**Using the Sexuality Education Protocol Tool to Evaluate
Sexual Health Education Curricula Designed for People with Disabilities**

There are a number of relationship and sexual health education curricula that have been designed for people with disabilities, many of which are included in the Massachusetts Departments of Public Health and Developmental Services' "Healthy Relationships, Sexuality and Disability Resource Guide (2014 Edition)." The Community Advisory Group (CAG) of the Sexual Health Equity for Individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (SHEIDD) project set out to identify the sexual health education curricula that were most holistic and best met the needs of young people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (I/DD) in our communities. Holistic sexual health education helps people learn:

- Who they are
- What their rights are
- How to express themselves
- How to build healthy relationships

Process of reviewing sexual health education curricula

The SHEIDD CAG reviewed seven sexual health education curricula for youth and adults with disabilities. Our process involved three steps: 1.) identification of a review tool, 2.) adaptation of the tool, and 3.) review of sexual health education curricula.

1.) **Identification of the tool:** We identified the Sexual Education Protocol (SEP), developed by Wolfe and Blanchett*, an instrument that allows educators and trainers to evaluate components of sexuality education curricula to determine the comprehensiveness of the curriculum and the best match for their students or clients with disabilities.

2**.) Adaptation of the tool**: We brainstormed additional criteria that we felt were essential components of holistic sexual health education and adapted the SEP tool to include many additions to the SEP criteria, including cultural inclusivity, LGBTQ inclusivity, trauma-sensitive approaches, medical accuracy, relationship rather than pathology oriented, and rights-affirming approaches. The adapted tool is included in this document.

3.) **Review of curricula**: We formed work groups and reviewed seven curricula using the adapted SEP tool.

Results of the curricula review

You can learn about the results of our curricula review in the document "SHEIDD Review of 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.

Review limitations

There were some limitations to our curricula review process. Time and resources did not allow for comprehensive training on the SEP tool before teams conducted curriculum reviews, which would have been ideal. Teams were not consistent in the number of people conducting reviews and did not necessarily include individuals from multiple disciplines.

Some possible guidelines for future evaluations that would increase reliability of the reviews include:

- At least two individuals review each curriculum.
- Reviewers evaluate one curriculum independently, then discuss and check each other's work.
- Reviewers read through the curriculum in its entirety to become familiar with it before rating.
- Reviewers check with content experts when unsure of what rating to assign.
- When rating, reviewers consider: how much would I need to supplement this to make it work in my community? Give a high rating if the curriculum has everything needed and a lower rating if not.

Conclusion

This evaluation process worked well with SHEIDD's collaborative framework, which involves multiple stakeholders including educators, support and care providers, researchers, parents, and self-advocates in reviewing curricula. The SEP tool is helpful for educators and trainers to identify the elements of a sexual health education curriculum that are important to the population they are serving and that reflect the values of their community. In addition, the original tool includes supplemental evaluation questions to further help organizations decide which curricula best fit their needs.

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Sexuality Educationn Protocol Tool*		
Title:		

Target student population

Age or age range:	Disability:
Setting:	Reading level:

Publisher/source name & address:	
Publication date:	Cost (indicate if free or low cost):

Criteria	Responses	
Goals and Objectives	Yes	No
Are there behaviorally stated (accessible to all abilities)		
Affective goals/objectives?		
Cognitive goals/objectives?		
Scope and Sequence	Yes	No
Are specific prerequisite concepts listed?		
Are preconceptions, myths, and fears addressed?		
Are concepts introduced cumulatively?		
Are elements and terminology separated (accessible language)?		
Instructional Strategies	Yes	No
Are the following media used?		
Books		
Brochures/handouts		
Overheads/carts/diagrams		
Models/dolls		
Photos/slides/drawings		
TV/video/films		
Games		
Guest speakers		
Are the following instructional strategies (variety of modes) used?		
Lecture		
Field trips		
Q and A		
Discussion		
Role playing		
Behavioral strategies		
Modeling/demonstration		
Direct instruction		
Visual elements (i.e. different types of media and interactive online learning)		
Evaluation	Yes	No
Do evaluations include:		
Identification of concepts (such as body parts)		
Tests		
Surveys		
Behavior analysis		

Sexual Health Equity for Individuals with Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (SHEIDD) Project: https://multco.us/school/sexual-health-youth-developmental-disabilities

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Curriculum Development and Evaluation	Yes	No
Was the curriculum field tested before publication & dissemination? If yes, is information about the students involved and specific outcomes of those studies revealed?		
Has the material undergone revision?		
Has user feedback been solicited? If yes, has the feedback been used to modify the current format?		
Was a theoretical framework used to design the program?		
Is the curriculum culturally inclusive?		
Does the curriculum come in multiple languages?		
Is the curriculum trauma informed?		
Is the curriculum comprehensive / holistic?		
Is the curriculum medically accurate?		
Does the curriculum acknowledge a variety of sexual relationships (i.e. single, married, etc.)?		
Is the curriculum relationship rather than pathology oriented?		
Staff and Family Development	**Yes**	**No**
Does the curriculum delineate knowledge, values, attitudes, and skills needed by teachers?		
Does the curriculum provide suggestions for collaboration with family members or support networks?		
Does the curriculum contain a component that addresses staff development?		
Presentation and Format	**Yes**	**No**
Can pages be added or removed?		
Is there representation of racial/ethnic diversity?		
Is there representation of various sex roles?		
Is there representation of various disabilities?		
Reference Aids	**Yes**	**No**
Does the curriculum contain:		
Table of contents		
Additional readings		
Resource organizations		
Resources (related to respect & consent)		
Glossary		
Index		
Sample lesson plans		
Evaluation instruments		
Materials		
Curriculum Adaptations Strategies	**Yes**	**No**
Does the curriculum use person-first language?		
Does the material present a variety of strategies for:		
Assessing prior knowledge		
Reviewing		
Repeated practice		
Constructive feedback		
Concept development (big ideas)		
Generalization/maintenance		

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Structure	Yes	No
Does each lesson contain an opening?		
Does each lesson contain a guided practice?		
Does each lesson contain a closing?		
Are there suggestions for adapting:		
Instruction (i.e. to individualize, engage peers, ensure relatable trainer)		
Student performance		
Materials		

Curriculum Concepts Does the curriculum contain information about:	Absent	Poor	Good	Very Good
Biological/Reproductive				
Anatomy & physiology				
Gender differences (Gender inclusive)				
Pregnancy				
Birth control				
Health and Hygiene	Absent	Poor	Good	Very Good
Hygiene				
Health and wellness				
Alcohol and drug usage				
STI and HIV prevention				
Body and disease				
Healthy Relationships	Absent	Poor	Good	Very Good
Friendships / social skills				
Responsibility to sexual partner				
Family types and roles				
Feelings and expression				
Dating and marriage				
Parenting				
Sexual orientation / LGBTQ Inclusive / Queer Friendly				
Self-Protection / Self Advocacy	Absent	Poor	Good	Very Good
Protection against abuse and sexual violence				
Privacy – What is it? Why important? Right to privacy				
Sexual feelings				
Sexuality (and variety of ways people express) as a positive aspect of self				
Sexual behaviors other than intercourse (i.e. masturbation)				
Appropriate / inappropriate touching				
Decision making				
Use of condoms				
Reduction of fear and myths				
Personal rights				
Goal setting				
Emphasize choices and how to move on from mistakes or heartbreak				
How to access resources and identify supports				

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Sexual discrimination				
Say "no" to nonconsensual sex				
Say "no" to drugs (high-risk behavior)				
Say "no" to alcohol (high-risk behavior)				

Note:

Purple font represents key components identified by both the original instrument and the SHEIDD Community Advisory Group

Red font represents key components identified by the SHEIDD Community Advisory Group

*Wolfe, P. S. Blanchett, W. J. (2003) Sex Education for Students with Disabilities: An Evaluation Guide. Teaching Exceptional Children, 36 (1). pp. 46 – 51

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