

Puberty

Was a difficult, upsetting and confusing time in most of our lives



Teaching About Puberty

- Puberty – normalize the conversation
 - Regular education health classes are often not enough
 - Your changing body
 - Taking care of your body
 - Learning to wear a pad
 - "Private Time"
 - Wet dreams / Sexual fantasies / Getting your period / Masturbation

Adolescent Relationships

- Are about HORMONES
- New feelings can be overwhelming



Puberty



- Hormones are a big deal
- Many middle school students don't understand what is happening to their bodies.
- Some students have a difficult time with these changes.
- Appearance matters
- Puberty has a huge impact on emotions

Appearance Matters



Puberty is When Teenage Boys Discover...



- Girls
- Humping, rubbing
- Touching themselves
- Wet dreams
- Sexual fantasies

and....masturbation

- Public vs. Private
- "Private time"
- Hands down their pants
- Hard Pressure
- Blue Jeans

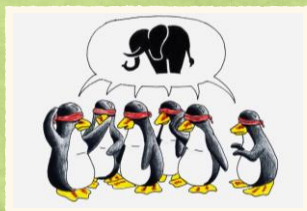


Puberty is When Girls Become Interested in ...

- Boys
- Drama
- More complex relationships
- Mean girls
- Looking good



Sex is the elephant in the room



Sexuality is not just sex it is...

- Social sexual boundaries
- Touching
- Stalking
- Consent
- LGBT information
- Birth control
- Sexual abuse risk reduction



Sexuality is not just sex it is.....

- Illegal sexual behavior
- Problematic Sexual Behavior
- Pornography
- Sexting
- STI's
- Pregnancy
- Communication
- Intimacy
- Decision Making ...etc.

What we know

- Sexuality
- Stokes, Newtown, & Kaur (2007) examined the nature of social and romantic functioning in adolescents and adults with ASD. What they found is individuals with ASD were more likely than their NT peers to engage in "inappropriate" courting behaviors; to focus their attention on celebrities, strangers, colleagues and exes; and to pursue their target for longer lengths of time (i.e. they engaged in stalking).

Teaching Sexual Health

- Sexual Health
 - Gynecological Exams – Video
 - Pads vs. Tampons
 - Birth Control
 - Sexually Transmitted Infections
 - Condoms
 - Breast and testicular cancer
- Should my daughter be on birth control pills?
- Video of Gynecological exam

Teaching Sexuality

- Sexuality and High School
 - What do they know?
 - What is sex?
 - Making out / Touching
 - When do you do what? (kissing... having sex)
 - What is normal? Sexual boundaries
 - LGBT / Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered information
 - Questions have been asked about fetishes

Safety Skills

- Teach students to recognize and identify creepy or uncomfortable feelings. It is the feelings that they should pay attention to, not who the person is.
- A crush is a feeling that goes in one direction.
- Boyfriend / girlfriend relationships go in both directions and both people have to agree to the relationship.
- Relationships can change from stranger to an acquaintance to a friend...

Technology, Safety and Sexuality

- Technology and Sexuality
 - What technologies are they using? Everyone they can.
 - What is safe and what is not safe?
 - Internet rules
 - Sexting and other technology
 - Pornography and YouTube
 - Cyberbullying / Smart Phones
 - Kiddy Porn / Access to the internet.
- Guess what I have 250 friends....

Technology



- Access to the internet
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - YouTube
- Texting
- Bullying
- Sexual Abuse

Sexuality & Technology



- Pornography
 - They think porn is what a sexual relationship looks like
 - OCD / Sexual obsessions
 - Child Pornography
 - Legal vs. Illegal
 - Can't identify ages in porn

Safety and Sexuality

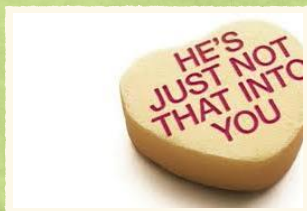
- Sexuality and High School
 - Vocabulary
 - Consent, No means NO
 - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
 - If you are not sure you if you can touch someone ASK
 - Stalking
 - Teach rules and laws
 - Problematic sexual behavior
 - Vocabulary – I really want to rape this girl.....

Teach Rules and Laws

- Teach rules and laws that apply to the students
- Address stalking immediately
- Students need consequences for their behavior
- Do not make excuses for problematic or illegal sexual behavior



Stalking



- Applies to both girls and guys
- Don't understand the large number of steps in the beginning of a romantic relationship
- Can't read body language or understand what others are saying
- Video Examples

Illegal Sexual Behavior

- All sexual abuse laws are local and they are different from state to state. It is important to know your local laws.
- People on the spectrum usually do not intend to break the law, more often it is a social mistake.
- However, they are being arrested and are going to jail
- Laws are enforced even if the offender is a person with disabilities
- If a person is determined not competent to stand trial charges will not be enforced.

When Teens Grow Up

- If this information is not learned in high school, it become much more complex to teach as an adult.
- 40 year old virgin
- Isolation at work
- Limited ways to learn these skills
- Contact with the criminal justice system
- Sexual surrogates / prostitutes

Practical Approaches

- Support relationships in middle and high school when teachers and families provide a safety net



Remember...people on the spectrum are very literal



Summary

- We must begin to talk about and address these issues even though they may be embarrassing and difficult
- Adolescents and adults with ASD need us to work together so we can decrease loneliness and risk while increasing access to healthy and happy relationships

Relationships Matter!

Quality of life includes healthy, intimate and safe relationships.



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