

SHEIDD* Review of Sexual Health Education Curricula Designed for People with Disabilities

Members of the Community Advisory Group of the Sexual Health Equity for Individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (SHEIDD) project* reviewed a number of healthy relationships and sexuality education curricula designed for people with disabilities. Below, we have ranked them based on how holistic we found them to be and shared our opinions on some of the strengths and weaknesses of each curriculum.

Through the review process, we learned that all of these sexual health curricula need to be adapted to be more rights-based, sensitive to individual and collective trauma and inclusive and affirming of people of all genders and sexual orientations, races and cultures. Some of the curricula also need to be updated as they have out-of-date or incorrect sexual health information.

We encourage you to review sexual health education curricula and consider what adaptations you would make to fit the needs of your communities. You can learn more about the tool we used to review these curricula in the document “Using the Sexuality Education Protocol Tool to Evaluate Sexual Health Education Curricula Designed for People with Disabilities” found in the [Curricula designed for people with disabilities](#) section of the Teaching Tools page of the SHEIDD online resource hub.

Curriculum	Author/ Developer	Target Population	Intended Setting	Some Strengths	Some Suggested Adaptations	Contact Information
1. Sexuality Education for Adults with Developmental Disabilities (Second Edition 2010)	Katherine McLaughlin, Karen Topper, Jessica Lindert. with Planned Parenthood of Northern New England and Green Mountain Self-Advocates	High school students and adults with developmental disabilities	Agencies or Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affirms people with disabilities are sexual beings • Designed to be co-facilitated by people with developmental disabilities and support staff • Acknowledges multiple sexual orientations • Comprehensively addresses sexual health topics • Uses a variety of teaching strategies and materials • Handouts and some teaching tools available in Spanish 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt to be inclusive of trans and non-binary people • Adapt to be inclusive of participants’ cultures and communities and discuss how they influence their relationships and sexual health • Use media, like videos, to help learning 	Please note that we have not reviewed the 2018 edition of this curriculum, revised to include two new lessons and language more inclusive of all gender identities: https://www.elevatustraining.com/workshops-and-products/sexuality-education-for-people-with-developmental-disabilities-curriculum/

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2. Friendships & Dating Program (2003-2017)	University of Alaska Anchorage Center for Human Development	Teens and young adults 16 years and older with intellectual/developmental disabilities Groups of 6-10 participants	Agency and Community Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affirms people with disabilities are sexual beings • Uses a variety of teaching strategies and materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt to be inclusive of trans and non-binary people • Adapt to be inclusive of participants' cultures and communities and discuss how they influence their relationships and sexual health • Include information on pregnancy • Include information on parenting rights and relationships 	https://www.fdprogram.org/
3. Positive Prevention PLUS: Sexual Health Education for America's Youth for Special Populations in Schools or Community Settings (2016)	Positive Prevention PLUS, LLC	Special Education students in grades 7-12	Schools or Community Settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledges people with disabilities are sexual beings • Uses a variety of teaching strategies and materials • Acknowledges multiple sexual orientations • Uses many visuals to help learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt to be inclusive of trans and non-binary people • Adapt to be inclusive of participants' cultures and communities and discuss how they influence their relationships and sexual health • Use media, like videos, to help learning • Include information on parenting rights and relationships • Simplify language to be more accessible 	https://www.positivepreventionplus.com/curriculum/special-education

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<p>4. Special Education Family Life and Sexual Health (FLASH) (1985-2011)</p>	<p>King County Public Health</p>	<p>Middle and high school students with special needs</p>	<p>Schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free curriculum • Acknowledges people with disabilities are sexual beings • Uses a variety of teaching strategies and materials • Each lesson includes a related activity students can do with a trusted adult • Suggests ways to adapt activities to individual needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt to be inclusive of trans and non-binary people • Adapt to be inclusive of participants' cultures and communities and discuss how they influence their relationships and sexual health • Adapt to be inclusive of people of all sexual orientations • Update information about contraception and other protection methods • Update information Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) 	<p>https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/locations/family-planning/education/FLASH/special-education.aspx</p>
<p>5. SAFE SECS: Sexuality Awareness For Educating Special Education Curriculum Students (2015)</p>	<p>Alexis Gebb, Sadie Guthrie</p>	<p>Secondary school students with moderate-severe disabilities</p>	<p>Secondary Schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free curriculum • Acknowledges people with disabilities are sexual beings • Uses a variety of teaching strategies and materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt to be inclusive of trans and non-binary people • Adapt to be inclusive of participants' cultures and communities and discuss how they influence their relationships and sexual health • Build out the general overviews and activities into lesson plans • Update information about sexual and reproductive anatomy • Find new links to videos 	<p>https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/SAFE-SECS-Curriculum-2237249</p>

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6. Getting to the Heart of Intimacy (2009)	Office of Investigations and Training, Oregon Department of Human Services	Adults with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities	Small groups of 3-10 people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a variety of teaching strategies and materials • Lessons can be used alone or in a series 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt to affirm that people with disabilities are sexual beings • Adapt to be inclusive of trans and non-binary people • Adapt to be inclusive of participants' cultures and communities and discuss how they influence their relationships and sexual health • Adapt to be inclusive of people of all sexual orientations • Update information about sexual and reproductive anatomy • Update information on pregnancy • Update information about contraception and other protection methods • Include information Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) • Include information on parenting rights and relationships 	
7. CIRCLES (1983, 1993)	James Stanfield Company, Inc.	Students with special needs	School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a variety of teaching strategies and materials • Mapping relationships using color-coded circles model can be a helpful in exploring types of relationships and boundaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapt to affirm that people with disabilities are sexual beings • Adapt to be inclusive of trans and non-binary people • Adapt to be inclusive of participants' cultures 	Please note that we have not reviewed the most current editions of this curriculum: https://www.stanfield.com/product/circles-curriculum-

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