

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH PREVENTION EDUCATION:  
WORKING WITH PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL  
DISABILITIES

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# OBJECTIVES

- List three ways in which people with disabilities are treated differently in regards to sexuality, sexual health education and sexual decision making.
- Identify two ways sex education lessons can be modified to meet the needs of a divergent learner.
- Explain two methods for being trauma-informed while educating.

# SARAH DAHLSTON (SHE/HER/HERS)

- Certified Sexuality Educator
- Neuro-typical
- LGBTQ+
- Ohio born and raised
- Animal mom
- Lover of desserts
- Newly neurodiverse nephew❤️





# WHY THIS TOPIC?

- I love sex education!
- I am an advocate for everyone's pursuit of **autonomy** and **pleasure**.
- People with disabilities are disproportionately effected by violence **AND** are often left out of discussions around relationships, sex, consent and more.
- Personal connection
- **It is simply not talked about enough.**



# PROBLEM #1 - THE STATE OF SEX EDUCATION. PERIOD.

## General Requirements

- 39 states and the District of Columbia mandate sex education and/or HIV education.
- **17 states require program content to be medically accurate.**
- 26 states and DC require instruction to be appropriate for the students' age.
- 9 states require the program to provide instruction that is appropriate for a student's cultural background and that is not biased against any race, sex or ethnicity.
- 3 states prohibit the program from promoting religion.

## Requirements for Sex Education

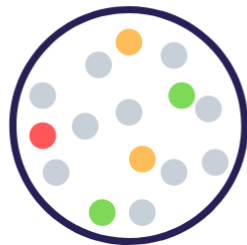
- 20 states and DC require information on contraception.
- **39 states and DC require information on abstinence.**
  - 29 states require that abstinence be stressed.
  - 10 states and DC require that abstinence be covered.
- 19 states require instruction on the importance of engaging in sexual activity only within marriage to be provided.
- 19 states and DC require the inclusion of information on the negative outcomes of teen sex and pregnancy.
- 17 states and DC require either an inclusive or discriminatory view of sexual orientation.
  - 10 states and DC require inclusive content with regard to sexual orientation.
  - **7 states require only negative information to be provided on homosexuality and/or positive emphasis on heterosexuality.**



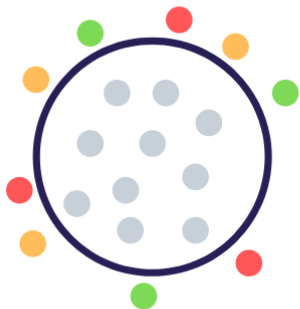
## Life Skills Requirements

- 35 states and DC require provision of information about skills for healthy romantic and sexual relationships.
- 38 states and DC require prevention of teen dating violence and sexual violence to be covered.
  - 24 states and DC require provision of information on asserting personal boundaries and refusing unwanted sexual advances.
  - **8 states require the importance of consent to sexual activity to be covered.**
  - 37 states and DC require provision of information on preventing, recognizing and responding to teen dating violence and sexual violence.

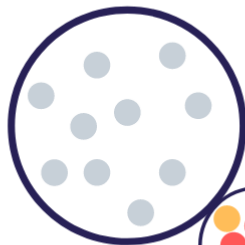
# PROBLEM #2 -- STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ARE SEPARATED FROM THEIR TYPICALLY DEVELOPING PEERS



**INCLUSION**



**EXCLUSION**



**SEGREGATION**



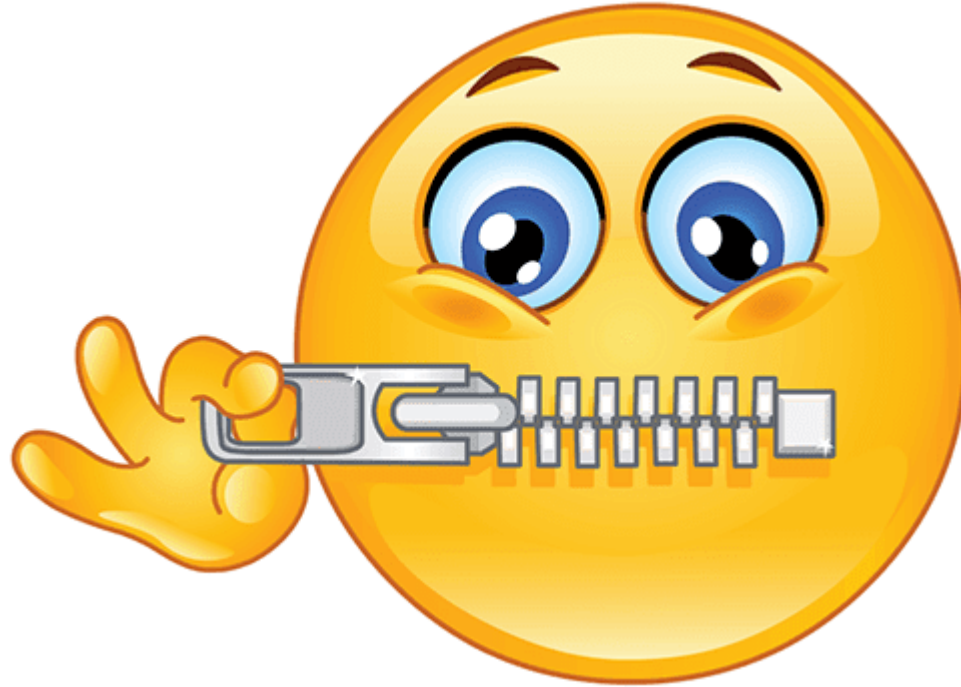
**INTEGRATION**

# PROBLEM #3 -- PERCEPTIONS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

People with disabilities are often...

- Overlooked or forgotten
- Seen as non-sexual, uninterested, or physically incapable of experiencing sex or sexuality in any capacity
- Removed from conversations around the concepts of holistic sexuality: sexual identity, sexual health and reproduction, and intimacy among others
- Seen as not having their own sexual identity
- Assumed that they do not experience intimacy with others
- Assumed that they will not be victimized
- Stigmatized
- Fetishized
- Infantilized

# PROBLEM #4 -- SILENCE



MEETING THE NEEDS OF THE LEARNER

# 1. MODIFYING LESSONS/ACTIVITIES

# TIPS FOR MODIFYING

- Know your key messages and repeat them.
- Do your homework.
- Accept and expect that sometimes it just doesn't work.
- Know the content.
- Be flexible.

# KNOW THE CONTENT





# THE BEST LAID PLANS...

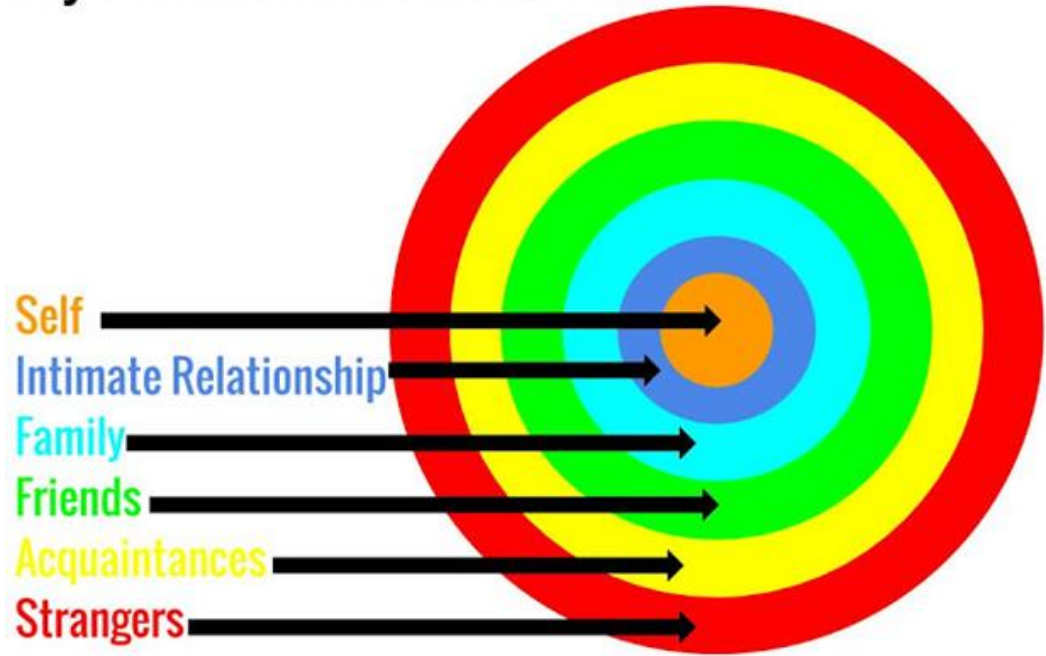


# 1. BOUNDARIES

- What does the word “boundary” mean?
- Can you give an example of a boundary you have?
- Let’s talk about different kinds of relationships and boundaries!

# CIRCLES OF RELATIONSHIPS

## My Personal Boundaries



# PEOPLE

- Mom
- Dad
- Grandparent
- Siblings
- Doctor
- Therapist
- Person on the bus
- Co-worker

- Boss
- Best friend
- Teacher
- Myself
- Dating partner
- Sexual partner
- Waitress at restaurant
- Person on gaming system



# TOPICS OF CONVERSATION

- Sex
- My health
- Weather
- Body functions
- Weekend plans
- My Address
- Phone number

- My email address
- My feelings or emotions



# BEHAVIORS/TOUCHING

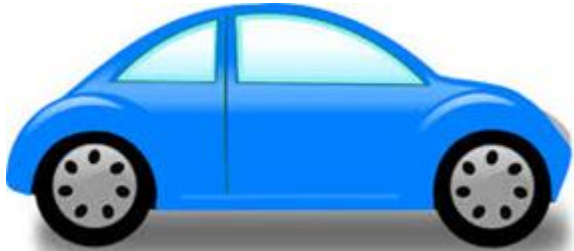
- Sexual touching
- Handshake
- High five
- Rub shoulders
- Wave
- Fist bump
- Kiss cheek
- Hug
- Kiss lips
- Be naked around



# REMEMBER...

- People and relationships can change circles over time.
  - From friend to intimate partner
  - From intimate partner to acquaintance
- Everyone's circles look different
- Further inward = more privacy
- **Identify two trusted people you could tell if someone touches you in a way they are not supposed to.**

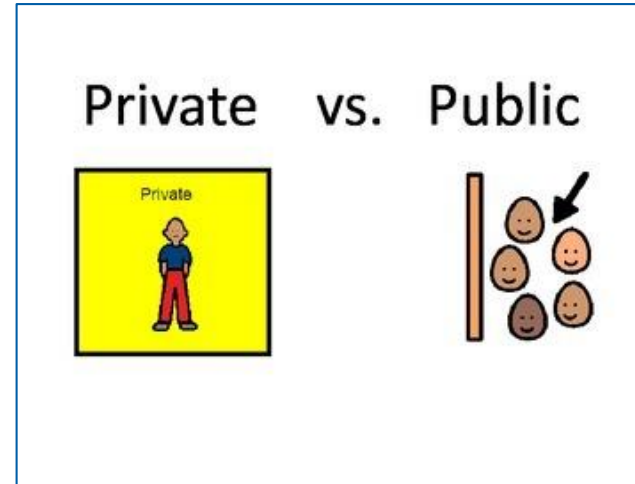
## 2. PUBLIC VS PRIVATE





	<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>
<b>What does it mean?</b>	Other people are there or might be there. It's a place where people can go in and out.	You are alone and no one can come in and out.
<b>Examples of places</b>		
<b>OK to talk about</b>		
<b>OK touches</b>		
<b>Body parts</b>		

- I went to my cousin's wedding last weekend.
- I kissed my sweetheart for hours on Saturday.
- I miss my friends from high school.
- A photo of you and your friends at the park.
- A photo of you with your clothes off.
- A photo of you and your sweetheart holding hands.
- A photo of you smiling with an ice cream cone.



## 2. USE VARIOUS APPROACHES

**Priming** - introduction to part of a concept before formal instruction begins.

- Hi, Mary, tomorrow we are going to talk about using pads for your period, but for now here's a pad for you to look at and think about.

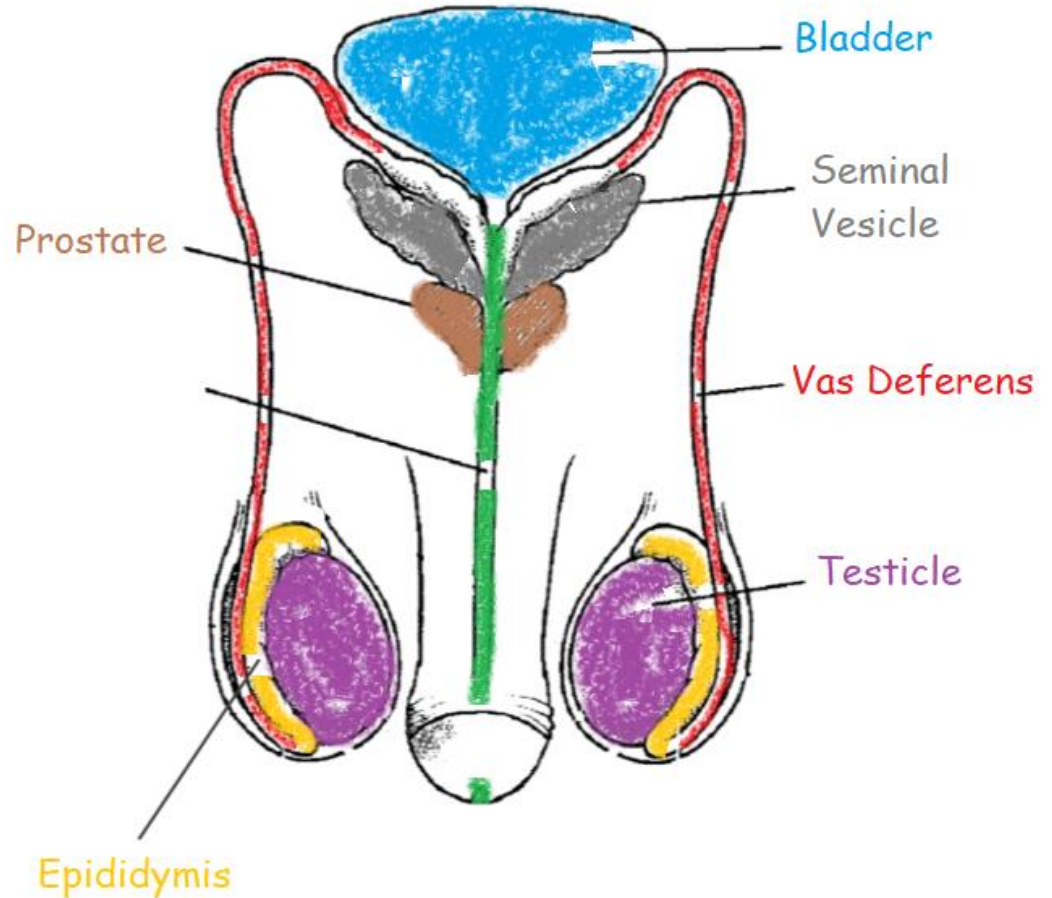


**Direction Giving** - Very specific. Make the implicit, explicit!

- Calm down vs. make your shoulders loose
- Masturbation is private vs. do it in your room with your door closed.



**Adaptation** - Modify task to audience/client and how they learn

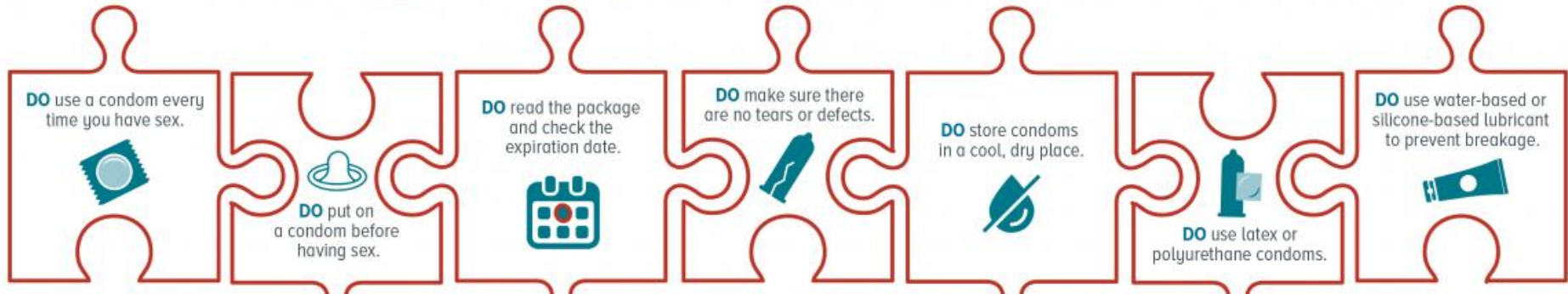


**Apprenticeship** - instead of teaching how to do, ask them to help you do it.

**Waiting** - Give them time to process and act on information.

**Chaining** - lining steps up together to build on the skills.

## The Right Way To Use A External Condom



**Modeling** - “let me show you and then you try.”

**Prompting** - Providing verbal, gestural or physical prompt to complete task.





**Parallel talk** - learner observes while teacher explains each step.  
Talk your process out loud.



**Repetition** - do the same thing over and over, a little different each time.

**Feedback** - non judgemental providing of information about how a task was completed.

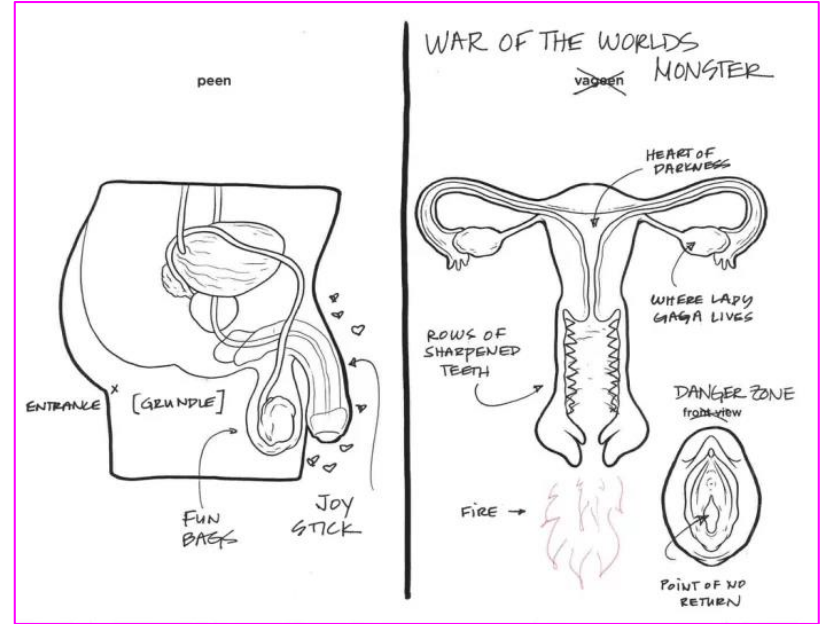
- Praise
- Acknowledge attempt
- Offer information about how to fix problems

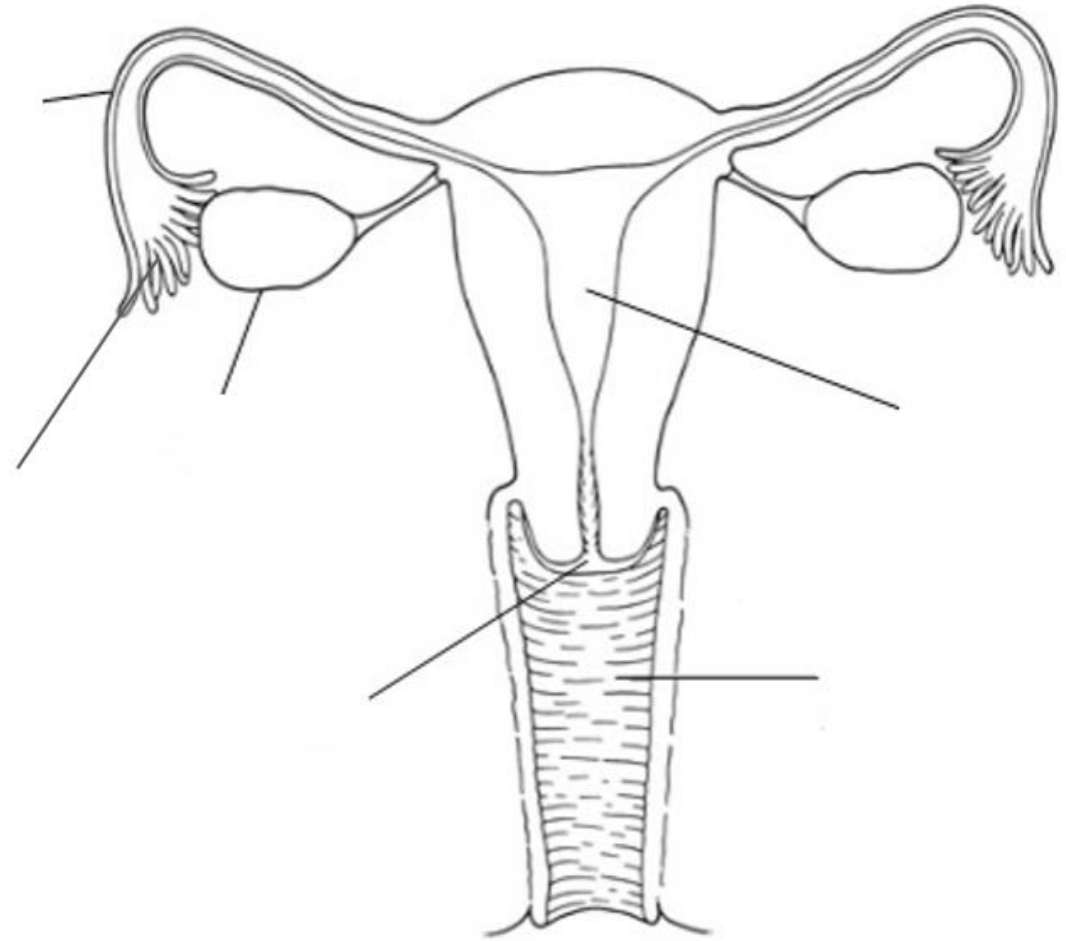
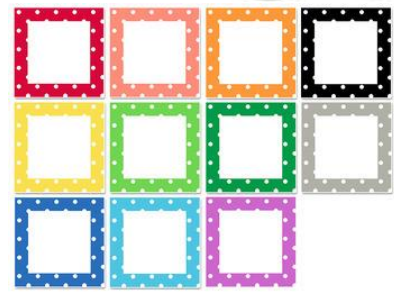


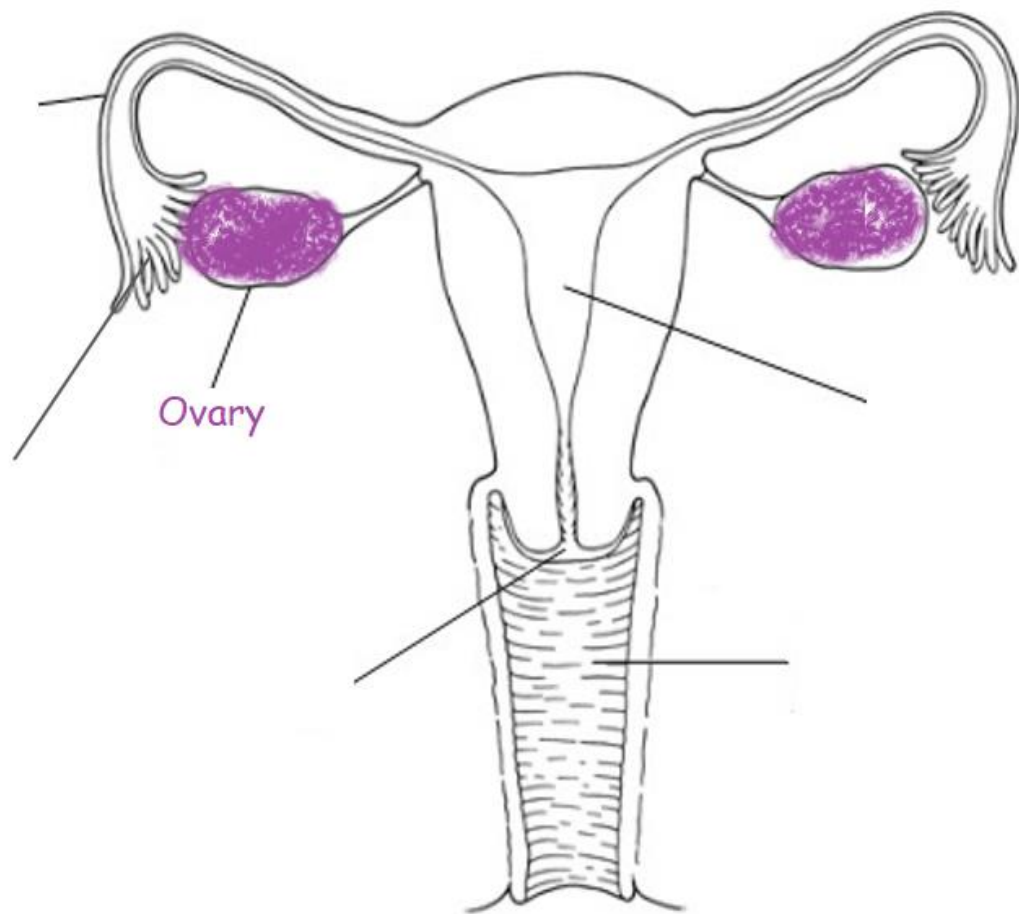
EXAMPLE

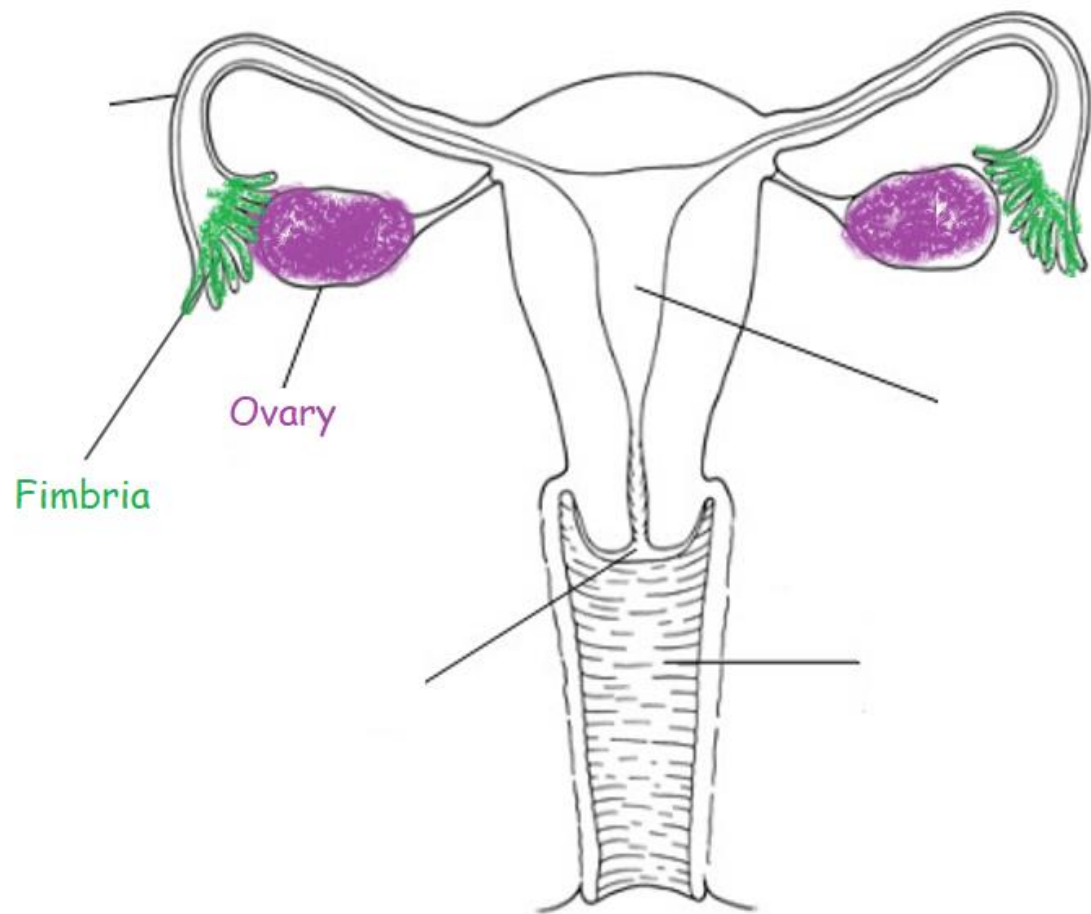
# KEY MESSAGES

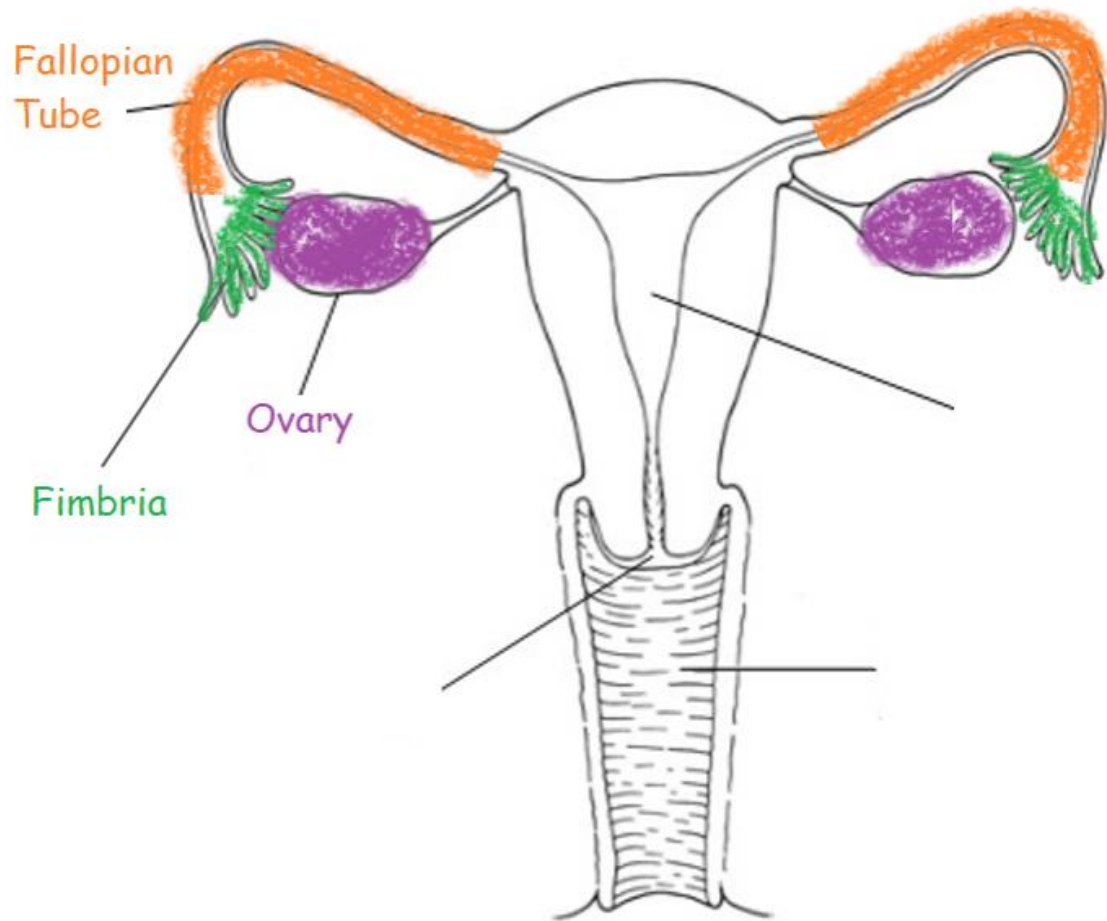
- Why it is important to know the proper names of the reproductive system.
- Importance of knowing the names and functions.
- Importance of feeling comfortable saying these words.



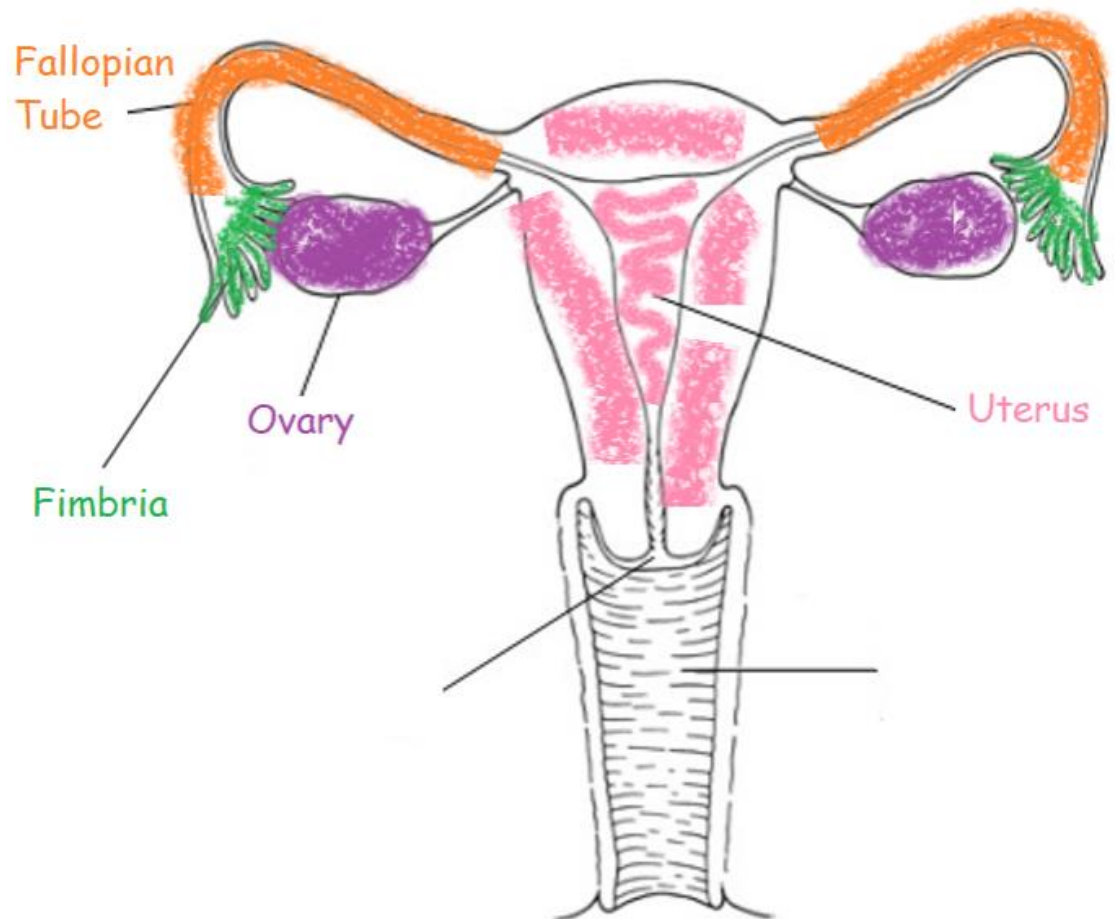










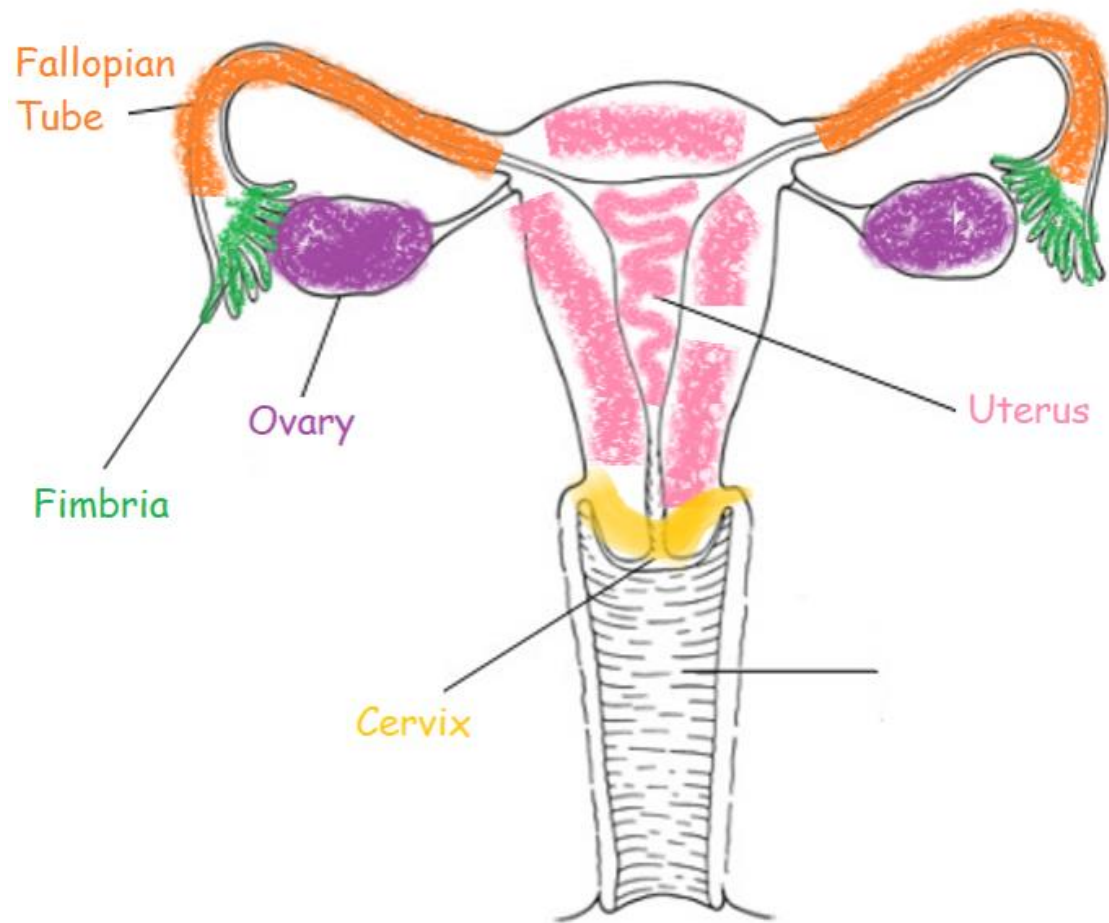


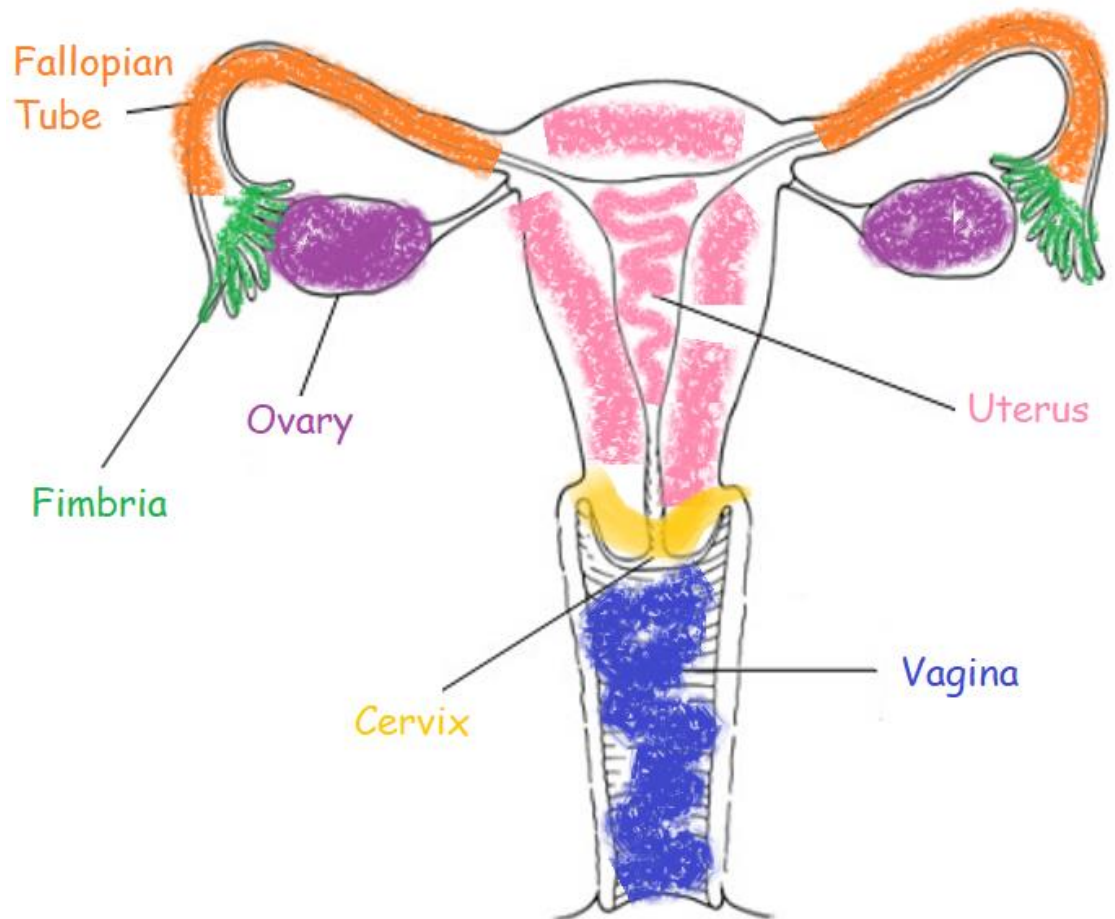
Fallopian  
Tube

Ovary

Fimbria

Uterus





Fallopian  
Tube

Ovary

Fimbria

Uterus

Cervix

Vagina

# MODIFICATIONS

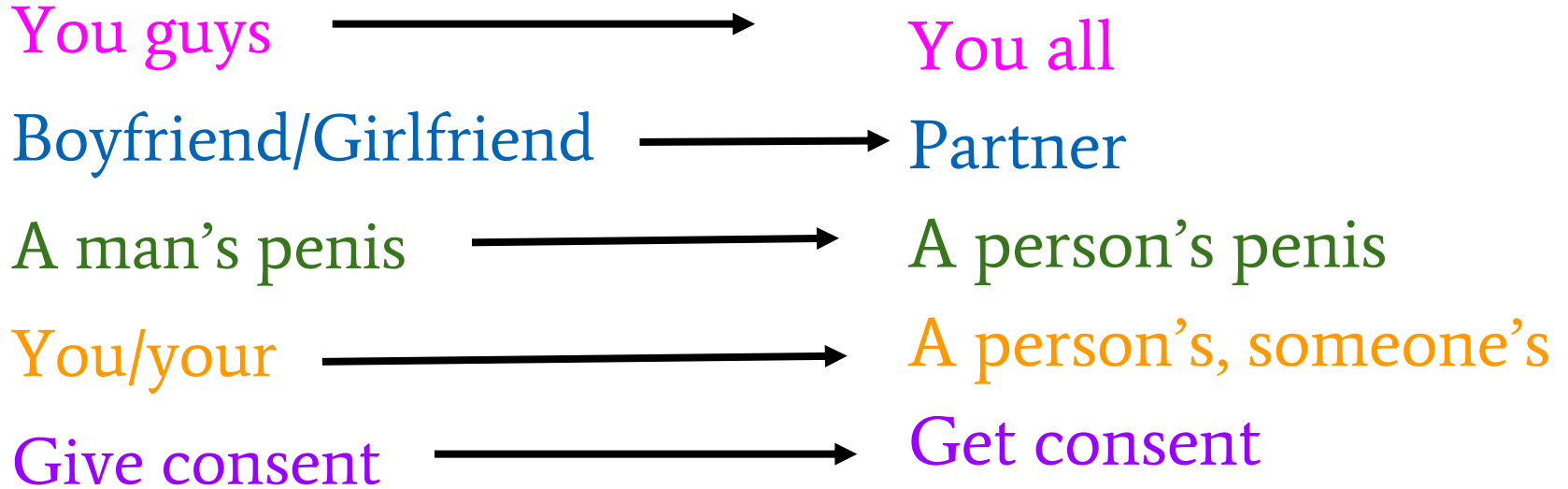
- Utilize visual supports
  - Videos, charts, social stories
- KISS - keep it simple, silly!
  - What to discuss: internal, external, both?
  - Color coordinating
  - Don't explain the universe when you were asked to explain a star
- Different charts for different development levels
- Spend as much time as the learner needs

# 3. LANGUAGE MATTERS

- Be concrete and explicit
- Avoid turns of phrase and sarcasm
- Repeat, repeat, repeat
- Incorporate multiple learning styles
- Be prepared for non/minimally-verbal students
- Use neutral language (*activity!*)
- Trauma-informed
  - Examples?
- Do not assume orientation or any other piece of identity



# MAKING SHIFTS



# 4. TRAUMA INFORMED SEX EDUCATION



# TRAUMA INFORMED SEX EDUCATION

**WHAT IS TRAUMA?**





**PRACTICE  
MAKES  
PERFECT**

# GOAL: CREATE A MINI LESSON PLAN

- Choose your topic - Healthy relationships, internet safety
- Using the sample intake form in your handouts...
- Create a mini lesson plan
  - 3-5 talking points about content
  - 1 activity/interactive learning
  - Knowledge check

RELATIONSHIP & SEXUALITY EDUCATION  
FOR PEOPLE W/ DEVELOPMENTAL  
DISABILITIES



# TOPICS

Puberty

Boundaries (Public vs. Private)

Anatomy

Sexuality

Internet safety

Condom usage

Healthy relationships

Hygiene

Consent

Birth Control

Safe masturbation

Other topics by request

**\*Note:** I am typically working with adults with various levels of I/DD who are often developmentally many years below their chronological age.

# PROGRAM PROCESS

1. Referral/intake form
2. Meeting between PPSWO and support team
3. PPSWO educator develops education plan and sends for review
4. Support team reviews, signs, and returns contract for services
5. Support team communicates with PPSWO educator to plan sessions
6. Ongoing evaluation of client and sessions

# INTAKE/REFERRALS

## Intake Form – Educational Services



Planned Parenthood Southwest Ohio Region

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Ethnicity: \_\_\_\_\_

### Residence type & location:

- Group home
- With family
- Independent living
- Other \_\_\_\_\_
- Location: \_\_\_\_\_

**Support Staff/Parent/Guardian Information** (who we will contact to schedule sessions and discuss progress)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to client: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Diagnosis/es: \_\_\_\_\_



**Level of intellectual disability:**

- Borderline
- Mild
- Moderate
- Severe
- Unknown

**Provide details:**

**Assessment of:**

Developmental Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Verbal (Y/N): \_\_\_\_\_

Reading Ability: \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Ability: \_\_\_\_\_

**Provide details:**

**Does the client have an IEP/ISP that we can review?**

- Yes
- No

**How does the client spend their time? (Day program, employment, hobbies, etc.)**

**To your knowledge, has the client even been a victim of...**

- physical abuse or neglect
- sexual abuse or trauma
- emotional abuse or trauma
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**In your opinion, what level sexual knowledge or education does your client have?**

None

Very Little

Some

A lot

**Is the client engaging in any behaviors that are causing concern? (Check all that apply)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public masturbation       | <input type="checkbox"/> Fixation/obsession |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unhealthy relationships   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual risk taking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unsafe internet behaviors | <input type="checkbox"/> Sexting            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Voyeuristic behavior      | <input type="checkbox"/> Stalking           |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other              |

**Provide details of behavior:**

**What would you like us to cover with your client?**

**Client history (What you are able to share...family support, legal charges/sentences, treatment, etc.)**

**How does this individual learn best?**

Education Program – Checklist and Agreement

**Client Name:**

**Organization:**

**SSA & Contact Information:**

**Other contact:**

**Name of PPSWO Educators in Attendance:**

1.

2.

**Please review and initial each item:**

\_\_\_ The content of each of the sessions listed in the education plan (pg. 2) has been reviewed with me.

\_\_\_ Classroom management techniques have been discussed (if applicable).

\_\_\_ Staff and/or parent/guardian presence during each session has been discussed.

\_\_\_ Mandated reporting requirements and responsibilities have been discussed.

\_\_\_ Condom education options have been discussed and I agree to the following methods of education (if applicable, check all that apply)

\_\_\_ Condom demonstration

\_\_\_ Onsite condom access

\_\_\_ Condom line-up activity

\_\_\_ Condom practice session

\_\_\_ I have the following items available for use of PPSWO educators (if on-site):

\_\_\_ Dry erase or black board

\_\_\_ Seating and writing surfaces for each participant

\_\_\_ Ability to show multi-media clips (internet access, TV screen/computer, speakers)

\_\_\_ I agree to contact the PPSWO educator via email, voicemail, and/or text message as soon as possible in the event that I need to cancel and/or reschedule.

**Email:** sdahlston@ppsw.org

**Phone:** 937-674-5226

**OK to text:** yes

\_\_\_ I understand that these sessions are for educational purposes and are in no way for the purposes of therapy and/or counseling services.

By initialing each of the items above, I acknowledge that each has been review with me by a PPSWO staff person. I also maintain that I am a person authorized by my organization to invite Planned Parenthood to provide this programming.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Agency Rep/Client Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Agency Rep/Client Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
PPSWO Staff Signature

# EDUCATION PLAN



<b>Name:</b> [REDACTED] <b>Age:</b> 29 <b>Gender:</b> F	<b>Support Specialist:</b> [REDACTED]	<b>Initial Contact Date:</b> February 2019, August 2019	<b>Requested Topics:</b> healthy relationships, appropriate masturbation, general sex education, contraception
<b>Diagnosis(es):</b> Bipolar, PTSD, Mild Intellectual Disorder, Lupus	<b>Learning Ability/Style:</b> verbal discussion, visual aids	<b>Likes/Dislikes:</b> art, Disney, music, Youtube	<b>Employment:</b> Day program 4 days per week *off on Thursdays
	<b>Teacher Guide</b>	<b>Materials Needed</b>	<b>Additional Notes</b>
<b>Lesson Objectives</b>	Gain understanding of [REDACTED] knowledge of relationships. Identify types of relationships in [REDACTED] life.	- None	
<b>Lesson Overview</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome back</li> <li>Important things to know</li> <li>Today's session</li> <li>Summary</li> <li>End of session <u>eval</u></li> <li>Schedule next session</li> </ol>	- Important things to know	
<b>Icebreaker</b>	What is your favorite kind of dessert?		

<b>Summary of Tasks/Actions</b>	<p><b>Brainstorm:</b> What types of relationships do people have? What types of relationships do you have?</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> Circles of relationships</p> <p><b>Brainstorm:</b> Healthy vs. unhealthy characteristics</p> <p><b>Activity:</b> healthy or unhealthy?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Circles of relationships activity</li> <li>- Healthy vs. Unhealthy brainstorm flip chart</li> <li>- Healthy vs. Unhealthy check sheet</li> </ul>	
<b>Active Engagement</b>	<p><b>Video:</b> What Makes a Relationship Healthy from <a href="http://www.amaze.org">www.amaze.org</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Device to view video</li> </ul>	
<b>Take Home Tasks</b>	<p>Find an example of healthy relationship on your favorite TV show.</p>		

# PROGRAM EVALUATION

|

I understand what we talked about today.



I understand!

I understand a little

I don't understand!

One thing I learned today is.....

I would like to come back for another session:

Yes

No

Maybe



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**TYPES OF RELATIONSHIPS***Answer the questions to the best of your ability.***PRE-TEST**Name three different types  
of relationships.

1)

2)

3)

What are two signs of a  
**healthy** relationship?

1)

2)

What are two signs of an  
**unhealthy** relationship?

1)

2)



# LESSONS LEARNED

# LESSONS LEARNED

- Own your sh\*t and ask for help
  - I am a Sex Educator, not an expert on living with disabilities.
- Do not make assumptions about identities, bodies and behaviors
- Get to know your learner(s)
- Be flexible - let the learner(s) guide the session
- Meet them where they are
- Ask for examples from their perspective
- Pay attention and remember your role
- Sometimes... it just doesn't work and you go back to the drawing board -- **AND THAT IS OKAY!**

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