Today

- Define sexuality
- Review what we know about sexuality development and Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Explore unanswered questions
- Introduce sexuality education

What Comes to Mind…

When you see this word:

**Sexuality**

The Dimensions of Human Sexuality

Sexuality Defined

“The sexual knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors of individuals. Its various dimensions involve the anatomy, physiology, and biochemistry of the sexual response system; identity, orientation, roles, and personality; and thoughts, feelings, and relationships. Sexuality is influenced by ethical, spiritual, cultural, and moral concerns.”

The Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS), 2004

Lack of Research

- Sexuality in ASD is neglected area
- Relying on informal information
- Myths about sexuality and ASD:
  - Sexuality education will increase inappropriate sexual behavior
  - Unable to develop a healthy sexuality
The List
Knowledge of Sexuality, Sexual attitudes, Sexual interests, Sexual behavior, Public vs. private behavior, Experience, Body Changes, Hygiene, Self-image, Friendships, Bullying, Dating, Stalking, Gender Identity, Sexual Orientation, Abuse, Sexual Obsessions, Boundaries

Body Changes
- Adolescents with ASD mature physically according to developmental timelines
- Society expects teens to take care of body, teens with ASD may not get this
- ASD teens had adequate knowledge but poor practice
- Cognitive barriers to hygiene
- Sensory issues can lead to poor hygiene

Videos
How to Wash Your Face
Brushing Teeth
- Pick up the toothbrush
- Wet the brush
- Take the cap off the tube
- Put paste on the brush
- Brush the outside of the bottom row of teeth
- Brush the outside of the top row of teeth
- Brush the biting surface of the top row of teeth
- Brush the biting surface of the bottom row of teeth
- Brush the inside surface of the bottom row of teeth
- Brush the inside surface of the top row of teeth
- Spit
- Fill cup with water
- Rinse teeth with water
- Spit
- Rinse the brush
- Replace the brush in the holder
- Wipe mouth
- Screw cap back on tube

Routines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>How many minutes</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Start Nighttime</td>
<td></td>
<td>5:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brush Teeth</td>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>5:01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wash Hands</td>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>5:02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bowel Movements</td>
<td>2:00</td>
<td>5:04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drink Water</td>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>5:05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eat</td>
<td>1:00</td>
<td>5:06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to bed</td>
<td></td>
<td>5:30PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sexual Behaviors
- Few privacy behaviors?
- Inappropriate touching of self and others/disrobing
- Problems with self pleasure
- Improperly labeled as “sexual deviant”
Public Versus Private

Boundaries

- Internal and External Boundaries
  - Rigid
  - Loose

Personal Space

Line Crossing

What is suspected...
- Perspective taking deficits
- Sexual frustration/desires
- Tendency to exhibit private sexual behavior in public
- Intense interests in other individuals, and sexual preoccupations (RRBs)

However...
- Social isolation
- Difficulty deceiving others, and
- Rule governance, law abidance

Stalking

- Touching someone inappropriately
- Making inappropriate comments
- Monitoring one’s activity
- Following others
- Pursuing them in a threatening manner
- Making threats against others and themselves.
- Pursued a potential partner longer even when there was no response or negative response from the potential partner

Touching

It’s generally okay to touch somebody’s arm.
TRUE FALSE

It’s generally okay to touch somebody’s head or face.
TRUE FALSE
Victimization

- Limited amount of studies but indicate at least as likely to more likely in ASD population.
- Communication limitations
  - Increased aggression
  - Increased self-injury
  - Social withdrawal
  - Over activity
  - Sleep disturbances
  - Appetite disturbances
  - Increased repetitive behavior
  - Decreased self-care

Why Do We Think So?

- Interpreting social cues
- Pragmatics problems (i.e., deception)
- Unquestioning compliance
- Reliance of others
- Social isolation
- Lack of information

Dating

- High interest in dating
- Less sources of information
- Less knowledge of dating
- Lower relationship history
- Less intimate experiences

Sexuality Education

- Teens with ASD have the potential to live healthy sexual lives, express their sexuality, make autonomous sexual decisions, form own attitudes, and develop healthy relationships
- All persons have a right to sexuality education and opportunities for healthy sexual expression
- Sexuality education can promote adult health by
  - Providing information about sexuality
  - Providing an opportunity to question, explore and examine their sexual attitudes
  - Helping to develop relationships and interpersonal skills
  - Help foster responsibility and develop safety skills

If I Had My Way...

- Body changes during puberty
- Hygiene
- Boundaries, personal rights of self and others, personal space
- Defining public versus private places, behaviors, and conversations
- Masturbation
- Attraction, knowing

When you feel attracted to someone, signs someone may be attracted to you:
- Approaching and talking to someone you are interested in
- Knowing when you are ready to date
- Basic dating
- Safety (abuse prevention, bullying)
- Behaviors that may “cross the line” and make others uncomfortable or unintentionally and legal issues related to these
- Awareness of ASD diagnosis

Questions?

Thank you