 → assume the mistake is from a skill deficit. Teach, model, role play, monitor progress
- Stage 2 → If still occurring, sign FERPA and call parents → student needs additional support and parents are a natural support
- Stage 3 → still occurring → code of conduct hearing

Example



Example



Example



In the end...Mistakes WILL happen

- Let's prepare our students the best we can to problem solve when faced with situations that are confusing, etc. they have the skills to
 - recognize something is wrong/uncomfortable
 - how to say no, leave, and report
 - safety network they can trust to help solve so they can safely learn for next time

PROCEDURE/PROCESS

PROACTIVE

EDUCATE

RE-EDUCATE

Resources

- Workbooks and curriculum: www.oakhillcrse.org
- Zones of Regulation: <http://www.zonesofregulation.com>

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