

Providing a National Overview: Proactive Responses to Sexual Violence

Leigh Ann Davis
Director of Criminal Justice Initiatives
The Arc's National Center on Criminal Justice & Disability®
(NCCJD)

The Arc of New Jersey's Partners in Justice Summit
Preventing Sexual Abuse and Harassment of People with I/DD

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Before We Get Started

- Many of us have experienced sexual violence or is close to someone who has
- It's OK and expected to have feelings about it
- Take a break any time you need to. Leave the room, zone out or go for a short walk: **TAKE CARE OF YOU!**
- You may want to talk through any feelings that come up today – call a friend, talk with a counselor, call a hotline



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The Arc of New Jersey's Blueprint to Address Sexual Violence



Photos available at: <https://www.njc.org/2018/06/25/623189167/states-aim-to-halt-sexual-abuse-of-people-with-intellectual-disabilities>

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New Jersey's Next Steps (in 2019)

- Break out of the disability bubble & partner with victim advocates/agencies whenever possible
- Apply the lens of intersectionality
- Support self-advocates as leaders in the MeToo movement and in criminal justice reform
- Be innovative when equipping the victim advocacy community to help sexual assault victims with I/DD



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Next Steps for 2020



- Intentional Partnering toward Awareness Building
- Supporting, Evaluating & Replicating Prevention Efforts
- It's Complicated! Tackling Difficult Issues Head-On



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Raising Awareness... It's Everyone's Job



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NPR's Abused & Betrayed Series

The rate of rape and sexual assault against people with intellectual disability is **more than seven times** the rate for people without disabilities.

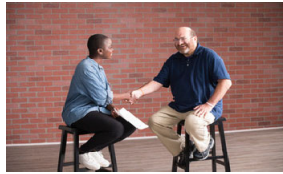
Image: Three pictures of people with disabilities whose stories were shared in NPR's Abused and Betrayed series.





- At least 1 in 6 men have been sexually assaulted
- PSA - first time to include a man with disabilities
- Over 4 million views
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2p06x-yumc0>

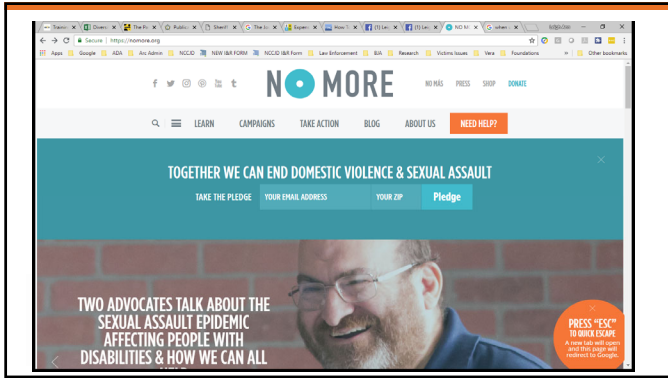
Image: Picture of man (James Meadors) shaking hands with woman who just read his story about surviving sexual assault for the first time. Both are sitting on stools and smiling.

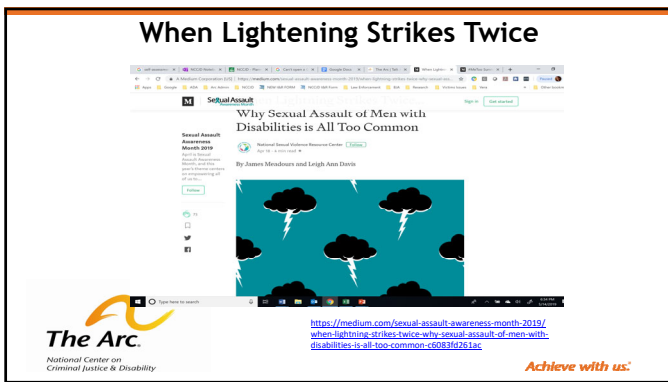




- While watching the PSA, what is one thing that surprised you or moved you?
- Is this an effective way to address stereotypes about sexual assault victims?
- How can you use this PSA to build awareness about sexual assault victims with disabilities in your professional or personal life?









Promising Prevention Strategies

- Peer to peer model
- Legislation/Policy
- Programs/Projects



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Peer to Peer: From One Survivor to Another

- Find someone you trust to talk about it
- It's ok if it's not a family member
- Ask someone to help you call the police
- You don't have to feel any shame!
- When you are ready and if you want to speak out, find an ALLY to help you
- Take time to HEAL



<https://www.safeaustin.org/supporting-survivors-of-sexual-assault-heres-10-things-that-helped-me/>



Peer to Peer: Telling Your Truth

- Make sure survivors have a way to get help and healing before speaking out
- Provide accommodations and other supports that help get the message across
- Practice! People with disabilities can practice telling their stories to each other until they feel ready to share with others



<https://www.safeaustin.org/supporting-survivors-of-sexual-assault-heres-10-things-that-helped-me/>



Peer to Peer Resource



PEER-TO-PEER
Bridging the gap through self-advocacy

Basic Track-Leader Guide

Class 1: What is a peer supporter and what do they do?

Class 2: Take care of yourself

Class 3: Personal Safety for Peer Supporters

Class 4: History of the people with disabilities in the United States

Materials available at:

<https://selfadvocacyinfo.org/>

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**“OFTEN
IT ISN'T
THE INITIATING
TRAUMA
THAT CREATES
SEEMINGLY
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PAIN, BUT
THE LACK
OF SUPPORT
AFTER.”**

The Frank Quares



Why Peer Support is So Needed:

“For victims with disabilities,
help is often too little, too late.”

Kecia Weller

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Legislation & Policy

- The Americans with Disabilities Act, Title II – accessibility and accommodations
- The Arc of Arizona – report seeking research
- The Arc of VA – sex education for students with disabilities
- The Arc of Texas & Texas Advocates – consent for examination



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The Arc of Texas & Texas Advocates

- HB 4531
 - If someone gets sexually assaulted, the person with I/DD has a right to get a sexual assault exam
 - Even if the guardian or caregiver says they don't want the person to get the exam
 - The vote was unanimous



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New Jersey's Accomplishments



- Partners in Justice (PIJ) meets quarterly and supported this summit
- Self-Advocacy Project added healthy sexuality to their program
- The Arc of NJ conducted a research project to identify sex ed programs in school districts
- NJ CASA conducting needs assessment to identify underserved populations in the state, due to their involvement with PIJ



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NCCJD: Resources & Projects

- Pathways to Justice: Victim Service Provider module
- Online Toolkit funded by Office for Victims of Crime
- People with Disabilities Foundation project
- Access to Justice International Hub (OSF)
- Talk About Sexual Violence



www.thearc.org/nccjd

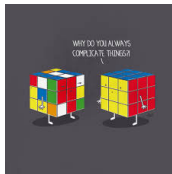
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Talk about Sexual Violence

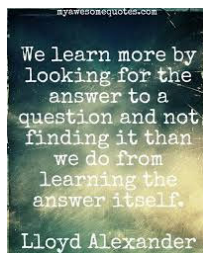
www.talkaboutsexualviolence.org



It's Complicated Tackling Difficult Issues Head-On



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A Note on Intersectionality



Queer women with disabilities v. all
queer women who experience
domestic abuse



Men of color with
disabilities v. white men
with disabilities arrested by 28



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Marginalized Identities

- American Indians are the victims of rape and sexual assault at a rate that is 3.5 times higher than that of any other race in the United States
- One in two transgender individuals are sexually abused or assaulted at some point in their lives
- Only 16% of men with documented histories of sexual abuse considered themselves to have been sexually abused, compared to 64% of women with documented histories in the same study



<https://metoomvmt.org/statistics/>

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Mandatory Reporting

- Shouldn't it be the person's decision to decide if, when and how to report a crime?
- Does the victim fully understand the potential ramifications of what could happen after a report is made?
- Can accessible supports and healing services be guaranteed to the victim after a mandatory report is made?
- Is the system re-victimizing the victim with disabilities



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Consent is About Communication & Empowerment

- Can a person with cognitive disabilities give consent to sex?
- How do people with disabilities learn when it is safe to consent versus when it isn't safe? Especially if they aren't taught?
- What is a guardian's role when it comes to this issue?
- How much autonomy does a person with disabilities have?
- How does supported decision-making (SDM) apply?



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Dignity of Risk

Dignity of risk is the idea that self-determination and the right to take reasonable risks are essential for dignity and self esteem and should not be impeded by excessively-cautious caregivers, concerned about their duty of care



Perske, R (February 1972). "The dignity of risk and the mentally retarded". *Mental Retardation*. 10 (1): 24-7

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Wonder isn't about finding
answers; it's about
becoming more comfortable
with questions

Leigh Ann Henion
PICTUREQUOTES.COM



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- Resist the pull to work and communicate in siloes and harness our collective resources to birth a movement.
- Change an entire culture when it comes to attitudinal barriers, addressing stereotypes and the infantilization of people with I/DD.
- Support people with disabilities to lead the movement... that is where the real power is.

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