

WEBVTT

1 "Michelle sanko" (3650170624)

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Well, welcome, and thank you for calling into sickness office. I'm awareness series. My name's Michelle, and my care manager for the autism specialty team here through the format of this call. Your main line will remain muted throughout the entirety of the seminar. Any questions received throughout the presentation will be through the Webex platform and will be answered.

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Presenters discretion, however, we should have time at the end of the seminar for question and answer as well. It should be noted that we will only be answering questions that are related to today's topic and there will also be an option at the end to complete a short survey as well.

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I handle for today's seminar is available online at [www that Cigna dot com](http://www.thatsigna.com). Backslash autism scroll to the current topic section in the middle of your page, and click on today's topic labeled autism, sexual identity, sexual orientation and self awareness in the teen years, or follow along through other Webex presentation.

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It will be available once it is finalized at the same website.

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Please also note that not all policies cover today's topic for more specific information. If your policy covers topics discussed in today's seminars, please contact the autism team by calling the number on your medical card.

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Now, I today I have the pleasure of introducing Dr Eileen. Creon Dr. is a licensed clinical psychologist and assistant professor who specializes in autism across the lifespan in her research lab at Tufts University. She uses community participatory methods to improve access to healthcare.

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sixteens and adults, she also collaborates with self advocates in our clinical practice. Pegasus consulting to conduct adult office and assessments and to offer sexuality and relationship education, programming and training for families and organizations. And now I will hand it on over to you. Dr.

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Thank you so much and thanks for having me um, and welcome to everyone for this next 45 minutes to an hour discussion about sexuality and autism. This is 1 of my favorite things to chat about. And, like, you just heard, like, please feel free to pop questions. Then is we're going I have the chat box up, so I think I can see both.

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Yeah, so, let's, let's talk a little bit about what we're actually going to talk about today. Okay. Um, also as you might guess, I just like to say this at the beginning in case you've got little ears listening. We are talking about sexuality and sex education. So, we will be using of sort of range of anatomical words. So, if that is concerned for, you're just a heads up at the beginning that, um, yeah, I'll be using some.

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Those those words, as we move through this presentation.

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All right, so I'm gonna, um, briefly sort of jump on a little soapbox here and tell you my why, like, why I do this work cause I think this is really important for setting the stage uh, as to why? I think it's so important. And and hopefully while you're here, or if not, why you're here, why by the end of this presentation, you will also think this topic is really important. Um.

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The main big 1 is to prevent negative outcomes and improve positive outcomes. Right I really think that by talking about sexuality and relationships, that is the best way, um, to make her better things happen. Um, and I don't just think that, like, there's lots of research about that, which is really nice, the, the World Health organizations on the same page. So, um, you know, I think by having.

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in these conversations proactively we can do a lot of good in the lives of a lot of people um the next bullet is because sexuality it's just like everything else and i put a question mark so if you are listening you know probably fall into one if not multiple buckets right you are um artistic yourself you are a family member of someone who is artistic you work with people who are

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Statistic, and so you already have a very robust sort of toolkit of, like, strategies that work for your own learning for your family's learning how, you know, let's say your your child responds best to a new situation and things like that. And because of the stigma around sexuality, oftentimes like, oh, but I don't know how to talk about this topic. And I'm here to say you do, you're just gonna use.

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The same methods that you've been using, but you'll probably going to be saying, the word P\*\*\* a little bit more, right? Or, you know, whatever sort of, uh, you know, word would be the best best fit for you. So, um, I, I think part of what I'm hoping, uh, is is the impact of doing these sorts of taxes that, like, it's, it's, there's stigma around it. And maybe it's funny to say it out loud the 1st, few times. But I promise that someone who's been doing this for.

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For quite a while now you get used to it. Okay. Uh, and the last 1 and this is really the most important 1, but I like to to build up to it for dramatic effect is that autonomy is good for us right? If we know how our bodies work, how to take care of them, how to sort of, you know, uh, interact with other people in ways that make us all feel safe and comfortable. That is really good for us physically. It's really good.

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For our mental health, there's a lot of research backing that up and so for us to skip over sexuality and relationship health, does everyone a real disservice? And so that is that is why this work is so important to me and why I'm here.

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Um, so I'm going to set the stage a little bit. We're just going to talk about a couple of terms. I'll try not to get to professor about it, but it is good that we all know that. We're talking about the same thing and then I try and break it down to 4 big pieces that I think are really the important take homes around sexuality in relationship education in autism specifically. Um, this could be.

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A month long course, right. Um, but I think the overview will hit in the next hour or so that we're together will hopefully give you a good a good foundation and good jumping off point for further questions. And then I'm going to share some resources 1 of the benefits of running a research lab is that.

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We're able to sort of spend some time finding things that are free and then, you know, that are evidence based and things like that. And we've compiled some of those for you. So that if you're going to look at, um, you know, do some follow up to this call, you've got some places to go.

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Um, so, sexuality in relationship, education is a big term. Um, you know, sex Ed is a little bit easier to say, historically, these topics have been what we've talked about anatomy, contraception, reproduction like, how literally is a baby made with a man and a woman, right? So very concrete, um, very heterosexual model.

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What happens during puberty, how do we avoid sexually transmitted infections or things like that? And these things, you know, are good and important to cover. We shouldn't get those, but we're missing a big chunk of information here. Right? And so these pieces over on the right tend to be more of the sort of socially leading constructs that are related to relationship education. Right? You are.

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Really, probably, in much of a situation where you need to talk about contraception. If you have a little bit of communication with the partner, understanding what certain sexual behaviors are understanding, um, you know, consent, things like that, but too often in our sexuality relationship programming, we miss out on this right. Side. Right? And this is not good for.

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Right and then it is especially troublesome when you've got folks with different communication profiles. So, if you have someone who is, you know, artistic in communicating in ways that work for them, and they're communicating with someone who's neuro, typical and communicating way, that works, man, there's a lot of opportunities for misunderstanding. Um, so my perspective on this is very, you know, I can very much.

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I think where I tried to come from the newer diversity of sort of affirming paradigm right? And so how do we make everyone's communications needs meet? So we understand each other right? Um.

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And so these, these start ones are things that we're going to touch upon a little bit. Today. Some of these concepts, these are all really important to talk about. Um, but just for purposes of time as well we'll focus some of our, our energy.

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Um, so why talk about this, why is this such a hot topic because it's really been gaining sort of popularity over the last few years, which is fantastic to see as someone who sees this, um, autism in, in there's a lot of missed opportunity here. We're not created offering great programming. Uh, and there are some really.

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Historically, rooted reasons for this, so 1 is there's a lot of persistent myth about autism and sexuality. Um, if we were in the classroom, I would say, what have you heard but since we're in this online platform, I'll I'll give a couple of them to you. Um, 1 is that. People are not interested in romantic relationships. So, why do we need to talk about? Because it's not information.

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People are going to use so that is false. Um, researchers, after far, too long has this brilliant idea. Like, what? If we asked artistic people and artistic people said, yes, we would like romantic relationships and sexual relationships. Um, and that when we think about the development of people across the lifespan, there are many, um, sort of connections and sort of physical drives.

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Things like hunger cues, things like, um, you know, the need to have water and things like that. And sexuality is 1 of those. That is not different between autistic people and our typical people, there might be some ways that that has expressed your experience sort of like, sensory experience wise differs. But this, this myth that I just people are not interested in relationships. I just.

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Not true, there's some really interesting work that for so much as the people, the interest might come a little bit later. So not during adolescence or sort of early adolescence when we see for some non autistic people but, um, that it is still there. So very much something that we should be talking about, sort of early and often.

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The reverse part of that myth is that if you talk about sexuality in any sort of disability context, people become sexual aggressors. They will commit sexual crimes. So we cannot bring it up because we were keeping everybody safe. Um, that is also not true. Of course, like I label this persistent myth, so you're probably with me to that point. But, um, so there's not a ton of.

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research in this area which is interesting it's actually very difficult work to fund but the research that we do have shows that autistic people are no more or less likely to commit sexual crimes than non autistic people and interestingly that when I just think people do commit sexual crimes at similar rates not autistic people is that the crimes are less likely to be

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Assaulted, um, and I do always have the caveat here. Like, I don't think we should rank order different sexual crimes or things like that. But, um, as opposed to physically, sexually assaulting someone, it's things like, you know, looking at, um, pornography of people. They shouldn't be looking at, um, and so it's, it's there's an interesting sort, I think difference in behaviors that we don't understand that. Well, scientifically. So there's something there, but.

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The fact that, um, that people are more sexually aggressive with access to sexual information is is not true. So that's not a good, good reason to not offer this information.

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Um, the, the 2nd thing that's really good to know about, is that when we asked for applied questions about sexuality relationship education, that's where we see some differences between artistic learners and non autistic learners. Right? So things like, um, based knowledge about, um, sexual anatomy, like, can you label these body parts in many studies? There's not.

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Differences between autistic and non autistic teens or adults. Um, but it's that applied question. Okay. Like, you know, is this situation 1 where someone gave you consent or not it's reading the queues of other people, especially if they're Neuro type does not match your. So, if it's statistic to artistic person or non artistic to non artistic, um, that, that we see some differences, right?

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It really is that that practice so the historical way of being, like, let's slide a book across the desk and hope you read about puberty and sex Ed and and we won't really talk about it or practice it. Probably not a best learning model, um, which we probably knew anyway. Um, the other thing that's, uh, oftentimes overlooked, but really important to think about autism is that many folks have a.

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Sensory profile, right the sensory experience of a physical environment, or sort of being in contact with someone else is going to have a bigger impact on sort of their day to day or experience in someone who is not artistic. And historically, we have not really woven that into our teaching or understanding of sexuality and autism and that's a myth. We've missed this big pile of information.

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That would be useful. Um, so for the, the projects that that we do in my research lab, um, and certainly, hopefully in your own life talking directly to artistic people, or if you are not busy person thinking about what is impacted your preferences across your lifespan. Um, sometimes can hold a really important key to sexual functioning and, like, a romantic relationship.

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Okay, um, here's another reason why autism, uh, specific or autism tailored sex. It I think is really important. Context is really important in too many sex. Ed programs. We just say here's what we do or here's the rule or here. What's the what.

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What this is called and we don't say why.

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Okay, um, and so, for people who have difficulty sort of generalizing or developing context from this, that's a real miss. Because then it seems like every sort of social, romantic relationship rule or guideline that that exists is is a new 1 as opposed to like, here's how we would help make this decision. So, something that, that I really like to do in the groups that.

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We run is, okay, like, how, you know, how can this apply in multiple context right? Um, so the picture here, actually, at Tufts, our mascot is the elephant or the jumbos. Um, and so if you're looking at each individual piece of this element, and you're gonna miss the big picture, right? I mean, this this guy on the left probably could figure it out, but this doesn't mean anything. So you really need to see the, the bigger picture.

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Sure of why we do certain behaviors, um, you know, what is the long term goal and having those discussions because there's a lot of implicit information than the way we discuss sexuality and relationship education. So seeing more of these things out loud.

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Um, so here's a, here's a good example actually, the 2 message rule. Um, this is not a rule that I made up this exists in, uh, it's called the piers curriculum, which was developed at UCLA by Liz, and it's a social skills program. Um.

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So, there's sort of like, pros and cons of that, that program but there's 1 particular rule. I really like to talk about the 2 message rules that if you contact someone, and they do not respond to you after 2 messages that you should not contact them again until they reach out to you. And so this is 2 messages total. So, it's like, uh, you can text them and send them a message on Messenger.

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Or you can call them once or twice like, it's, um, that this rule of 2 is really important. Um.

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And in groups that we run, 1st, you know, especially for teams us, what do you think this number is? And oftentimes, the guess is a lot higher, uh, and so that sometimes can sort of cut off some potential, like, for for calling people too much or texting people too much. And then the, the 2nd, thing is, we're like, okay, but why is this the thing? Right? And it might be that other people might.

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Be bothered it might be that. Not to see people sometimes are really indirect. Right? And so they're not responding because they, they really don't want to talk to you, but they're not gonna say that cause they think they're being nice. Right? Um, and so giving that context for, here's the behavior to expect and read and why it might be happening is a really important part of the relationship aspect of sex education.

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That I think is really important to emphasize.

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The 2nd, big recommendation of these, these 4 points is to be clear.

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okay uh you might need to say penis to yourself in the mirror one hundred times no one hundred might be a little bit much um we tend to teach sex ed in ways that we learned sex ed so we're really sort of interesting uh cohorts moment here um you know i don't know the the ages of the people listening or what your experience has been but

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About how sexuality relationships were were taught, um, and discussed or not in your home right? Um, so.

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You know, are there ways that you can intentionally push back against those lessons or practices and this is on autism and sex and specific thing. This is really, really general. And then, in that case, let's say, especially if you're a parent, and you're trying to, to change some patterns about how you learn this information, I can get access to that information. Right? There aren't a ton of adult sex ed programs, which is a shame.

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Because that's maybe when more people are using the information in, in ways in sort of like, long term relationships. Um, but how can you really think about, um.

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Being as clear as you, you can be in ways that you might not used to be being clear. This is also really important because for, um, and at all, but for some artistic teens in particular peers are really important source of sexuality and relationship information. So, if you've got a team who either is socially isolated, or is maybe with other peers, but.

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Not picking up on some of the nuances of some of the stories people might be telling about dating or crushes or things like that. That's a big source of information that many of these teams are missing out on. And so oftentimes.

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Parents or groups are like, sort of stepping into to augment this information um.

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But that might not be something that we're Super prepared for. Right? I, I have a toddler who you may or may not here in the background. But, um, you know, most of us, like, we're in the hospital, like oh, like, I just gave birth this baby. Gosh, I can't wait to explain vaginal intercourse too. That's like, not usually a thing but how can we prepare ourselves when, when maybe that is something we need to be talking about.

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Um, so a big question related to this that I get is, what terminology should I use? Right? Should I be using the anatomically correct terms? Should I not say anything at all? Should I find a book and stick to that? So, I just highlight a couple of like, really sort of classical unclear terms that we use and to talk about sexuality right?

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Birds in the bees. That makes sense. Okay. Um, it's just not something. If I'm like oh, we're going to talk about the birds and bees today. If you didn't know that. I was talking about sort of sexuality in making a baby. Uh, you would be like, what, what actually are you talking about right? Um, same thing as, like, score like, oh, he scored.

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Right that could mean a whole bunch of different things and I say that not as like, the, the world's biggest sports enthusiast but you don't know if you're talking about sexuality. If you're talking about the big game last night, things like that. Okay. Um, the word Wiener, that means a couple of different things, right? It depends on the text. Uh, and also things like fun.

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Bags that is very confusing. Right? So, the reason I bring up these specific words, um, is that there are a ton of examples of these, and I'm sure that you can think of some of your own life. Um.

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So, there's, there's the accurate terms, right that we might think about, like, you know, having sex with someone having intercourse with someone breast P\*\*\*, that sort of thing. But they're also the words that that kids in particular might be hearing when they talk with your peers. And so our job is really to come up with a way to try and clarify all this and muddiness. Um, how do we move from.

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You know, I'm I'm not totally sure what we're talking about, but I'm gonna take my best guess to making kids feel like, okay. Have a good sense of what's going on. So, a lot of times what we'll do, um, in group, and this is a really fun activity, it's always awkward the 1st minute and then gets a lot better is I'll put a word for some sort of like, sexuality related term on the, on the screen. So, let's.

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Say for this example, let's say, put the word breast and like, what are all the words, you know, for breasts usually get a couple of seconds of silence and then people say can I swear and I say, yes, and then your job is to generate all the different terms or phrases that people might use. I always learn something new here. Right? Cause the, the.

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Phrasing around this, there's always new stuff that comes up. Um, and then oftentimes I'll correct. Um, errors or catch errors because kids might have words that are incorrect. I would say, like, for example, for for an older group, we were talking, we moved a little bit away from

anatomy. We're talking more about like, sexual behaviors and so someone brought up the term low job and someone.

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Was really misunderstanding what that term meant and so being able to correct that in a safe space uh, I think it was really important. So it's both ways to make sure that, you know, can just sort of accurate. It's also a really good opportunity to talk about.

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Context right. So context being, you know, the word breast is accurate, right? That people will know what you're talking about. If you're on the bus with a bunch of your friends.

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I don't know, maybe some kids are saying the WordPress, but they might not be right they might be saying, B\*\*\* they might be saying kids, but that's, you know, like, when we're in group, I'm like, we're going to agree to say, you know, breast or B\*\*\* in here, we're not gonna use the word tips or whatever we negotiate with that that group and so displaying that all these words mean the same thing. Um, but Here's where we would use.

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Certain words, in here words, that we wouldn't use it all right sometimes kids come out with things like Ooh, that's not a thing we're gonna say, and here's why always explaining why, if you can okay. Um, related to this, the presence of, um, body parts on communication devices, this is always a big thing to chat about. If you've got kids using communication.

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00:19:59.469 --> 00:20:19.469

Devices or adults is a good person using a communication device, um, that has sort of different vipers you need to have people's genitalia on there. Uh, we'll talk about safety in a little bit. There's a huge safety reason for this. It is also sort of like a human rights autonomy piece. Um, I was saying brief and I won't I won't get too much into it. Sometimes I hear, especially from schools are like, oh.

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00:20:19.469 --> 00:20:38.789

I think if we put that on there, like, he would just press the button all day. I'm like, I don't know how many, 12 or 13 year old boys you've worked with. Right? But that is not. Is that right? That is just 12 or 13 year old boys, um, which I say, sort of tongue in cheek, right? A little bit like, sarcastic. Um, but I think, you know, that is a developmental part of it. Like, sometimes those words will get said a whole bunch.

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00:20:38.789 --> 00:21:00.649

Uh, consent, here's something that we don't teach that, well, in this country, if you've been watching news at any point in the past, it's like decade or so. Um, but here's the thing slightly depressing information about this. Um, so group of researchers did a study of college students, and they said when you're thinking about intimate relationships.

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00:21:00.649 --> 00:21:20.649

How do you give in here consent for those? And so they had them list them all out and they did this, you know, statistical factor analysis they said, okay, let's sort all of these responses and they came up with these 4 boxes. So verbal direct. So when people are saying, yes, no, stop more, something like that indirect verbals. So, the classic, like, oh, I've got a test though. I have a.

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00:21:20.649 --> 00:21:39.839

Headache so that people are saying, perhaps no, but giving me a different reason, a direct and non verbal, pushing someone away running away and then non verbal indirect, which is sort of growing in a frequency of use but, like, ghosting someone right or maybe, like, hearing something through a friend of a friend. Okay so here are 4.

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00:21:39.839 --> 00:21:49.019

Boxes if you think back to either sex said that you received, or maybe that you're watching your child receive, um, which box do we teach to.

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00:21:49.019 --> 00:22:02.819

It's usually this 1, we say, oh, if someone's doing something, you don't want them to do, say, stop run away right? Um, which is good advice. I'm not saying that we shouldn't do that. Here's where some bumper news comes in. Researchers also. Ask. Hey.

80 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:22:02.819 --> 00:22:06.269

Now, that we've got all these different types of methods. Which ones do you use?

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00:22:06.269 --> 00:22:16.589

Guess which was least likely to be used this exact 1, verbal and direct people didn't do that. They were really into the indirect ways, um, in nonverbal ways. So.

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00:22:16.589 --> 00:22:25.679

I bring this up because even when we, let's say you've got access to a great sex ed program, and it is a really good fit with someone's communication profile.

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00:22:25.679 --> 00:22:43.619

Is it teaching to the skills that are actually being used in sort of a socially valid way? Right we've got 1 curriculum that I love, but there's a whole chapter on leaving a good voicemail. You know, I I haven't dated in in the current context, but my understanding from my college students is that if you're leaving voicemails to get a date, you're probably not dating all that effectively.

84 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:22:43.619 --> 00:22:58.409

Okay, so we really need to think about, um, yes, it's good to tell people to say no. And to hear. No, but are they actually in those situations perhaps not so we need to reveal some of that, you know, hidden curriculum, uh, what, you know, things that are going on said.

85 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:22:58.409 --> 00:23:19.549

So, our research lab did a study of autistic adults, and we asked them, like, hey, here are all of these topics about sex ed now that you're adult, right? And you've been through puberty, you've been through, you know, if you had sex and adolescence, you've been through that if you could go back, what do you wish you had had more info on? What do you wish you could get more resources on now?

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00:23:19.549 --> 00:23:35.339

Um, and we asked about most and and beyond of the topics you saw on, that 1st slide with all like anatomy and reproduction and and things like that. And here were our top 4, um, in order sexual orientation, gender, identity consent in assertiveness.

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00:23:35.339 --> 00:23:55.339

So, if you'll notice not anatomy, not right none of that sort of like very scientific concrete lack of sort of the social component piece really considered a certain. There are incredible social skills to be asking to learn more about and sexual orientation and gender identity really reflects both the, the lack of services in this area that.

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00:23:55.339 --> 00:24:15.339

We have, and then some particular parts of the autistic population that we'll talk about in a few slides. Okay. Um, so this was with, um, over 130, artistic, um, and non artistic adults. So, we also compared these were not the top, um, topics for the non autistic adults. So, sometimes I get a question. Like, should we adapt that said for, um.

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00:24:15.339 --> 00:24:35.339

Stick learners, and in my dream, completely grant funded, uh, world everyone would get like, a slightly tailored approach, but I do think we need to be emphasizing some of these skills because people aren't taught them in the same way. So, for example, for many people with disabilities, um, and certainly for many people with autism, there's a real emphasis on.

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00:24:35.339 --> 00:24:51.239

On compliance in therapy in school and things like that. Um, and so skills, they consent and assertiveness are harder to teach because it's a real paradigm shift from how children in schools settings particular might have been learning. Okay. Um.

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00:24:51.239 --> 00:25:10.169

So, yes, so we're continuing to collect data related to this and see if we can see some other patterns related to, like, people's personal identities by sort of like race and gender identity and things like that. But, I think good to know that these are things that are want more information on. So, as providers, as parents as friends, we can try and, you know, support that.

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00:25:10.169 --> 00:25:17.219

Um, my 3rd point is to use a positive and inclusive framework. Um.

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00:25:17.219 --> 00:25:36.989

The history of sexuality and disability is is is a tough 1, right? Um, you might already know this if if not there's some, some interesting, not slightly standing resources. I can point you to. Um, but I what I like to phrase like, this, this area has been through enough stigma. There's really no need to add to it. If there's something that you don't know, are unsure of.

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00:25:36.989 --> 00:25:56.989

We can just say that right? What I love love love about a good success program is like, I, I think 100 of the time I've done this exit program, someone has asked a question at some point, or brought up a website or something and I'm like, wow. I have no idea what that is, right and modeling how we look it up, because this will not be the 1st or the last time that someone also.

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00:25:56.989 --> 00:26:12.419

In a group, or that you're working with, uh, needs to look up some information. So I'm like, what, what sort of sites could give us this information. If we just pop it into Google, we need to be careful, because we might get some bad information. How do we assess the quality of of information that we're looking for? Um.

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00:26:12.419 --> 00:26:16.529

And so here is part of my, my thought process on this. So.

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00:26:16.529 --> 00:26:36.529

As a clinical psychologist, so I have my research lab where we, we study this and then I have my practice where I work a lot, you know, especially in in schools, and, and, um, directly with families where some sort of like, sexual event will happen. Right? So, let's say, uh, you know, little Timmy is caught masturbating on the bus, right? That's a Dr cream gets called right? Um.

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00:26:36.529 --> 00:26:58.819

A big strong reaction, right? Maybe schools upset bus drivers that parents are upset. It's a big thing. Okay. Unfortunately, this bills is association of sexual behavior and a big negative reaction right? Whether, or not that was the intention. And so there's a sense of shame that comes up this means there's a decreased chance of sharing and asking questions. And this phenomenon has been shown in research studies over time.

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00:26:58.819 --> 00:27:09.869

Um, a number of different populations, so we don't love this. Right? This isn't what we want to see cause we don't want less of a chance of people sharing or asking questions. Ideally.

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00:27:09.869 --> 00:27:29.869

If we had this sort of positive, inclusive framework, this is something that we can talk about a little bit earlier and a little bit more often. Right? So that, that the stage is already set. That's not saying the event is still not going to happen. Right? Um, that, you know, Timmy might still masturbate on the bus, but then that door for communication is already open. There's a common language that already exists. Maybe.

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00:27:29.869 --> 00:27:49.869

Some resources that people already know are are there, so it's a little bit less panic, inducing for the support group. So then there's increased knowledge, more social behaviors for everybody. Right? So that gives us a thumbs up. So, you know, by coming to talks like this, maybe by checking out some of the resources, and I'm going to point to a little bit later on hopefully you've put yourself in a good position to sort of feel more comfortable. If, if.

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00:27:49.869 --> 00:27:59.129

You're in a situation where you're like, oh, this didn't go the way I wanted to, or, you know, a, a child of yours or a patient, or a student of yours or something like that.

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00:27:59.129 --> 00:28:08.849

Um, this is important for a lot of reasons, um, around safety that we'll talk about. Um, and also, I think is important for people to feel like they are in charge of.

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00:28:08.849 --> 00:28:15.149

Their own sort of like, you know, relationship and and sexual decision making, which I think is a really important thing to keep in mind.

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00:28:15.149 --> 00:28:19.589

The other piece I want to mention, speaking of a, a positive frame.

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00:28:19.589 --> 00:28:35.459

Especially disability, we spend a lot of time focusing on, like, what can go wrong and how we can, um, you know, minimize negative outcomes, which is important. Right? We want to keep people safe and that is sort of a part, you know, there's, there's positive and negative ends of sort of, the sexual health. Um.

107 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:28:35.459 --> 00:28:38.639

Spectrum, but also that there's a lot to celebrate here.

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00:28:38.639 --> 00:28:58.639

Right. Um, someone's 1st, period. I mean, there are a lot of beautiful cultural customs around that. And if they're not is that 1, you could sort of make in your house. Like I know. I'm in my family growing up my mother, she got us a blanket that had a big picture of a goddess on it. The 1st time. You got your blank and you sort of like, joined the joint, the womanhood sort of thing. Um, is there a way you can.

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00:28:58.639 --> 00:29:18.639

And celebrate that, even if maybe there's some, like, sadness or discomfort, or frustration around the 1st, period, um, 1st, crush and unrequited love. I really like to stress this. Especially if you're someone who has young kids that sometimes the instinct could be like, oh, like, you know, that person might not like you back. So let's not do that. Unrequited love is a really tough.

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00:29:18.639 --> 00:29:38.639

Part of love, like, um, relationships and dating is is rife with failure. Um, I think we can all probably say that from both personal experience and from watching a movie. Um, but, but that the, these things like being able to talk about and celebrate, those, makes it a lot more likely that people are going to share other aspects of relationships that they want to talk about.

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00:29:38.639 --> 00:29:41.879

That are sort of go, um, for support or just like to.

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00:29:41.879 --> 00:29:47.849



Here's something nice that happen. So, setting up those nice conversations, even if maybe they're a little bit uncomfortable.

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00:29:47.849 --> 00:30:07.849

So, let's talk about gender, identity and sexual orientation, using this sort of inclusive framework. So there's been lots of really interesting, interesting studies. And especially in the past, I want to say, like, 10 years or so um, that show sort of more decidedly through through time. Now, that there's more gender diversity in artistic populations.

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00:30:07.849 --> 00:30:17.909

Non autistic population, so, um, add in Australia, and in another ones, in particular, they do a lot of population based studies so the rates are just much higher. Right? Um.

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00:30:17.909 --> 00:30:37.909

So, folks who are non binary folks who are trends, um, and for artistic youth, who are have have less access to sex and materials. Um, they're already sort of coming into the, the area of relationships with less access to information. That's really useful to them. And then, in addition, if you think about the staff, if they're more like.

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00:30:37.909 --> 00:30:57.909

To identify gender, diverse and more than 90% of the sex said, curriculum in the U. S focuses on heterosexual relationships between system people that leaves a really big education gap there. Right. Um, and so both for autonomy and sort of that human rights perspective, but also from a safety sexual health, mental health.

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00:30:57.909 --> 00:31:17.909

Effective that is something that we have got to work on fixing. Right there's a lot of angles where this problem is being maintained. And so there's some really interesting work being done in this area as well. But I think making sure if you're involved in program development, or if you're seeking out a a goodset set program, there are more and more communities developed for.

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00:31:17.909 --> 00:31:26.609

Gender diverse, um, artistic people, because that is a really important identity and sort of learning need to get to get met. Um.

119 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:31:26.609 --> 00:31:42.749

I shared this briefly. This is not something that I made and there's the website down here, but this can be a really good tool to talk about gender identity. Because sometimes that's a question that I that I get. I know that was not something we talked about. I think at all in my sex, Ed program going up, all of mine was fairly brief. Um.

120 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:31:42.749 --> 00:32:02.749

So the rainbow at the top, being gender identity, how people think about their gender, uh, the green dots, whole body gender expression how people might present so close hair cut and make up that sort of thing? Um, sex assigned at birth. So, your chromosomes of female, male, other intersects, and then the sort of MasterCard looking logo here, which.

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00:32:02.749 --> 00:32:22.749

Which actually isn't, but who you're physically attracted to, and emotionally attracted to and so sometimes, um, yeah, there is a teaching tool for providers or parents. Um, I'll use this to talk about some terms and then for teen or a young adult, um, or or any age adult groups. So we'll talk about, like, okay, where are you on this? These sort of lines today. Um, and.

122 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:32:22.749 --> 00:32:33.509

Just talk a little bit about what that means. So that's a good tool and it's available and so many languages I can't I can't think the language is not available. And so if you go to that site, um, you can download any of that.

123 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:32:33.509 --> 00:32:46.169

Uh, in safety. All right, that's a big 1. we want to set the stage for success. Okay. Um, abuse rates are fairly high in the autism population. Uh, uh.

124 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:32:46.169 --> 00:33:06.169

There are sort of a separate there's a lot of reasons for that. And it's also likely that we underestimate how high the rates are. Because for many people who might not communicate verbally or rely as heavily on verbal communication, finding ways to report sexual abuse is really, really challenging. Okay. Um, this is something that we're actually working on in my.

125 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:33:06.169 --> 00:33:12.029

We just finished developing, like, interactive video.

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00:33:12.029 --> 00:33:26.219

Uh, like, virtual reality tool that asks for, like, safety type questions that younger kids can play. So we can try and get at some of their assistants of safety without asking directly. Um, so we can practice skills before. It might be a problem. Um, but there's not.

127 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:33:26.219 --> 00:33:43.139

There's not a ton of progress in the area, which is incredible to me, considering the high rates of sexual abuse participant adults, who who can report on, um, incidents on their own, the rates of sexual victimization is extremely high. So, we see really high rates of PTSD. Uh, in this population.

128 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:33:43.139 --> 00:33:56.849

So, uh, in a similar study that I mentioned before we also asked or a group of artistic adults where they got information about certain certain topics. So this 1, we asked about consent. What did you learn about consent?

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00:33:56.849 --> 00:34:00.659

So, the big blue piece, and the big red piece, that's the Internet.

130 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:34:00.659 --> 00:34:20.659

The blue piece is Internet, uh, website and verifiable quality. And what we meant by that was sort of, like, maybe a medical site, some place that, you know, like a dot, or something that had some legitimacy legitimacy to where we could maybe trust that the information was pretty solid the red was sort of, like, um, you know, we described Here's like, 1st hits on Google so this sometimes.

131 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:34:20.659 --> 00:34:34.409

Is boring sometimes it's just maybe like a random blog that popped up places that ideally right both as a, as a person as a parent, I wouldn't love for my child to be learning about consent because that is such a nuanced topic. Okay. Um.

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00:34:34.409 --> 00:34:54.409

so you know depending on the the folks who are listening this dark blue piece this part always bumps me out so i'm a clinical psychologist right so this is care provider so this lumps a lot of us together right so if you're a pediatrician your primary care provider or a therapist of some sort that's all of us we're at one point seven five percent people don't really ask us right um some from friends which isn't so bad

133 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:34:54.409 --> 00:35:14.409

But even sort of parents and siblings are none of us can compete with the Internet. Um, and so knowing that that Internet use and practice, um, and being able to navigate the Internet and media literacy, I think should be a very important part of sexuality, relationship education cause it's just the reality of today's world whether.

134 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:35:14.409 --> 00:35:22.079

People are online dating or not really? Just, there's sort of all sorts of access to other people and sexuality. They the information, um.

135 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:35:22.079 --> 00:35:42.079

There's a resource for this sort of check out and discuss the rules in your state. A big point that I like to make is sometimes we assume that kids know what sort of legal or not legal or that they'll pick it up from their peers. And I really am a big advocate for being as clear and direct as you can be. So, like, if you, if you are 19, right? Um, you do not text with.

136 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:35:42.079 --> 00:35:46.049

Someone who is this certain age or do not send pictures of yourself to this person? Like.

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00:35:46.049 --> 00:35:53.129

Being really clear, and making it really visual what the rules are about that to include to avoid some legal trouble. Um.

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00:35:53.129 --> 00:36:13.129

1 activity that we spend a lot of time on in in groups, or working families is coming up with a plan to be a detective about catfishing. So, cap fishing is when you pretend to be someone that you are not on the Internet, this is a really big problem. Sometimes people are sending sexual materials. Sometimes they're asking for money. This is something you get a lot of calls about from families.

139 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:36:13.129 --> 00:36:33.129

That it is not something again that, like, art has been as much of an issue historically, because the the Internet played less of the big role in relationship development, especially for younger children, um, but binding ways to be a detective about it. It's actually a really fun activity in many of the, the teens adults. I work with have some good strategies and then we create like a checklist. So when you meet someone.

140 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:36:33.129 --> 00:36:38.249

New online that you've never met before, how can we follow some of these steps? Um.

141 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:36:38.249 --> 00:36:58.249

Parental controls and supervised times, so some of, you know, I don't know about you, but for some of these technologies that come out, I'm like, oh, my gosh to figure out the parental controls would take, like, way more time than I just like, have the bandwidth for um, there are some guides that exist, uh, we used to run in grad school. We had a group of us who would do like workshops, or people would come with their devices and we would set up parental.

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00:36:58.249 --> 00:37:18.249

Controls so if you've got someone in your life, who could help you figure that out do that I think the other part of this I'm in working with people. And the older end of the spectrum is that sometimes people are accessing sexual, sexually explicit material. And that might be okay, um, that's a much bigger discussion and deciding, you know, where that line between sending a boundary.

143 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:37:18.249 --> 00:37:38.249

For for safety and legal reasons, and letting people sort of express their sexuality. That's a very complex, complicated question. But I'll leave that there for you to sort of mull over and then maybe we'll see or see ourselves in in the future and we can chat more about it. But, um, Internet safety is a really big thing that I, that I think she really should fall under the sexuality relationship.

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00:37:38.249 --> 00:37:59.839

education umbrella another big piece is to start early or now right if you're sitting here be like oh my gosh i wish someone had taught me this or oh my gosh i wish i had talked about this with my kid years ago that's okay hey we are stuck in this really funky societal model where let's talk about algebra and sex education differences okay and i say this is someone who

145 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:37:59.839 --> 00:38:13.590

major did math i have a lot of respect for that i love math think about algebra though right you learn counting you learn adding multiplying and then you work your way up to work problems and then you learn algebra right if you've mastered all of that right um

146 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:38:13.590 --> 00:38:18.660

Less than 22% of American adults use algebra in their day to day life.

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00:38:18.660 --> 00:38:24.000

I myself included, I don't use the terminology route then we think about sex education, right?

148 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:38:24.000 --> 00:38:37.380

Usually, the model is around age 13 you get about 60 minutes on how to avoid thing. Now. That's a little bit of exaggeration. Hopefully it's a little bit more, but it's not that much more. Right? It's not this usually this big, comprehensive program in this country.

149 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:38:37.380 --> 00:38:57.380

More than 97% of American adults where they're without a diagnosis will have some sort of, romantic or intimate relationship. Right? We are not preparing people for that is sometimes I think seen is almost like a

frivolous topic or an extra topic when, in fact, it's something that the majority of the population is doing. So I feel like we should get them.

150 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:38:57.380 --> 00:39:03.960

Ready for that, right? Um, there are many countries where they use like a lifespan model, which is really good. Um.

151 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:39:03.960 --> 00:39:23.960

You know, doing things like, you know, reading picture books about consent and boundaries W, with younger kids. So you're building up to the to those skills right? I'm not advocating for saying, oh, let's talk about, like, and in kindergarten. No one's suggesting that, but especially if you've got, you know, if you are, or you've got a kid who is learning about anything.

152 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:39:23.960 --> 00:39:37.590

And, like, a lot of review is helpful, that is also going to be true for success. So, just making sure that you're using the same learning models like a lot of review, teaching and tiny building blocks to get to some of these bigger themes. That lesson is going to remain true.

153 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:39:37.590 --> 00:39:57.590

And, you know, why else? This is tricky is because sex can be difficult to talk about. Okay. Um, the personal value is in a daily availability of curriculum has the greatest influence on the content of the curriculum based on teacher report for sex ed programs. Right? So the teacher's particular beliefs that has a huge impact on access, which.

154 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:39:57.590 --> 00:40:10.470

Is troublesome because we don't really prepare most of our professional roles, especially within the autism and disability space to talk about sexuality. So who's supposed to do it? Right we're really love sort of all pointing at each other. Um.

155 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:40:10.470 --> 00:40:30.470

Artistic teams don't generally bring sex up, like, many teams when they're in a provider's office. Um, but they respond favorably. When asked. So, let's be asking the question. Right? Are you dating? Do you have a crush? Do you want to be? What are your long term goals? And this is interesting. This is not, um, autism specific, but, um, I bring it up because it's still threateningly.

156 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:40:30.470 --> 00:40:44.610

To me about 70% of med students, think that they're going to have to address and treat sexual concerns as an important part of their future careers just under 40% feel adequately trained to do. So, I would imagine this number and the disability space is much, much, much, much lower.

157 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:40:44.610 --> 00:41:04.610

Okay um, and so for many of us, we're relying on our medical providers to jumpstart this conversation. I'm medical providers might not know that, right? Like, how do we tell them that part of this study that you mentioned before where we're developing is virtual, um, sexuality screening tool uh, is that we're making that, like, the score from that? Like, how kids respond gets.

158 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:41:04.610 --> 00:41:18.990

Auto populates a list of resources and references for the provider to, like, give to the family. Um, we're just in the process of piloting that. So, if anyone's interested in exploring that with us, let me let me know, it should be should be fun looking forward to it. Um.

159 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:41:18.990 --> 00:41:32.790

So, our, our research group looked into this a little bit more specifically, because we're like, this comes up a lot. Like when I talked with parents, like, oh, I thought they would learn this here. And teachers are also saying the same thing. So, we surveyed, uh, parents or guardians and school staff so it could be the.

160 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:41:32.790 --> 00:41:43.170

Teacher or some sort of direct service professional in the school of young adults. So ages, 16 to 25 of the age range that we use. Um, and we said, okay, here are bunch of sex and topics.

161 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:41:43.170 --> 00:41:47.280

Are you teaching about this and do you think you should be teaching about this?

162 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:41:47.280 --> 00:42:07.280

The good news from this is that across both parents and teachers, and every single category is that the number of people who are teaching about it is lower than the number of people who feel like, they should be teaching about it. The reason that this is good news, is that I think people are here for this information right? Ideally, these numbers would be the same people who think they should be talking.

163 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:42:07.280 --> 00:42:27.280

So this gap represents some discomfort or lack of resources. So, this is a real opportunity as a researcher as a disseminate this information with, like, all right we have got to get some resources on gender identity. It looks like contraception over. 90% of parents think that they should be talking about contraception. 35% are, how can we make up for.

164 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:42:27.280 --> 00:42:31.470

That difference. Okay. Um, it's also good to understand in a, what.

165 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:42:31.470 --> 00:42:50.340

Parents think teachers are talking about what teachers thinks parents should talk about uh, we have a tool, um, on my my practice website, actually, that we sort of assign, what are the different topics who should talk about them and whose role is that? Cause it's just a conversation that needs to be made explicit. We need to describe the context. Right? Well, all comes around. Look at that.

166 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:42:50.340 --> 00:43:05.520

Um, couple of interesting stuff, because sometimes a question that I get sexual development, um, when do we talk about different topics? So, kids learn in sort of a pretty solid on gender roles by round age. 3.

167 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:43:05.520 --> 00:43:19.470

Attraction so start having questions, or being interested in other people starts to merge around 9 or 10 years old, and that's across identities. So, whatever sort of sexual orientation um, people are identifying with later in life that initial attraction to other people starts fairly early.

168 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:43:19.470 --> 00:43:39.470

Uh, puberty, the average beginning age of that is about 10 for girls about 11 and a half for boys, um, sexual behaviors, and sort of takes a lifelong learners situation. Okay. Um, what I think is really interesting to take home, is that when you think about the timing for autistic kids in particular there hasn't been as much.

169 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:43:39.470 --> 00:43:59.470

Work on this to see if the timelines are quite the same, which I think is in this, because we lost we spend a lot of time thinking about, like, when do we offer this information but there's not a lot of scientifically driven ways to make those decisions. So, and part of this study that we did, we asked again not to seek adults retrospectively. When did you 1st have think about these things? Have these experiences.

170 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:43:59.470 --> 00:44:16.710

We asked neuro typical adults, the same questions, and we found that by diagnostic group thinking about gender identity and sexual orientation was not different between the 2 groups viewing porn was not different in the U. S. the average age. The child views sexually explicit material online is 8, right? Which is.

171 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:44:16.710 --> 00:44:36.710



very scary to me um engaging in romantic relationships similar timeline and experiencing a first kiss right so when that happened it was around the same age so there's some early research to suggest that the the timing of when we offer information should be the same there's a little bit i have sort of a leaning toward i think we should do a double weight i think we should do provide information early

172 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:44:36.710 --> 00:44:50.790

Because we don't know when people will need the information and then like, a refresher a little bit sort of later in puberty, maybe into early adulthood. People have more of their I didn't need experiences and sort of social location figured out or practiced.

173 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:44:50.790 --> 00:45:10.790

The other really important thing to know is that the onset of puberty seems to be earlier by almost 10 months for autistic girls. Right? We're not sure why but there's been a couple of studies that have shown this also relatedly that their higher rates of autistic traits. And children with precocious pupil your, when puberty is starting earlier. So if you are the, the parent of.

174 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:45:10.790 --> 00:45:25.080

A young girl, um, knowing that you might want to start preparing for some aspects of puberty earlier, especially if, you know, this might be sort of a sensory upsetting event. Right um, so that the, the prep, the timeline for that is, you're leaving yourself lots of leak.

175 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:45:25.080 --> 00:45:45.080

Okay, all right so we've got about, let's see. Oh, perfect, good about 13 minutes up. I'm going to show you a couple of resources and tools. Um, I just wanna make sure I don't see any questions in the chat, but also, if I'm looking in the wrong place, and we can definitely tell me. So I'll continue to keep an eye out. But let's talk about what do you do now?

176 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:45:45.080 --> 00:45:59.370

Into this top, um, so I'm going to share a couple of things with you, you know, take them, take them or leave them. Hopefully some of them will be useful. Um, 1 thing I do like to share is that our research lab, which is very creatively named at the Korean lab, we're working on an acronym in.

177 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:45:59.370 --> 00:46:19.370

February 2020, and that was a project that fell to the bottom right now. We've got a virtual sex ed program, and it's a research study, running for verbal autistic teams, 13 to 17 and we're also trying to learn a little bit about how autistic kids develop ideas of gender. So, we're just asking, like, we do a a toy test like, we would play with this toy.

178 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:46:19.370 --> 00:46:39.370

The kids do you like to play with? And both of these are on zoom. So anywhere in the U. S. you can participate in these. Um, and this is a great way. Both like to get sort of a, a service and to contribute to improving our knowledge around this. So, um, those are a couple of things we have going on. And then both the, the lab, uh, Instagram and Facebook and Pegasus caps is my practice. We.

179 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:46:39.370 --> 00:46:51.750

Our resources, there's a fair number of like, free webinars, especially by self advocates that we try to repost. Um, and so we try to be more of like a resource to to people as a research lab. Right? We're just sharing that information.

180 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:46:51.750 --> 00:47:11.750

Um, also, in the my practice, we run a lot of virtual parent groups to discuss, like, oh, this is something I'm really nervous about, especially for parents of adult children who are autistic, we have other, um, intellectual developmental disabilities and I think that peer support with other parents, um, it's hugely beneficial, although that might be very psychologist of need to say.

181 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:47:11.750 --> 00:47:25.410

And then there are 2 tools here that that I did not generate the citations are at the bottom. Um, but social stories. And if that's something that, that works for you, it works for a learner that, you know, adapting those for related topics. Um.

182 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:47:25.410 --> 00:47:45.410

And then also visuals for things like tracking, you know, periods right. And cycles and things like that. Um, I do see a question in the chat. Yeah. Oh, there's a couple. Great. Um, so can you speak a little more to the topic of consent and how to help increase autonomy for artistic doesn't understand social cues. Yes, so there is a fantastic.

183 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:47:45.410 --> 00:47:51.030

Called the autism relationship handbook. Actually if I type in a chat, can everyone read that? But.

184 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:47:51.030 --> 00:47:55.080

Handbook and is faith Harper.

185 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:47:55.080 --> 00:48:05.310

And, uh, Joe Bill spelling his question that came out within the past year or 2. um, that is, um.

186 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:48:05.310 --> 00:48:25.200

Written by self advocates very readable. Um, and it talks specifically about some sort of like a certain assertiveness and consent skills. There's a, there's acronym they use and I just, I just love it. I now recommend it to all of the patients that I've worked with, and sort of policies that you work with. Um, so that is where I might start and especially, um.

187 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:48:25.200 --> 00:48:40.680

The the social queues piece of it, I think it does a really nice job of, like, here juice that might be helpful to read. And here, you know, if you have different reactions to different queues, Here's what to do. And I think because it's from a self advocate perspective, I really like to recommend that 1. um.

188 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:48:40.680 --> 00:49:00.680

Can you speak more how to access outside support for sex and for individuals that are uncomfortable to speak discuss with parents? Yes, you go to identify a super user. Okay. Um, and so this is someone who is going to be able to have that conversation and, and, you know, I'm assuming this is maybe someone who is is asked the question as the parent. Um, but is there someone who can take.

189 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:49:00.680 --> 00:49:04.260

That role on and can you be specific about that? So the.

190 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:49:04.260 --> 00:49:24.260

Low key joke, though, not Joe, because all these kids are starting into puberty as many of my friends have kids, and they've been like oh, like, and we'll give you the sex talk when the time comes, because they know they do for work right now. They've told me this, and when they were like, 2 years old, I was like, oh, hilarious. And now I'm like doing the quick count. It's gonna be a lot of them, but having someone that they feel comfortable talking to doesn't have to be parents.

191 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:49:24.260 --> 00:49:44.260

I had this really wonderful, um, mother, uh, daughter, uh, group that I worked with once and the, the, the 2 of them were like, we're just not going to be able to talk about this. The mother in particular. She's like, I, I can't do it. Like, I just, it's not how I operate, and they did a notebook. Um, and this was something, you know, both of them were able to to write to each other. And that was their type of communication that works. So they never really spoke out.

192 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:49:44.260 --> 00:49:49.500

Loud about it, but they were still able to ask questions and share some information, which I thought was really nice.

193 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)  
00:49:49.500 --> 00:49:53.310  
Um, so.

194 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)  
00:49:53.310 --> 00:49:56.400  
Let's see, um.

195 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)  
00:49:56.400 --> 00:50:17.780  
Sorry, I was scrolling up a little bit. Um, how do we address sex with individuals who have did these are boundaries regarding the topic? Yes. Um, example being an individual who identifies talking about sex is inappropriate, and can result in anger. So, a couple of ways that I approach is 1, is that I try to find sort of less invasive ways to have this information.

196 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)  
00:50:17.780 --> 00:50:35.160  
Found but accessible it might not be the moment for this person. Right? Um, we're sort of like being near the situation, like saying, I'm talking to someone and maybe they're not sitting right there with the, the 2 of us, and having a group conversation, but they're nearby. So, they can sort of over here part of it if there's a different.

197 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)  
00:50:35.160 --> 00:50:55.160  
learning strategy sort of social story that can work and then making sure that you're sort of continuing to offer that it's there even if people get really upset about it right it this is i think the idea of tailored sector is we want people to have access to the information some people won't want this information right um like uh i should have mentioned this before but sometimes we will bring up

198 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)  
00:50:55.160 --> 00:51:15.160  
Sexuality and autism, um, the rates might be a slightly higher than non autistic populations but more and more stories are showing them. It's not considerably. So and so, someone might be like yeah, this, I'm not interested in this. This isn't relevant to me. That's okay. Right. So, but this knowing where you can get the information, if you do need it sometime, I think is really important. And.

199 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)  
00:51:15.160 --> 00:51:26.310  
Do you think emphasizing the safety part can be really important? Um, there are a couple of good visuals. Um, actually, let me show you the, the visual that I'm talking about um, in a, in a book that's called, um.

200 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)  
00:51:26.310 --> 00:51:38.580  
Sexuality and relationships, I think, for people, intellectual disability so it's not autism specific. Everything is a good way to to have some of

those conversations in a really visual way. Um, so, let me share a couple of.

201 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:51:38.580 --> 00:51:58.260

Resources and then I see there's a couple more questions so we'll get back to those, but just in case people are popping off. Right. Too. Um, so our lab website, um, which if you just look at Korean lab and Tufts, we'll pop up, we keep compiling and this is updated fairly regularly. 6 said resource list. So we have, um.

202 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:51:58.260 --> 00:52:01.860

Some specific programs that that people have, um.

203 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:52:01.860 --> 00:52:19.380

Given some articles, a couple of websites, there's some books television shows, we try to keep this updated. Um, and then we also have a few, uh, like papers that we've written on our Labs. So, if you're interested in any of the results of some of the studies that I mentioned, those are those are all in there. Um.

204 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:52:19.380 --> 00:52:38.730

And so those are a couple of things also, any studies that we have, like, the ones that I just just mentioned about the sex ed project is more info on that the organization for autism research is really great resource called sex set for self advocates. That was developed with self advocates, which I love. Uh, and so if you scroll down.

205 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:52:38.730 --> 00:52:58.730

There are a whole bunch of different topics, so let's say you want to do dating 101. you click on dating 101, and there are a bunch of mini chapters and so, for each of these chapters, there's the text that's written. And then a video of someone reading it out loud. And then at the end, there's like a little quiz. If you want to do it, so sometimes I recommend this to teams or adults, and I'm working with him.

206 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:52:58.730 --> 00:53:06.960

More often than not, I'm sending parents and providers there because they're facilitating these conversations. And so this can be a good place to start. Um.

207 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:53:06.960 --> 00:53:14.580

Also, if you're looking for videos, this is not an artist and specific resource, but amazing or takes all of these.

208 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:53:14.580 --> 00:53:31.770

Concepts, um, and makes very cool. Brief animated videos are all about, like, 2 to 3 minutes. Um, so healthy relationships puberty. I like most of them. I always watch them 1st to see, you know, if I like them, I'd have to find 1 that I really don't don't like. And again, this can be for, um.

209 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:53:31.770 --> 00:53:40.620

People you're, you're working with who might have a diagnosis, or oftentimes I'm recommending, you know, parents or providers go, go, check this out. Um.

210 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:53:40.620 --> 00:54:00.620

And so, just a couple of thank you, and then we'll finish up the questions, but for all of our research projects, we use a community advisory board of self advocates and parents that young kids with the diagnosis of autism. And then some self diagnose people across the lifespan and then we have a bunch of research assistants who are Neuro day version as well who help with this work. So they obviously.

211 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:54:00.620 --> 00:54:12.390

Should be doing a lot to all the results that you saw. Um, and then some of the steady announcements and and, uh, parent groups that I mentioned, there's the, the website for any of those, those pieces um.

212 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:54:12.390 --> 00:54:18.240

And then, so I'm going to stop sharing here for a 2nd so we can maybe see.

213 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:54:18.240 --> 00:54:23.280

Some basis to answer these last couple of questions. Um.

214 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:54:23.280 --> 00:54:29.070

There we go. Okay. Um, so.

215 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:54:29.070 --> 00:54:38.700

Let's see that there. Okay. Um.

216 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:54:38.700 --> 00:54:45.780

Yes, what about, uh, kids who are non verbal? Are there studies done on them? Not as many.

217 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:54:45.780 --> 00:55:05.780

And this is very frustrating, um, not none, but a lot less in part, because this is hard work to get approved through a research ethics board, which is not like a great excuse, but it is a really interesting

barrier. And so there's some interesting work going on now actually, um, where, uh, there are a couple of groups wanting to see working on.

218 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:55:05.780 --> 00:55:23.160

Or sort of institutional review board trainings for why it's okay to do this work and why it's important to do this work. Um, so there's less but there's not none. I will say the sort of down syndrome community is a bit I would say a head of the oxygen community in terms of, like, developing, um.

219 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:55:23.160 --> 00:55:43.160

Acceptance and resources around sexuality and relationships and so sometimes I'm pulling from those resources and some of my autism groups because it's there's more that exists in a more visual format and more in sort of simpler terms things like that. Some of the resources that I mentioned, like, the autism relationship handbook, and even the side on the left or very.

220 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:55:43.160 --> 00:55:47.490

Tech space right so that's not going to be accessible for as large group of people.

221 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:55:47.490 --> 00:56:04.380

Okay, um, let's see someone says we, I'm having a weak response to something like that does not set the behavior puts other tool at risk. Why would we prioritize the Pro social behavior? Shouldn't we teach it their consequences? But then have a discussion on why? Um.

222 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:56:04.380 --> 00:56:24.380

Yes, I would agree with that, I think maybe there was the 1st, part of the question, if I'm if I'm missing that, let me know, but having, um, yes, I think if someone does not stop a behavior like that wouldn't be a reason to not, um, intervene right. So I think the example you're talking about is little little to me, masturbating on the bus. Like, we, we don't want that to happen still, but we don't want how we approach that conversation. The 1st time.

223 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:56:24.380 --> 00:56:31.080

Cut off any future conversations about sexuality and safety. Um, so hopefully that.

224 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:56:31.080 --> 00:56:36.990

Clarify that a little bit um, let's see.

225 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:56:36.990 --> 00:56:51.450

Do you think the compulsory heterosexuality should be addressed as a topic in sexual orientation class, especially since that may cause issues with social cues? I think we should present sort of the range of identities that exist. Um.

226 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:56:51.450 --> 00:57:11.450

In part, because I think we underestimate, like, if we think about what we know from non autistic kids, because this work has not been widely done in children with any type of development and disability. Um, but I think sometimes there's a scientifically false concern that kids get really confused if we talk about anything outside of a gender binary.

227 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:57:11.450 --> 00:57:15.480

And the, the kids are actually pretty good at that. Um.

228 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:57:15.480 --> 00:57:34.860

So so, I would say it would be better to give sort of a wide range of information. My general stance on it. Uh, if to sum it up in a nutshell is that if someone has a particular interest or identity, and it's, it's gonna come out in some way. Gosh, would I rather they ask me and I will try to get them good information rather than.

229 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:57:34.860 --> 00:57:45.660

Trying to ask someone who does not have their best interest in mind I think that sets everybody up for failure. Um, and so that is always the sort of platform that I come back to um.

230 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:57:45.660 --> 00:57:48.810

Addresses that question.

231 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:57:48.810 --> 00:58:00.510

Um, so, Michelle, I'm now, just seeing your note that there's more questions inside. Okay. I'm with, you know, I'm sorry guys, I was looking in the wrong spot. Um.

232 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:58:00.510 --> 00:58:20.510

Okay, yes, so a bunch of questions about people, kids, not wanting to discuss with it. I think the sexy groups honestly are the way to go. Um, the, the little bit of research we have on delivery of sensitive information, actually shows that the best best case scenario is that there's 1 facilitator. So, let's say me. So I meet with the group of.

233 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:58:20.510 --> 00:58:30.960

Or adults, or whatever it is, and then I meet with parents caretaker family members who everyone gets the same information, but they don't



have to look at each other while we're talking about it. So, I think that that is a really good practice to follow.

234 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:58:30.960 --> 00:58:47.040

All right, so we are right at 2 o'clock that last 1 in there. Um, but I'm happy to hang out for a couple of minutes if people have additional questions. Um, but otherwise, thank you for offering this as a topic. Thank you for coming. Um, please if there are, um.

235 "Eileen Crehan she/her/hers" (3474754816)

00:58:47.040 --> 00:58:56.387

You know, resources that, that you, you find useful, please explore those sites. Um, yeah, I think the recording and the slides will be available afterward. Uh, yeah.

236 "Alana Embriano" (3909234688)

00:58:56.387 --> 00:58:58.080

The rest of your Thursday.

237 "Alana Embriano" (3909234688)

00:58:58.080 --> 00:59:18.080

Absolutely, thank you so much for attending everyone. And thank you. Dr Korean for providing such wonderful information. Um, if you want to put your contact information, like an email in the chat for people to follow up with you, you're welcome to do that again. If anyone has questions about the therapy.

238 "Alana Embriano" (3909234688)

00:59:18.080 --> 00:59:34.110

He's discussed today or any questions we were unable to answer, please contact the autism team by calling the number on the back of your card. The recording once finalized will be available online at W. W. W. dot com. Backslash autism.

239 "Alana Embriano" (3909234688)

00:59:34.110 --> 00:59:45.930

Please be sure to mark your calendars to join us next month on Thursday, October 12th where we will be discussing understanding sensory processing and regulation. Thank you so much and have a great day.