



Planned Parenthood of Delaware



# Supporting Healthy Sexuality & Relationships Across the Lifespan

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# About us...

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# Workshop rationale

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Parents and guardians are the **most important** sexuality educators of their children. But, it's not always easy...

All people should get **age-appropriate, medically accurate information** and answers to their questions about sex and relationships, without being shamed or judged.

All people have the right to the information and skills they need to **protect their health**.

All people need to understand **what a healthy relationship looks like** and have the opportunity to **practice** good communication skills before they become sexually active.

People with disabilities are at higher risk for sexual abuse and assault.

# Myths

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## People with disabilities...

- Are child-like and dependent
- Cannot understand relationships and sexuality
- Are asexual / non-sexual
- Are oversexed / unable to control sexual urges
- Cannot have or raise children

# Barriers to Sexuality Education for People with Disabilities

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Prevalent myths and misconceptions

Access to education and resources

Fewer role models

Fewer social opportunities

Agency / provider / guardian values

Comprehension



# Position Statement: Sexuality

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❖ Joint statement by The ARC and the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

“Every person has the right to exercise choices regarding sexual expression and social relationships. The presence of an intellectual or developmental disability, regardless of severity, does not, in itself, justify loss of rights related to sexuality.....”



# Resources

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Planned Parenthood of Delaware: 302-224-8099 ext 5

- One-on-one relationships and sex education for people with IDD
- Parent/guardian workshops and professional training

Nemours Transition PLAN clinic 302-651-5502

Adolescent Medicine/Gynecology at Nemours (through 21<sup>st</sup> birthday)  
302-651-4000

Special Needs Gynecology at Christiana Care (Dr. Arlene Smalls @  
Wilmington Hospital 302-320-6300 and Dr. Vrunda Patel @ Christiana  
Smyrna 302-659-4444)



# Be in touch!

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# Tips for guardians

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1. Acknowledge that everyone is sexual and has sexual feelings
2. Consider your own values and beliefs
3. Be ready to assert and explain your personal privacy boundaries
4. It's never too early, or too late, to start talking
5. Use accurate language for body parts and functions

# Tips cont'd

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6. Use photos, pictures and other visual materials
7. Use “teachable moments”
8. Be willing to repeat information over time. Be patient.
9. Validate feelings and experiences. Offer praise and support.
10. Use all the reliable sources of information available to you – other parents, teachers, Planned Parenthood, and websites: [sexetc.org](http://sexetc.org) [scarleteen.com](http://scarleteen.com) [amaze.org](http://amaze.org)

# The 5 P's of Sexual Behavior

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1. Privacy
2. Peer Partner
3. Permission
4. Protection
5. Pleasure

