



Ability
Relationships
Sexuality

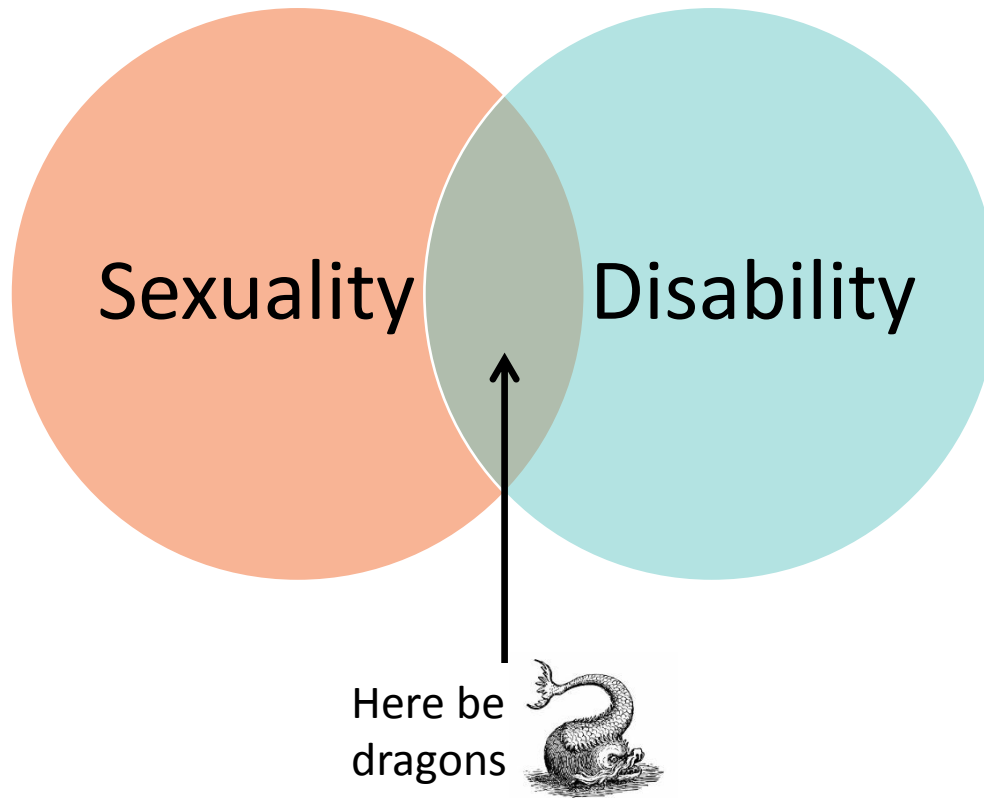
Upskilling the Workforce about the Double Taboo: Sexuality and Disability

Sandra Norman

Why is it important?

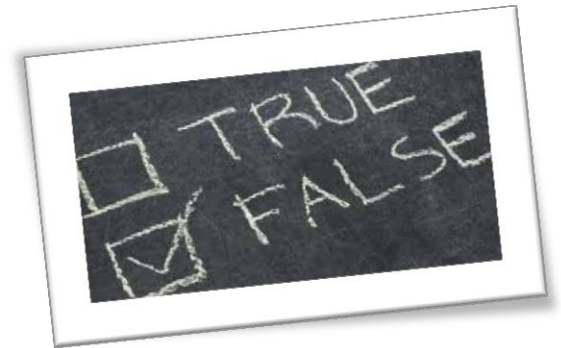
- Under screened for sexual health related testing
(Eastgate, 2011)
- Less likely to receive comprehensive sexuality and relationships education (Frawley and Wilson, 2016)
- More likely to experience sexual trauma e.g. in Australia 90% of women with intellectual disability have been sexually assaulted (Frohman & Sands, 2015)
- Family, friends, caregivers, healthcare professionals, and government policy can sometimes be barriers to accessing adequate sexuality education or information (Frawley and Wilson, 2016)

Double taboo



Myths: People with disabilities...

- Don't have sex
- Can't have sex
- Shouldn't have sex
- Are over-sexed, deviant, or out of control
- Are only heterosexual and cisgender
- Can't be parents
- Can't form or maintain relationships
- Lack the capacity to understand sexuality education



Impacts of the myths

Don't or can't have sex

- No education
- No contraception
- No condoms
- No STI checks
- No privacy

Shouldn't have sex

- Shame and secrecy
- Movements restricted
- Supervision

Over-sexed

- Medicated to lower libido or reduce unwanted sexual behaviours

Impacts of the myths

Only heterosexual and cisgender

- Restricted social & sexual options
- Restricted gender expression

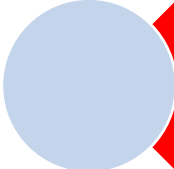
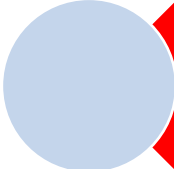
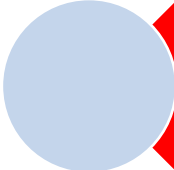
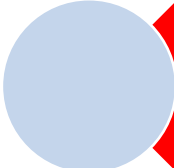
Can't be parents

- Sterilised without consent
- Given contraception without knowledge

Can't form relationships

- Not taught relationship skills
- No social opportunities
- Relationships not supported

More Barriers to Sexual Health

-  Physical
-  Communication
-  Discrimination
-  Lack of Autonomy

What can you do about it?

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Awareness &
Advocacy

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Communication

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Accessibility

Awareness & advocacy

- Disability awareness – not always visible
- Awareness of sexuality and sexual health needs
- Impacts of the values, beliefs and attitudes of yourself and others
- Health promotion
- Knowledge of Laws
 - Consent
 - Guardianship
 - Sterilisation
- Resources and referrals

Communication

- Simple language
- Break topics down into smaller pieces
- Don't make assumptions, check knowledge
- Visual aids
- Concrete examples
- Repeat and summarise

Accessibility

- Accessible venues – ramps, wide doorways, clear signage, accessible bathrooms
- Height-adjustable examination tables
- Information – print resources, online materials
- Free condoms, given discreetly
- Privacy - try to speak to the person alone, at least for some of the time

Questions?

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