Navigating the Sea of Autism and Adolescent Sexuality

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Developmental Delay does not mean Physical Delay.

Puberty WILL happen!
Timing Puberty

- Josh at 13
- Put it on a schedule?
- Average age of onset
Longitude and Latitude

- Emotional maturity level is quite different from physical maturity
- Dr. John Ortiz---"The 2/3 rule"
- Can change on any given day
Sensory Needs Change and Increase

- Age appropriate
- Changing body---changing system
- Increase availability---throughout day
Playing Survivor
How to not get voted off the island!
Survivor!

Independence is the Goal

If you don’t teach the skill, will someone have to do it for them?
Off the Island

- Adults need to wear an eye patch!
- Advocate for piracy
  - Should know their disability
  - Should know their strengths and weaknesses
  - Should know how to advocate for themselves
- Be prepared to walk the plank
  - Natural consequences for actions
Off the Island

- Cooperative Work
  - First at home (yardwork, clean garage, etc.)
- Negotiation
- Self-Advocacy
- Tone of Voice
- Appropriate Responses
Joining a Tribe

- Cooperative Work
  - As a small group
  - Boy Scouts? Girl Scouts?
  - Service Project at school?
  - Activities at school?
  - Create own school club
Finding the Treasure

- Rewards are an important part of life!
- Must have reward for doing work they don’t like or understand
  - Reading, merit Badges, daily routines,
- Teach the “have to’s”
Dive in!
Diving In

- Start now-even if you don’t think the student is ready
- Family Values (not a political statement)
Basic Principles

- Hygiene/Self-Care
- Right vs. Wrong
- Public vs. Private
- Honor the “NO!”
Hygiene and Self-Care
Appropriate Grooming is not a choice.

But you can choose when, where, how, and what!
Grooming is a “have to”!

- In order to hold a job
- Be treated with respect
- Encourage friendship
- Adults will treat them better
- We have enough oddities without wearing or looking like Ugly Betty!
Grooming in the Early Years

- Desensitize to oral/tactile stimulation
  - Hair Cuts
  - Toothbrushing
  - Soap
  - Hand washing
Grooming Routines

- Essential to all of our lives
- If you don’t teach one, they’ll think of their own!
- Allow for adding and subtracting as necessary
- Can write routines for different days of the month—menstruation, etc.
- “Special Day” grooming routines
Pirate Choices

- Morning, Afternoon or Evening
- Tub or Shower?
- Hot or cold?
- Soap or Liquid?
- Shampoo, Conditioner,
- Shaving Cream, Face Soap
- Deodorant
- Go on a “Treasure” hunt!!
Use Visuals!

- Clear directions of task
- Stops discussion
- Fosters independence
- Provides consistency
- Transportable!
Toileting

- If the student is not toilet-trained, this should be the priority
  - Adversely affects options in the future
  - May take a while, but is vital
  - Ensure everyone who works with the student understands the process
Shaving

- Electric vs. Razor
- Practice
- Where?
- Creams, Lotions, water
- “How to” videos
  - www.videojug.com
  - www.youtube.com
Right vs. Wrong
Right vs. Wrong

- Concept can apply anywhere, any age
- List of who is acceptable for conversation
- Personal Boundaries
  - Visual cues—picture cards, smocks, etc.
  - Circles Curriculum
Right vs. Wrong

- Use these words early and consistently
- Replace “no” with “wrong”
- Use discrete trial teaching if needed
  - Pictures of right actions vs wrong actions
  - Pictures of right gestures vs wrong gestures
  - Pictures of right touching vs. wrong touching
Deep Sea Diving

Otherwise known as

DATING!

Who, when, where, why, how
Deep Sea Diving

- Practice your “technique”
  - Fable on Xbox
  - Role Play
  - Create situations

Be Creative!
Right vs. Wrong--Internet

- Addictive tendencies
- Appeals to their learning style
- Asperger’s more likely to be addicted to pornography than other male teens
- Asperger’s/High Functioning Females at great risk for predators
Right vs. Wrong--Stalking

- A significant issue for our teens
- Approximately 75% of individuals with Asperger’s have one or more interactions with police—frequently due to “stalking” and “sexual harassment” behavior
- Teach how you let a person know you like them
  - [www.videojug.com](http://www.videojug.com)
  - “How to know if a girl is flirting with you”
Right vs. Wrong—Sexual Abuse

- Teach appropriate interactions in
  - Locker rooms
  - School lunchrooms
- Teach who, when and where for
  - Kissing, hugging, touching, and intercourse
- Teach the difference between facial expressions of love and disinterest or anger
Public vs. Private
Public vs. Private

- Conversations
- Dinner topics
- School hallway topics
- What part of our bodies are public?
- Inappropriate Touching
  - “Penis is finished”
  - Pictures of women, personal box at home
- The Timing of Puberty
  - “Will it happen tomorrow?”
Public vs. Private in the Early Years

- List of topics to discuss
  - Body functions
  - Body parts
  - Weight
  - Family information
- Model language
  - “That’s a private story. You can tell that to..”
Public vs. Private--Masturbation

- Teach where, when and who
- Inappropriate Touching
  - “Penis is finished”
  - Pictures of women, personal box at home
- Exercise is critical during teen and young adult years
- Challenges to handling masturbation
Public vs. Private

- Intercourse
  - Location, location, location!
- Birth Control
  - Options available for BOTH sexes
  - MUST discuss this with family
- Need as much, or more, information than typical teenager
  - And need to have it repeated
Different People—Different Actions

Do you know the difference?
Let’s see............
Girls who are friends

- Wave hello
- Talk about school
- Talk about weekends
- Laugh and tell jokes
- Like you and many other people

Girlfriends

- May hold hands
- May hug
- May kiss
- Do not touch private body areas
- Go on dates, to school functions, etc.
- Like you more than anyone else
Honor the “NO”
Honoring “No”

- Critical teaching component for safety
- Goes both ways—everyone has the right to say no
- Teach how to react to someone saying “no” to them
- Teach the body language of “no”
Navigating the Open Sea
Navigation

- Pre-Teach and Pre-Warn
- Constant Conversations
- Healthy Relationships and thoughts
- Sunday Night Conversations—recommend to families and share resources
- Books available for kids to see at all times for learning and questions
- Consider counseling---for EVERYONE!
School Programming Considerations

- Social Skill Acquisition time EVERY day
- Social Skill practice time in the community/or with typical peers
- Support needed for extracurricular events
- Need to determine the priority educational goals
- “How can we make this happen?”
My Personal Compass

Independence
Self-Esteem
Joy
Thanks for coming!

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