



Sexuality and Autism

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And a cast of thousands !
Division TEACCH



Sexuality

- Importance debated
- Limited data
- Recent research shows that most individuals with autism engage in sexual activity and/or show sexual interest



Treatment/Educational Approaches to Developing an Intimate Relationship



Values

- What should we teach?
- Family values
- Societal values
- Individual perspective



Intimate Relationship Meets Complex Needs

- Physical pleasure seeking
- Tension release
- Social contact/caring relationship



Concrete Learners and Sexuality



Teaching Privacy and Safety

- Where and when to masturbate?



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- What to use to masturbate?



Teaching Privacy and Safety

- Where and when to masturbate?
- What to use to masturbate?
- Where and when not to touch/masturbate?



Teaching Privacy and Safety

- Where and when to masturbate?
- What to use to masturbate?
- Where and when not to touch/masturbate?
- What to call masturbation?



Sexual Skills Training

- Who does the teaching?
- How to teach?
 - use of vibrators, lubricants
 - picture sequences
 - picture/written manuals
 - videos
 - discussions



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Interpersonal Issues

- Public versus private body parts, activities, places

Public Area
Living Room
No Touching Penis



Private Area
Bathroom
Can Touching Penis





Two parts of a boy body that are PRIVATE

- 1) Penis
- 2) Butt

Three parts on a girl body that are PRIVATE

- 1) Breast
- 2) Genitalia
- 3) Bottom or Buttocks

Body Parts

Public	Private
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Eyes2. Nose3. Mouth4. Ears5. Legs and Arms6. Hands and Feet	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Penis2. Bottom/Butt3. Underwear4. Breast
<p><i>Who can see these?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Friends2. Anybody else	<p><i>Who can see these?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Doctor2. Mom, Dad and Brothers
	<p><i>What do you do if someone other than your doctor, mom, brothers or dad touches your private parts?</i></p> <p>Tell them to stop and go tell mom, dad or brothers</p>



Interpersonal Issues

- Public versus private body parts, activities, places, topics
- Strangers versus not strangers/friends
- Appropriate touches/looks/approaches



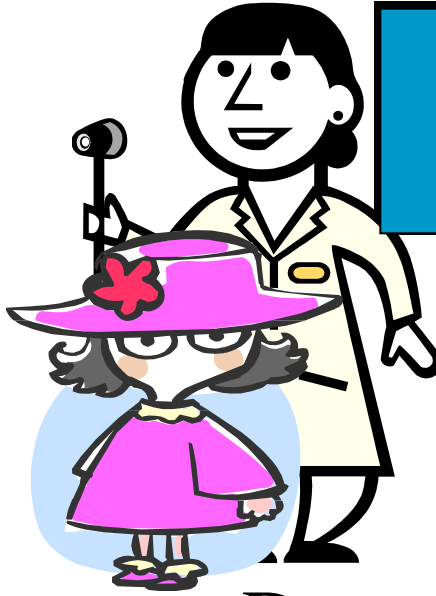
Interpersonal Issues

- Public versus private body parts, activities, places
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- Appropriate touches/looks/approaches
- Vulnerability to suggestions and advances from others



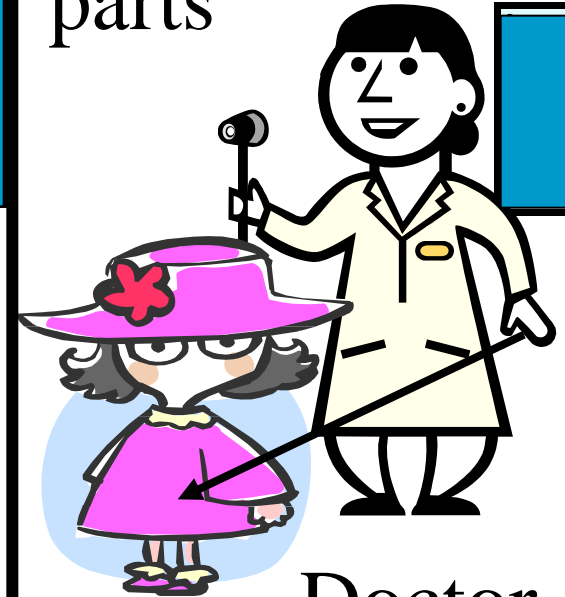
Emily

Doctor's Office



Emily Doctor

Doctor can touch private parts



Emily Doctor

Teach to say “NO” or “Stop”





Interpersonal Issues

- Public versus private body parts, activities, places
- Strangers versus not strangers/friends
- Appropriate touches/looks/approaches
- Vulnerability to suggestions and advances from others
- Special Interests – seams, body parts, children



Abstract Learners and Sexuality



Understanding Sexual Needs

- What is the individual currently doing to meet the following common needs:
 - Physical pleasure seeking
 - Tension release
 - Social contact/caring relationship
 - Physical comfort
 - Self-esteem
 - Social status



What's Missing?

- Identify need areas that are not being met in the individual's life.
- Help him/her prioritize the needs.



Sexual Skills Training

- Topics:
 - masturbation,
 - physical intimacy and sexual intercourse,
 - homosexuality,
 - birth control, contraception,
 - conception, pregnancy, abortion, child birth,
 - sexually transmitted diseases and how to prevent them,
 - dangerous harmful sexual behavior,
 - illegal sexual behavior.



Sexual Skills Training

- Who does the teaching?
- How to teach?
 - use of vibrators, lubricants
 - picture sequences
 - picture/written manuals
 - videos
 - books/discussions



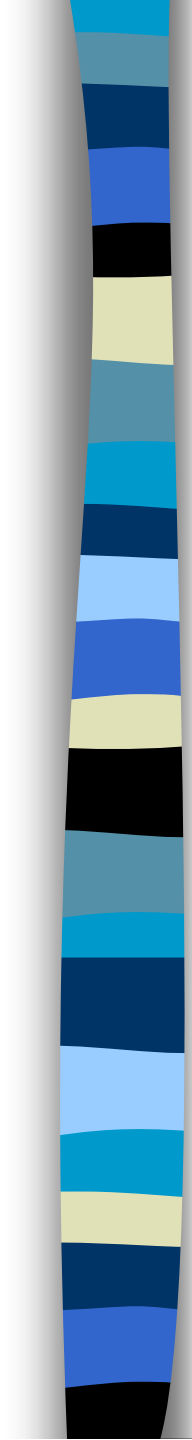
Sexual Skills Training

- How to teach?
 - Use concrete, explicit language
 - Break down the topics into manageable chunks of information

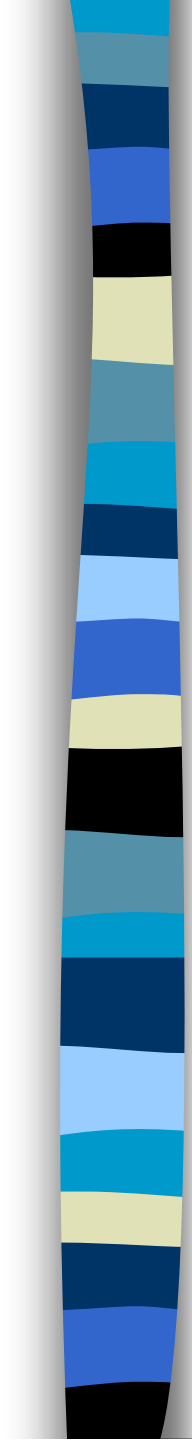


Challenges to Sexual Education

- Internet access
- Difference between teaching about sexuality and sensuality versus procreation and where babies come from
- Understanding of others' feelings
- Recognizing and expressing own feelings



Essential to teach about sexual feelings



Essential to teach about
consensual relationships



Social Skills and Relationships



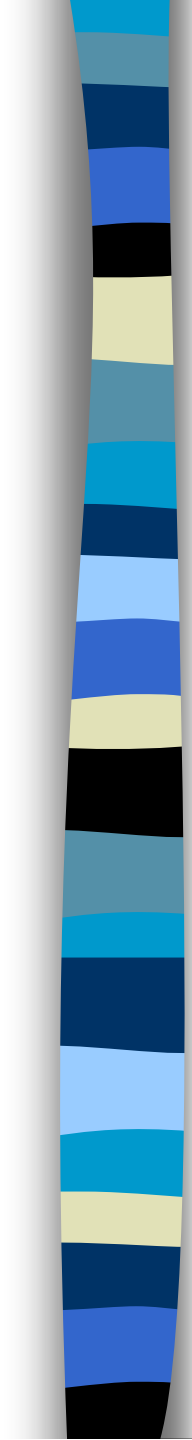
Social Issues

- Want social relationships outside the family
- Want variety and depth in relationship
- Interested in dating as a way of achieving sexual intimacy or adult status



Social Issues

- Trouble distinguishing between levels of intimacy (stranger vs. acquaintance vs. friend vs. date)
- Trouble taking another person's perspective
- Does not know the prerequisite steps to an intimate relationship



Provide Training on the
Different Types of
Relationships & Levels of
Intimacy and Prerequisite
Skills/Behaviors Necessary
to Achieve These
Relationships



Strategies for Teaching Social Skills

- Define Social Skills or Relationships in concrete terms



Defining Relationships

- What is a friend?
- Who do you ask on dates?
 - What do you need to know before you ask someone out?
- What is a Boyfriend or Girlfriend?
- What does it mean to be married?
- What is a Stranger?



Defining the Necessary Social Rules or Skills for a particular activity.

- Present them Visually.
- Individualize
- Give a copy to the individual with autism
- Review the rules frequently

Guidelines for going to the Movie with a friend.

1. We agree on the movie.
2. We make a date to go (put time and place on my calendar).
3. When we go to the movie I sit with my friend and watch quietly.
4. We can talk while we are waiting for the movie to begin.
5. I am quiet when the previews begin and during the movie.
6. I can share my popcorn and snacks with my friend.
7. I can talk with my friend after the movie.





Prerequisites to dating

- Good personal hygiene
- Finding a variety of activities that you enjoy and would do by yourself
- Practice the “date”
- Learning not to talk about your special interests all the time
- Practice asking someone(don't ask more than 3 times)
 - By Newport and Newport,2002



Getting Married

1. Some people get married when they are all grown up.
2. When people get married, they move away from home. They don't live with their mothers or brothers anymore. They move to a new place with their wives.
3. Before people get married, they have to know how to take care of themselves.
4. They have to know how to cook lots of meals.
5. They have to know how to do their laundry.
6. They have to know how to clean their apartment or house.



Getting Married (continued)

7. There are lots of things they have to know how to do.
8. Also before people get married, they have to have money. They need money to pay for the wedding. They need money to pay their rent and other bills. They need money to buy food and clothes and medicine.
9. Some people do not get married.
10. They are called bachelors (some people say single). Bachelors (single people) can still have girlfriends/boyfriends. Bachelors (single people) can still have fun. Bachelors (single people) can be happy.



Selected References

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