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AUCD

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Sex Talk for Self-Advocates – Webinar #9

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>> This meeting is being recorded.

>> I muted everyone. For folks who are not presenting, I have muted you all. You can unmute yourself for the presenters when you are ready to talk.

>> TANISHA CLARK: Hello and welcome to the Webinar Sex Talk for Self-Advocates on Sexual Self-advocacy. My name is Tanisha Clark, and I'm a senior manager at AUCD. We would just like to thank you all for joining us today.

Before we begin, I would like to address a few logistical details. We will provide a brief introduction of our speakers and panelists. But, first, because of the number of participants, like Ana just said, we ask that you please keep your audio muted throughout the call. Instructions will be provided shortly on how to ask questions and share comments. Closed captioning is provided on this Webinar, so please -- you can simply click on the "closed caption" box at the bottom of your screen to enable it. The entire Webinar is being recorded and will be available on the AUCD website following this Webinar. The link to this recording will be shared to the sexual health listserv once it is available. If you are not on that listserv, we can provide information in the chat box on how to join. There will also be a short evaluation survey that I will share in the chat box as well and I will also email it to everyone after the Webinar. We ask that you please provide feedback by completing the survey and just provide suggestions on future topics.

Now, please join me in welcoming our co-chair Lindsay who will take it from here. Thank you, all.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: Thank you, Tanisha. This is a little bittersweet. This is our final Sex Talk for Self-Advocates series. We are just thrilled that so many of you have decided to join us today for our last Webinar. And thank you to those of you who have been with us along the journey for all nine and those of you that are joining us for the first time today. We're very excited about this topic, sexual self-advocacy. My name is Lindsay Sauve. My pronouns are she/her. I work at the UCEDD at Oregon health and science University in Portland, Oregon. And I'm here also with my co-chair, Lindsay Mullis. Are you here? She's had some tech difficulties today. Maybe she got bounced off.

Well, hopefully she'll join us and she will introduce herself. We are your sexual health SIG co-chairs. As Tanisha said, we will give you some information how to join the sexual health SIG. You don't have to be working for a UCEDD or a LEND. You can just be really interested and doing work in sexual health and be part of that community. We can get you that information in the chat.

And we have a lot of content to get through today, so I'm going to go ahead and get us started and introduce our educators who are here today.

With us today, helping to lead this Webinar, is Max Barrows. Max is the outreach director for



Green Mountain Self-Advocates, a position he has held since 2007. He mentors youth and adults with developmental disabilities to speak up for themselves and become leaders.

Green Mountain Self-Advocates is a lead partner of the self-self-advocacy resource and technical assistance -- oops, sorry about that. Let me just fix my screen here. All right. Backing up a little bit. Green Mountain Self-Advocates is a lead start in the self-advocacy resource and technical assistance center. Max leads the SARTAC technical assistance team, assisting local and state self-advocacy organizations across the nation. Max connects with people on all levels, advocating for true inclusion of people with developmental disabilities.

In his work, he advances the message that when you meet an individual with a disability, presume competence. He received a White House Champions of Change Award for his work in 2015. Max is an accomplished self-advocacy from Vermont who served as board member for Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered from 2008 to 2016. Thank you for being here today, Max.

And then we also have the pleasure of having Katherine McLaughlin. Katherine is a national expert and trains individuals, staff, and parents on sexuality and developmental disabilities. She teaches sexuality education to people with DD/ID as well as trains them to be peer sexuality educators themselves. Katherine is the author of an agency and school curriculum: Sexuality education for people with developmental disabilities, and has developed two online courses. One to train professionals, Developmental Disability and Sexuality 101, and one for parents, Talking to your Kids: Developmental Disabilities and Sexuality. And you can contact Katherine and learn more about what her company offers at the Elevatus training link that is listed there. Welcome, Katherine. Thank you for being here today.

And then we also have the pleasure of having Erica Thomas. Erica is the education and outreach specialist at RCM of Washington in Washington, D.C. At RCM, she facilitates the direct support professional academy where she mentors future DSPs. Erica delivers person-centered health education coaching sessions with people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities on a variety of wellness topics. She serves as a liaison between family members, health care professionals, and community providers that support people with disabilities. Erica advocates for supports and assists people with navigating the health care system.

Erica also develops and implements health care information curriculum and information sessions including topics such as sexuality, intimacy, healthy relationships and community safe for people with disabilities and their support teams. When she is not advocating for people with developmental disabilities, she enjoys traveling the world and spending time with her baby boy. Thank you, Erica. And thank you for being with us today.

I'm just going to go over a few housekeeping things, just sort of set the stage for our approach



today.

First of all, our approach is to use person-first language. And we just want to acknowledge that there are other approaches such as identity-first language. That's what we are using today. We do our best to use gender-neutral language to be inclusive of all genders and gender identities. And whenever you see a question pop up, the questions have been -- or taken from the direct words of participants. I'll tell you a little bit about how we formulated the structure for the Webinar today. But those are the direct words from participants who participated in our survey. And I also want to just mention that sexuality and relationships, we're going to be talking about a lot of different topics related to sexuality and relationships, that these are very personal topics. And sometimes when we talk about things like sex and relationships and advocating for our rights, those can -- those topics can bring up memories for some folks. And sometimes those memories can be scary or make us feel not safe. And we want everyone on this call today to feel safe.

So some things that you can do, if discussing these topics brings up a memory or brings up a feeling for you, one thing you could do is you can take a break. You could just mute yourself and turn off your video and walk away and take a break or go talk to somebody about what's going on.

You're also welcome to just log off of the Webinar. The Webinar is being recorded so you can always come back and watch the recording.

But we want you to do whatever you need to do to feel comfortable and to feel safe. And if you need to talk to somebody and you don't have somebody to talk to, you know, about what's going on, we definitely welcome you. There's some resources out there such as the crisis call center. And this number is a number you can call and contact somebody who can provide you some support. So we just encourage you to take --

>> ERICA THOMAS: I guess they can hear me --

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: There we go. We're going to get going here.

>> LINDSEY MULLIS: I'm here by phone. Apologies for electric weather in Kentucky today. I'm excited to be here.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: Thank you so much. I'm going to turn the mic over to you, have you introduce yourself and if you're ready to go, take it away.

>> LINDSEY MULLIS: Thank you. I'm the other Lindsey. I'm the other co-chair for the sexual SIG. We want to make sure you can use the chat box for comments and questions and you can do that to everybody in the room or you can also pick individual people to chat box. Usually that would be me if you want to have a private chat. But for today, if you don't mind to let that be the other Lindsay if you want to ask a private question that doesn't have your name show up in the chat. You can select her name and pick her to choose the chat independently just between the two of you.



And we'll be able to answer those questions at the end of the Webinar. We do have a lot of content today, so we're really hoping to make sure we have some time to do that.

And then as Lindsay mentioned, the questions that we're answering today do some from self-advocates from across the nation. We did a fantastic survey several years ago and we're excited to be at the last one of the series really to be talking about this wonderful topic of sexual self-advocacy. So we're looking forward to hearing from the panelists and also hearing from you all. We'll be asking questions of you to answer in the chat box as well today. So looking forward to hearing your feedback on that.

And then in moving along on the next slide is our links for the sex talk self-advocates series we've had, numbers 1 through 8. We will make sure those also get put in the chat box. You can go back and watch all of those recordings and all of that information is on the AUCD SIG page to check out what we've been talking about for the past couple years.

And with that, we're going to turn it over to introduce our additional panelists today. Look forward to hearing from them as well.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: Katherine, would you like to introduce Tia? Katherine McLaughlin Katherine McLaughlin yes, I would. Hello, everyone. Tia -- she can give you more of the details. But Tia and I have known each other, I think, for over ten years. And the picture I have on the screen is Tia and myself teaching a sexual self-advocacy workshop in Arizona a year and a half ago. So, Tia, can you tell the attendees a little bit about yourself.

>> TIA NELIS: Sure. My name is Tia Nelis. And I work for TASH, which is a national, international organization that advocates on behalf of people with more significant disabilities, also advocates for all people with disability but a focus on helping people with more significant disabilities find their voice.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Great, thanks. Erica?

>> ERICA THOMAS: Thank you. And I have the honor of presenting to you Ms. Thelma Green. And Thelma Green is a self-advocate for Washington, D.C. She's on several different boards and committees, including Project Action, the RCRC restricted control group, and also the woman's knowledge group and many, many more. She didn't want me to name everything, but I will get a chance to hear from Thelma later on when we talk to our panelists.

>> MAX BARROWS: And I will go ahead and introduce my panelist. So David Frye, he is a wonderful self-advocate here in Vermont where he lives. He creates advocacy toolkits as part of our SARTAC team. He stands up for equal rights for people with disabilities who are LGBTQ+. In 2013, David received the Vermont Pride Award for Individual Activism. He also received a building block award for the United Way -- from the United Way for his volunteer contributions to his



community.

And my next panelist -- the next panelist that I found -- well, I didn't find her but I recruited her, her name is Amanda Daniels. And Amanda Daniels also lives here in Vermont. She helps facilitate meetings we have with GMSA and SARTAC. She is an outspoken self-advocate. She has an active outdoor life taking care of her horses and helping out neighbors with buildings -- building and landscaping projects. Were you going to say something? I didn't want to interrupt anybody. Here is the first question we will start out with. I want to let you know if you are not comfortable answering any of these questions, feel free to pass. So the first question that I will ask is: What is sexual self-advocacy? And what does it mean to you? And participants, you can answer this question also by putting your answer in the chat. And Lindsay will read the chat after the panelists have finished answering. Without further ado, I will kick it off with the question first which is: What is sexual self-advocacy? And what does it mean to you? And I will go ahead and have my panelists -- one of my panelists, David, kick that off. Go ahead.

>> DAVID FRYE: So what sexual self-advocacy means to me is not just speaking up for yourself but speaking up for others about sexuality. And sexuality is a part of everybody's being because we're all sexual beings. And I think it's more so -- well, I'm not saying more so, but people with disability that are GLBTQIA, I think it's more harder for us in being sexuality and coming out and speaking about who we are and coming out of the world as being GLBTQIA.

>> MAX BARROWS: Good answer, David.

And do you want to take a stab at that next, Amanda?

>> AMANDA DANIELS: For me, sexuality self-advocacy is speaking up for my rights and more my self-advocacy, like my sexuality, what I do. And what it means to me is to be there to support other people that kind of need help.

>> MAX BARROWS: All right. So those are good answers. Is there anything in the chat, Lindsay, that came from the panelists on that question?

>> Lindsey Mullis: Do we want to see if Tia has an answer for sexual self-advocacy?

>> MAX BARROWS: I forgot about that. Go ahead.

>> TIA NELIS: My comment about that is what sexual self-advocacy to me is being able to speak up for what you want but also helping other people speak up about sexuality because I think that a lot of times other people with disabilities might not have the courage to speak up for the relationships that they want because they might be afraid or because somebody has told them it's the wrong thing to do. But I also think as for me as a leader, it's also my responsibility to help teach them about what is sexual self-advocacy and to help them be able to speak up for what they want in a relationship. And I think that's important that we help others learn from each other and be role



models to other people, that it's okay to speak up for what's important to you.

>> ERICA THOMAS: And, Thelma, did you have anything that you wanted to add to that?

>> MAX BARROWS: I was going to ask that.

>> ERICA THOMAS: Sorry about that.

>> MAX BARROWS: No, no, no, you're good.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: Thelma, you might have to unmute your microphone. There you go.

>> THELMA GREEN: Okay. Self-advocacy means to me that people with disabilities, especially those who live on their own and they have a boyfriend or girlfriend, whatever, they should have the right to have sex when they want and where they want in their home without anybody interfering. That's what I think sex advocacy -- sexual self-advocacy means. And we also need to be educating other people, other self-advocates to speak up and educate the staff that's working with them so that they can have a sexual act if they want to. And respect.

>> MAX BARROWS: Mm-hmm.

>> LINDSEY MULLIS: Those are all such wonderful definitions and meaningful ways to think about sexual self-advocacy from our panelists. We're curious to see if anybody on the call had additional thoughts or feelings. Feel free to add those into the chat or if you can unmute yourself if you want to take a couple seconds to share what sexual self-advocacy means to you. We would love to hear from that as well. So we'll give you all just a couple of seconds to see if anybody is bringing anything into the chat. I'm not seeing anything come in. So we will let you all simmer on that until we move on to our next one.

>> MAX BARROWS: So I am proud to say that Green Mountain Self-Advocates came up with a phrase "sexual self-advocacy." We started using the phrase about 20 years ago. Sexual self-advocacy is harder than regular self-advocacy. So I'll read this. GMSA, Green Mountain Self-Advocates definition, GMSA believes that we are all sexual beings and sexuality is a positive and pleasurable part of life. The fundamental principles of self-advocacy apply to sexuality and relationships. We have control over our own lives, make our own decisions, solve problems, and speak for ourselves.

We have the right to choose our own partners -- same-sex, opposite sex, differently-abled.

Next slide.

Everyone has a right to be -- to the facts about health and sexuality. Information must be easy to understand. Relationships are learning opportunities. We move in, out, and within them in different ways. Treat adults as adults. Have respect for our right to make choices and mistakes. And accept people where they are; support us in discovering who we are. No judging. Do not push your values on us.



>> LINDSAY SAUVE: Thank you, Max. And there's some good stuff in the chat here. Carly acts, what sexual self-advocacy mean to say no to a person and have a strategy when they don't listen to you. I would say yes.

>> I would say yes.

>> THELMA GREEN: Stephanie says I think supporting our youth with disabilities, we need to think about self-awareness before self-advocacy. So in the world of sexuality, can be challenging, things like who am I. Who am I as a sexual or asexual person? What does it mean to me? And what do I want to pursue? Great comments about what sexual self-advocacy means to folks. We encourage you to keep putting those in the chats if you think of things.

Our panelists and Max have already kind of talked about this, but we really come from the perspective that everybody is a sexual being, and people have sexual and relationship rights. And that's all people. People with and without disabilities. And it's important for people to know what their rights are, right, so that they can advocate for themselves. And it's also important for people who support people with disabilities to know what people with disabilities sexual rights are so they can support those rights. It really does take a village to do that work.

So these are would be things like every person has the right to make choices about sexuality and relationships. Every person has the right to make friends and to have romantic relationships and sexual partners. Every person has the right to receive education and information about sexual health and relationships. And oftentimes needs support to learn how to make decisions and may need to practice. And folks have the right to that information and education on how to learn how to do that.

People -- every person has the right to have control over their own body, and every person has the right to protection from sexual harassment and abuse. And so these sexual rights were adapted from The Arc and Association -- American Association of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities position statement on sexuality. So I'd highly recommend -- we have that linked in the resources. So if you want to read that statement. I think it's really important for people to know what their rights are and to also supporting people's rights and advocating for those rights.

And then I think I'm turning it over to Katherine.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Yeah. I'm going to talk a little bit about this new report that came out and then Linda Sandman is going to talk a little bit about what they did in Illinois.

But SIECUS, Sexual Information Education Council of the United States, has just put out a call to action. And what they're asking, in particular, of schools is to make sexuality education inclusive of students with disabilities. And we know that many students with disabilities are not receiving sexuality education. And students without disabilities are. Maybe they also need more, but many



students are not. And this document talks about some of the gaps in education and makes some recommendations.

So just a question to think about, like, how many of you on the call who have a disability received sexuality education? And you could put yes, no, in the chat if you want. But this is just showing us that it does -- we do -- we're not provided that kind of education. And being a sexual self-advocate is advocating for schools to provide sexuality education. That's another thing.

A couple of the panelists said it's not only about themselves but it's about advocating for others. So that's a way that you can advocate for others, is to try to make sure that schools are inclusive.

>> THELMA GREEN: And the school -- especially the schools, the special needs schools, they need to have sex education classes there, too, because I didn't get it until I was in a trade school and they taught me.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

>> THELMA GREEN: It was in Washington, D.C.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Thelma is an example of not really getting it until later in her life when she felt like she needed it before that.

This document also looks at one of the different laws regarding sexuality education being inclusive. And the five orange states require sexuality education to be inclusive. So those are the only ones that say your sex education in your state has to include persons with disabilities.

The dark blue says that they require that your health education be inclusive, not specifically sexuality and relationships but health. And those are five states.

And then the blue, there's only four, I guess. Yes. And they have some resources for states, but there's no requirement and they're not enforced. They sort of have a handbook or something like that. But I thought this might be a good time for Linda to just talk a little bit about Illinois. I know it isn't specific to schools but some of the work that you've done.

>> LINDA SANDMAN: Sure. Thanks, Katherine. And hi, everybody. It's so good to be here. It's such an important topic. So glad that we're having this Webinar. Yeah, I'm in Illinois and I have to say it's nice to see Illinois be a leader in some things, in some ways (laughter).

So in Illinois, basically our guardianship and advocacy commission has a human rights authority. And they are responsible to investigate any violations of disability rights, and there were a number of incidents that had come up regarding the sexual rights of people with disabilities. And so they worked with their legislative arm to draft a bill. And that bill was discussed and there were stakeholder meetings held around the state. And I'm delighted to say that in August of 2019, that bill passed. Our governor signed it. And it went into effect in January of 2020. However, a pandemic happened and so things got very slow in implementing the bill. But we haven't given up. There is



an oversight work group that has been working away at helping to support providers in providing sexuality education.

This bill -- this law -- it's not a bill anymore, it's now a law -- is for adults with developmental disabilities who receive services through our Department of Human Services. And it's added to a section of our mental health and developmental disabilities code. It applies to group homes, what they call CILAs, if you have heard that, community integrated living arrangements. It applies to intermediate care facilities to people with developmental disabilities. It applies to day programs. And it applies to some of our institutions that we still have in our state, state-operated developmental centers.

And it requires access to sex education. So as Katherine was saying, no many people never had that access while they were in school. This requires access to sex education, to related resources, and treatment planning. And our state has developed a website that has a lot of those materials available and information about the law. We have a group that has met and reviewed and approved seven different sexuality education curricula that are designed for people with developmental disabilities. And those reviews are all posted.

And basically providers are now going about developing their programs based on these approved materials and thinking about how they're going to best meet the needs of the people who they serve.

I will say that we have -- the work of our committee has really grounded itself on the idea of sexual self-advocacy and the input of self-advocates. So if you go to the Web page -- and I'm going to put the link in the chat so you can go to the Web page, and you can see some of the language. And there's a sexual rights statement that's on there. And many of the documents have been created in easy-to-read language so that self-advocates can understand all the materials that are there. And in our resource list, we put a green thumbs-up by resources that were particularly accessible and user-friendly for self-advocates.

So we're making an effort to try and keep all of this information very accessible. Thanks.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Thank you, Linda, for telling us about that. It will be great to see the website. So we would love the link.

Just a couple things in the chat, someone put in there that there's a House bill in Minnesota that's new, sexual health education bill. So if you're in Minnesota, that might be of interest to you.

And then someone -- Stephanie said that what is meant by inclusive is a question, too. And I think in this particular document, they're talking about inclusive of disabilities -- students with disabilities in sexuality education. But you're right, "inclusive" could mean a lot more than just students with disabilities. But that's what this document's referring to.



So I think I'm passing it on to Lindsay.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: This is also very exciting, just learning about what policies are going on at the governmental level. But we're curious to hear what you all think. So just thinking about what we've been talking about with regard to education and supporting people. We're going to Lindsay Sauve a poll. So think about this question for a second. Do you think that more people need to help people with disabilities learn about sex? And think about what your answer might be for that. And I'm going to go ahead and Lindsay Sauve a poll. Go ahead and plug in your answer. I will give you a minute or so to do that. All right. It looks like the majority of people have voted. I am going to leave five more seconds. If you haven't had a chance to vote yet, now's the time to do it. A couple more coming in. Still a few more coming in. Give everybody a chance. Okay. We'll just do a count-down. Five, four, three, two, one.

All right. Let's go. End polling. And then I can share the results. Can people see the results? Great. Overwhelming yes. So 97% of the people who answered this question felt like, yes, more people need to help people with disabilities learning about sex. So it's important to provide that support, provide that education.

So that's really great.

So I'm going to stop sharing the results. And one of the ways to do that is to work at the governmental level, like Linda talked about and Katherine talked about, about putting in policies and laws. Another place to do that is at the organizational level, because we know that people with disabilities receive a lot of services and support from organizations. And they have a lot of people in their lives who support them, whether that's natural supports or whether that's staff or whether it's a case manager or service coordinator.

So we have learned that it is really important that people who work for these organizations, who provide that support have really clear policies. I have worked really closely with a program project called Sexual Health Equity for Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. And SHEIIDD did a needs assessment. They went out and talked about people who provide supports, whether it's staff, teachers, educators, parents, and sort of asked what do they need to be able to provide better support to people with disabilities around sexual health and healthy relationships. What they said is they need policies, policies and procedures, that tell us what is okay to talk about, what's not okay to talk about, and just kind of making sure that those conversations are okay to have. And, also, some training. So having policies in place but also training so that support providers know how to have these conversations because we're not all born sexual health educators, right? We have to learn that information. So training is really important for people to know how to do that.

And just some guidelines to think about. So if you are in a position at an organization to think



about how to develop a policy, it's really helpful that staff have policies that are clear and consistent, that it's communicated across the organizations and systems. Leadership supports these policies and backs these policies up, that's really important, too.

That expectations are clearly explained to both staff and clients and that staff have guidance about how to support people's rights and how to talk to people about their rights.

And then just learning what the different roles are, I feel like everybody has a role in supporting sexual health and supporting people and helping advocate for rights. So it's important to know what that is and to talk about that and to be really clear about that.

And I think I'm going to pass the next slide on to Erica, right, to talk more about this.

>> ERICA THOMAS: Yeah. So like Lindsay said, she gave you some really great examples. You still might be thinking more about how and how people with disabilities can learn more about sex. So the first, of course, is just providing sexuality education, just like anyone else people with disabilities are curious and they want to know about sex.

Sexuality education not only will teach people about their bodies and about sex, it also teaches folks about important topics such as consent, sexually transmitted infections, healthy and unhealthy relationships, where to go for help, and then exploring their own sexuality and so much more. A good place to start is providing sexuality education and not being afraid to give that information or share that information with folks.

Another area is -- or another "how" would be to support people and how to make sure people are safe and healthy and making informed decisions. So it's important that family members, friends, DSPs and even doctors work to educate and support people of choice in whatever those relationships look like. Like Max said earlier, not pressing your views on to another person.

So that means teaching and supporting people to make safe decisions and teaching and showing people how to be safe in their communities, helping people to know the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships and working with people to empower them to make informed decisions about their own bodies.

So having those tough conversations with people is another way to make sure that people are getting the sexuality information, education, that they should be receiving.

And then another way is with family members, friends, DSPs, and others on the person's support team, you're not always going to be around when the person is engaging in some type of sexual activity, whatever that might look like for the person. So we're not going to be there to give advice. We're not going to be there to remind people about what you learned, right? So it's our job to have those conversations with folks and, again, to educate people and empower them through sexuality education and encouraging these safe-sex practices, right?



So everybody take a minute and think about a time in your life when you learned something new. So it took you a few times to get it right, correct? Am I wrong? I know when I learn things, it takes me a few times to get it right. So sort of the same thing, it applies to people when they're learning about their bodies and about themselves as sexual beings, right? The more we talk about it, the more conversations we have, the better we get at it.

So let's put ourselves in a position where we're continuing to have these conversations and telling people with disabilities that it's okay to have sex, it's okay to be a sexual being, it's natural and normal and sex is okay. Having those conversations and, again, practicing.

And then just keep in mind that at the end of the day, we have to treat adults as adults, right?

>> THELMA GREEN: And you got to remember some people need to know what unhealthy relationships is, too. Like, if somebody forces themselves on them, they have got the right to say no.

>> ERICA THOMAS: Right. We'll get into that a little later, too, Thelma. So thank you for bringing that up.

So people with disabilities with a right to express themselves sexually just like anyone else. And, again, it is our job to support people and to educate people, not to judge people and tell another person how to live their life.

And on the next slide, I'm going to share with you a quick video. And it's a person who I currently work with, Ms. Danielle Darby. And she was a DSP in her previous life before she's in the position where she is now. She's going to share a story with you about sexual self-advocacy and, again, treating people as human beings and sexual beings.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: I have to do a quick fix. I realized when I shared my screen, I forgot to share the sound which is very important when we're watching a video. So let me make sure to choose that.

>> THELMA GREEN: That's funny.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: I forgot there was going to be a video. All right. Here we go. And, Erica, I'm crossing my fingers. I tested it. It worked. So let's hope that it does.

>> Good afternoon. My name is Danielle Darby, and I am the chief operating officer at RCM of Washington. I may be talking to you today as the chief operating officer. However, over my long career in disability services, I have run the gamut on all of the roles possible, including I started out as a direct support professional, just like many of you.

I am here today to talk to you about sexual self-advocacy and why it is important for people with disabilities.

Just because you may have a disability doesn't mean that you're not a sexual being. Everybody in the world is a sexual being. And people should be educated about their wants, needs,



and desires and empowered to talk about them and act on them as needed.

I wanted to give you a story about early on in my career, I worked with a young lady at a small provider out in the Midwest. I won't tell you her name today, but she had a pretty significant disability. She had cerebral palsy. And she used a wheelchair. She lived alone in her own apartment and she had this really cool pulley system that was installed in her apartment. So it went from her bed and into the bathroom so that we could get her into the shower and all of that. So it was actually a really cool system to learn.

But so I didn't work directly with her on a daily basis. She was not someone who was -- that I daily worked with. However, every week we had to stand in and take cover so that other people could have breaks. And so one day I was called to her home. And she said: I need help getting ready. My significant other is coming over and we're going to have sex and I need you to help me get ready. And I must say, I was feeling a little awkward. I was 23 at the time. This was my first job working with people with disabilities. I really didn't know what to do.

So I thought to myself: How do I handle that? I thought, you know, she's a person just like me. And so I asked: What can I do to help you? And she said, well, he'll be here shortly but I like to be ready when he's here because I don't have movement in my lower legs. And I said, okay, so how can I help you? She said, first, we need to go to the bathroom, make sure that I'm clean. I said, okay, no problem. So we did that.

She said next I want to take off my clothes and get into the bed. Okay. We did that. And I said, now what can I do to help you? She said, well, under the bed there's these little, what I'm going to call stirrups, kind of like if you have ever gone to the GYN. She said they attach to this little hook on the side of my bed. I said, okay, let's see if I can figure this out.

So I looked under her bed and sure enough they were there. And so I just was asking questions along the way, making sure I was doing it right for her. And she said: You know, put both sides on and then I had to help her put her feet into the stirrups so that she could be ready because, as I said, she had no movement in her lower legs.

So I said what else -- anything else? She said no. She said, but, my boyfriend's number is on the counter. Will you please call him and tell him that it's okay to come over. He just lived down the road. And so I did so.

And she said, that's all.

And I said okay. And so the next day, I didn't hear from her the rest of the night. And then the next day, she called me again and she said, I need help. So I went over again. And this time it was for something completely different. And so I asked her, how did your evening go? She said it was so amazing. Thank you so much for your help. And I was relieved that what I did was good enough



for her. And, you know, from that point on, I realized that working with her was not going to be as nerve wracking as I thought when I first got there the very first day.

At any rate, I just wanted to kind of give you that example. And I'm sure that Erica and others have things to share with you.

>> ERICA THOMAS: I'm glad that the video worked.

>> THELMA GREEN: Yeah, it was good.

>> ERICA THOMAS: It was good. Yeah, so that was, like, a pretty cool example of what it looks like to be an advocate for someone who may need assistance, who made need sexuality education. But it seems like this person taught Danielle a lot about what it means to be a sexual self-advocate. So I thought that was a really neat story for her to share. If you have any comments or anything, I would love to read them. If you have any comments, you can put them in the chat box.

Moving on to our next section, it's going to be about advocating for your right to be in a relationship and how to talk to your parents or your staff about that.

And so Katherine is going to talk to us more about advocating for relationships.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Great, thanks. So I think we've been talking about legislation or laws that can help support people to get what they need around sexuality, people with disabilities. We talked about policies within an organization. We just saw someone with any organization being supportive. So now we're moving into: Well, how do you as a self-advocate advocate for your rights to be in a relationship? To advocate for privacy? Whatever you might need to advocate for. And we're going to ask the panel to talk about anything that you've had that has been successful when you've had to advocate for your rights, relationship rights, sexual rights, or someone you know that had to advocate. What works when talking to staff or parents? And then we'll also talk about what are some of the challenges or what hasn't worked. Tia, do you want to start? No one has to answer these questions but if you have some thoughts about what works and what doesn't when talking to staff and parents, would love to hear from you.

>> TIA NELIS: Sure. I think that one of the things that had happened when I was teaching around sexuality was sometimes parents could go one way or the other. Sometimes they go, like -- it was, like -- well, let me just tell you the story so you can understand it.

One time this gentleman was in the class and his dad was there with him. And one of the things that he said was when we were talking about sexuality, his son had a relationship with a girl. And he wanted to make sure that his son had done -- had sex in the right way. So he said that he was going to -- for the first time that his son had sex, he was going to be in the room and watch so he could tell him how to have sex in the right way and make sure he's doing it right.

And so -- and then my question to him was: Okay. If you say that you want to make sure that



your son is having sex in the right way, then why don't you let him come in the room when you're having sex with your wife so he can observe how you're having sex? And do you think that you would -- why would you appreciate him watching you have sex and rating you on how you had sex instead of, you know, why is it okay for you to do that? Why aren't you comfortable with him having - watch you have sex with your wife? And I think he was, like, oh, no, I can't -- I can't let him go in there and do that. And I said: Why is it any different from you?

>> THELMA GREEN: Thank you.

>> TIA NELIS: With your feelings around you being able to do that and around the relationship he has personally. If you're not comfortable with it, what makes you think that he's comfortable with it? And so I think that was --

>> THELMA GREEN: A wakeup call.

>> TIA NELIS: We can educate him and try to tell him that just because he's a person with a disability that he doesn't have a right to have privacy and have a relationship privately and not be judged. You wouldn't want anybody judging you, so why should it be any different? So I think those are kind of the things. Those are the challenges we have and a lot of other challenges is that people -- parents think that if you learn about sexuality, you're going to have sex all the time. And, also, if you don't learn about sexuality, then you're not going to have sexuality. And I basically say, listen, if your kids want to have sex, they're going to have sex with or without your permission. So wouldn't you rather them be educated and be able to be informed about making the right choices around sexuality so they don't get abused and they don't get hurt? And they can know what a healthy relationship is because it's not all about being bad around sex. There's good things about sexuality, too, in relationships. And I think we also need to focus on the good things about relationships and sexuality and not always the bad things that could happen to you so that people can learn and not be afraid to ask questions and not be afraid to talk to others about it.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Thank you, Tia.

Thelma, do you have anything to add in talking to staff or parents about your right to be in a relationship?

>> THELMA GREEN: I think that you talk to them and let them know that you have -- well, I would let them know because I live by myself. And I let them know I have a boyfriend and I'm sexually active. So my mother has been cool with that for years. But if I had to talk to them, I would let them know, I know my father, he had a problem when he was alive for a while. But he had to realize that I'm a grown woman now, and it is what it is.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Great, thank you, Thelma.

Dave, David?



>> DAVID FRYE: You know, I used to do talk shows a while back. And I remember doing this and I used to preach people, hey, you know, we're all sexual beings and sex is okay. And I had this one fellow that was telling me, he said, well, David, I'm from the U.K. And it's really, really hard for me to have sex in my wheelchair. And I want to know, do you have any pointers what I can do because I can't get out of my chair. The only time I get out of my chair is when I go to bed. And I said, you know, you can have sex in your chair. And don't tell your boyfriend that you can't have sex in your chair because you're a human being. You have desires. You have wants. And it's okay to have sex in your chair. It may be awkward for you to have sex in your chair, but you can do it.

And I used to preach -- I used to do these talks, like, once a month, not only doing it at the Pride Center but supporting people with disabilities and that are GLBTQIA. And I really, really enjoyed it. I really enjoyed sharing my experience. And one person said: Because I'd love to go to a gay bar, but the stairs or something to get into the bar. And I said, that's when you've got to speak up for yourself. You got to say, you know, I really want to come to this establishment. And, you know, you've got to put in a ramp so I can get into the bar. And, you know, it's -- and I hear this time and time again. I heard from another organization that really, really liked going into this establishment because it was a gay bar but there were stairs. So a bunch of them got outside of that establishment and did -- you know, didn't leave that place until they got to talk to the owner and said: You've got to change your ways so we can use your establishment.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Right.

>> DAVID FRYE: It's so important for that.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Yeah. Thank you.

>> THELMA GREEN: I agree.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Yeah. Amanda, did you have anything to add around how do you speak up for staff or owners? Yeah.

>> AMANDA DANIELS: Well, let's just say, I was in a relationship for three years. And my mom was kind of controlling it, and I didn't like it. So I kind of spoke up to her and I said it's my relationship, let me be myself, my person, my human. And that's the way it was. And then after three years, me and my boyfriend broke up.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Wow, okay. Just speaking up and saying I'm a human, let me do me.

>> AMANDA DANIELS: Let me be myself and let me have my decisions and my disability, who I am.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Yeah, yeah. So I heard -- Tia talked about we're all the same. You wouldn't want someone in your room, just as your son doesn't want someone. Thelma



talked about I'm a grown woman and you just have to get used to it. And then David talked about we need ramps. And then Amanda is talking about I'm going to live my own life. These are great examples of how to speak up and things to think about that work in help moving people.

I have a few tips to give. And then -- so being -- speaking up for ourselves isn't always easy. I struggle with it, and I'm in my 50s. But what we want to do is really stand or sit straight, facing the person, and be ready to speak. We want to look them in the eyes and using a calm voice, we don't want to be screaming or really soft voice. We want to be calm and say what we mean. Like: I'm a grown woman. We don't want to get too close to people because that can feel aggressive. And we want to be positive, even if people disagree with us. Like, I hear what you're saying, I'm still a grown woman. I hear what you're saying, I have the right to be in your bar.

So we're speaking up and we're being positive even when we disagree.

And then the next slide is really knowing your rights, too. And so what kind of rights do you have? There's lots going on in the chat about guardianship and things like that. So really learn what does -- if you have a guardian, what are their rights? What can they have control over and not have control over? What are your state laws around sexuality education? So the more you know about the laws, those are there to support and back you up as well.

And, remember, that it's your life, your body, and your mind, and you get to decide what's right for you. So always saying that to yourself. And it helps us feel more confident.

Don't wait for permission to say what you need. Stick up for what you want. And say what you want without feeling guilty or feeling like you're a bad person. Like, oh, I shouldn't. I don't deserve that. Get rid of the guilt and you don't have to wait for permission. If you want something, it's your right to speak up for that. And that's what this is all about. And whether it's to legislators or to your parents or a bar, you can speak up.

So I think -- I had a couple scenarios, but I am thinking we should probably move along, right? I think we've got some really good ideas from the panel. But just a couple things, if you feel like your rights are being violated, that someone is stopping you, controlling your life, there are protection and advocacy centers in all the states. And this link here, if you click on it, it takes you to -- I believe it's a map of all the states. And then if you go to the next slide, Lindsay, yeah, you can find -- if you go down to "find your P&A agency," that's what's going to come up. You scroll down and look and it will take you to your state or territory so you can find the advocacy center in your state, if you feel like your rights are being violated.

And I think that's it for this part of our advocating -- speaking up for yourself with a parent or staff or owner or legislator.

Now we're moving more into how do we speak up for ourselves in a relationship, which is



another part of sexual self-advocacy.

So I'm passing it to, I believe, Erica, right? Max. Max, I believe is next.

>> MAX BARROWS: Yes, it is. So advocating for your rights. So this -- I think we start with the next question, I believe. Yes, and this question is for participants to answer in the chat box. And so basically it's: How do you advocate in a relationship? So, like, think about that for a moment as you are typing your answers.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: I'm not seeing anything coming yet. But I'm happy to read them off if people want to share in the chat.

>> MAX BARROWS: I will repeat it again: How do you advocate in a relationship?

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: I'm happy to share one idea I have.

>> MAX BARROWS: Go ahead.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: Knowing what you want in a relationship. So, like, knowing what you -- what your values are, what your desires are. So I'm seeing being honest and clear with your expectations. And tell them how you feel and be honest with them. State your preferences, expectations, and boundaries. Communicating about consent. We're going to talk about consent a little bit later on. I think that's really important, too. And consent means for those of you that don't know what that means, that means like saying yes or no to things, particularly around sexual activity. I think those are all good comments.

>> MAX BARROWS: Anybody else?

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: I see making sure -- am I still unmuted? Making sure you're both listening and understanding. Now they're going fast. Discuss discomforts and insecurities. A relationship should be 50/50 being honest with your partner. And when you argue, that you talk things over.

I think those are some really good answers. And I think that -- are we turning this over to Erica now?

>> ERICA THOMAS: Yeah.

>> AMANDA DANIELS: I just put one in there.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: This is grade. Take it slow and get to know them. That he was a great one. And Shaun put in knowing what you want and telling others. Being open and honest with others. Thanks, everyone, for sharing.

>> ERICA THOMAS: Those are really great answers. Thank you for all of those in the chat box. Continue to send them in as we continue on.

We started talking about relationships and what those are and how to advocate for yourself in relationships. So let's take a quick look at what it means to have a healthy or unhealthy relationship.



So you kind of look at how does the relationship make you feel? Like, are you afraid of this person? Are you happy to be in this relationship? Are you sad all the time? Think about your feelings and how you feel when you're with that person. Do you and your partner respect each other? So, you know, are you -- when Katherine had talked earlier about the way that you can speak to someone, you sit face-to-face, you're not yelling, you're not screaming, you're not getting too close to anyone, you're not being aggressive. Are you and your partner respectful of each other?

We heard the "consent." Consent, like it was said, it means yes or no to, in this case, a sexual act, right? So in order for consent to be given, both people have to say yes. If one person says yes, the other person says no, whatever it is cannot happen. You can be in the middle of a sexual act and if someone says stop, I don't want to go any further, that means stop. So just because you said yes in the beginning doesn't mean that yes is for the duration of the event or yes means yes forever, right? Just because I said yes this one time doesn't mean three days from now my answer is still yes. Before any sexual act, make sure consent is given, and both people say yes.

Think about in your relationship, do you trust each other. Do you think what the other person is doing? Is the person out doing things behind your back? Right? Also think about if there's any mistreatment or any manipulation, right?

And we can go to the next slide.

All of these parts -- so here's some examples of what a healthy and unhealthy relationship could look like. So a healthy relationship, you are respecting each other. You are honest. There's open communication. You trust each other. You support each other. I said honesty twice. That means it's super important because I put it there twice, right?

In an unhealthy relationship, that might look like your partner or you are being disrespectful, right? You aren't honest with each other. There may be a lack of communication. You might not trust each other. You may be jealous of your partner. Your partner may be jealous of friends or something like that, right? So that's an unhealthy relationship.

If anyone is being manipulated, so if your partner is manipulating you or if you are manipulating your partner. And if there's any arguments and fighting. And so just really quick about the arguments and fighting, like, everyone is going to argue with their partner. I mean, if you don't argue like I need to get tips from you because you're on it. So there are going to be arguments, but what are those arguments like. Are they intense? Is there name calling? Is there fighting? Is there physical contact?

You want to think about all of these things within your relationship to determine if that relationship is healthy or unhealthy for you.

And then if we can go on to the next slide.



I would like to pose a question to the panel. It's about communication. So I'm going to lead with you, Thelma. How do you communicate with your partner in a kind, firm, and healthy way? So how do you communicate with your partner in a kind way but you're being firm. You're stating the facts. But you're not being mean or you're not being aggressive. Uh-oh, Thelma. I think you're on mute.

>> THELMA GREEN: Okay. Can you hear me now? Okay. Well, me, I would sit down and talk to my boyfriend. And I let him know that I'm not ready right now. And I would let you know when I'm ready and we sit and we discuss it.

That's what a healthy relationship is.

>> ERICA THOMAS: All right, cool. Thank you, Thelma.

Amanda, did you have anything you wanted to add? How do you communicate with your partner in a kind, firm, and healthy way?

>> AMANDA DANIELS: You talk to them eye to eye contact and make sure they're listening and make sure there's nothing around them to bother you or them. And if they say yes or no, like, if you say I don't want to have sex right now, can we do it at another date or time, and if they say no, then I would just say, okay, then, fine, see ya.

>> ERICA THOMAS: All right, Amanda.

>> THELMA GREEN: That's a good strong girl right there. (laughter).

>> ERICA THOMAS: Tia, did you want to add --

>> AMANDA DANIELS: Thank you, Thelma. Thank you.

>> THELMA GREEN: I said that.

>> ERICA THOMAS: Thelma said that, Amanda.

>> AMANDA DANIELS: Thelma, sorry.

>> ERICA THOMAS: Tia, did you want to add anything?

>> TIA NELIS: Well, I think that you first need to figure out what you want to communicate about, so you figure that out first. And then figure out where you can go to talk somewhere privately so that you can really listen to each other and figure out what is -- what is the complication or the problem and see if you can agree or not agree but to also know that if you really are against something, then you really need to stand strongly about what you are disagreeing to.

And don't let the peer pressure get to you. And you know what is best for you and what you want so that you need to make sure that you are -- stand firm on your decision about if you agree or not agree.

>> ERICA THOMAS: Thank you for that, Tia. David, did you want to add anything to the conversation?



>> DAVID FRYE: Well, I always -- I've always said -- and I've always thought a relationship, when you're going to be in a relationship or come into this, you have a long interview with that person. This isn't just a job interview but, you know, it's your life. So I think it's important to have a long interview with that person. And when you do come to reality about having sex, it shouldn't be something that is forced. It should be something that's pleasurable and fun and feels good. And when there's force involved, it's so wrong. And it can happen to gay men being raped. You know, when there's something that doesn't feel good in the relationship, that's when you have got to back off and just -- or go seek some help if it's that bad.

>> ERICA THOMAS: Thank you, David. And thank you, everyone, for your very insightful comments.

Can we go to the next slide? So the next one is around communicating with someone who feels like they're further in the relationship than you are. So if there's someone who is thinking the relationship is further along or is wanting to do more things and maybe you're not ready, so how do you communicate with someone who feels they are further in the relationship than you are? David, do you want to start that one off? Start us off.

>> DAVID FRYE: Yeah. I think that -- and, believe me, I've been on a lot of dating sites. You know, when we talk about the Internet, there's a lot of dating sites. And, you know, when you're trying to find a partner and maybe you're interested in that person and maybe that person isn't interested in you, take that criticism. It's all right to take that criticism and move on.

>> ERICA THOMAS: Thank you for that, David. Thelma, did you want to add anything?

>> THELMA GREEN: About?

>> ERICA THOMAS: How do you communicate with someone or how do you talk to someone about your relationship, so if they feel like they're further in the relationship than you are.

>> THELMA GREEN: Then I just tell them I feel like you're further than I am, I'm not ready right now. Either you wait or you move on, you go your way and I go mine. You have to sit down and talk about it.

>> ERICA THOMAS: Definitely.

Amanda, I see you smiling.

>> AMANDA DANIELS: If they are further in the relationship than I do, I would say here's the highway. Let the highway go out with you and let the highway go in with me.

>> THELMA GREEN: Sounds like me.

>> ERICA THOMAS: Amanda and Thelma need to meet up.

>> AMANDA DANIELS: We do. (laughter).

>> ERICA THOMAS: And, Tia, what do you think?



>> TIA NELIS: Well, I would say, first, we sit down and communicate about how each other feels about the relationship. And then I would say, you know, these are the things that I am willing to put into this relationship and here's how far I want to go right now. And then listen to what they -- what they say and how they feel where the relationship is. And then I would say if we can't come to an agreement and want to get pushy, then I would say I guess we're going to have to end this relationship because I think it's both people in a good healthy relationship have to agree with what they're willing to do and not do and not be pushy towards one person or the other.

>> THELMA GREEN: Yeah.

>> ERICA THOMAS: Thank you for that. So what I'm hearing is a lot of various communication that's involved. And then what I'm also hearing is that if someone is further along and after those conversations, if that person wants to still continue and be further in the relationship, then that means, you know what? It's been great knowing you, and I'm going to move on.

>> THELMA GREEN: Mm-hmm.

>> ERICA THOMAS: Awesome.

So Max is going to take us into the next slide and he's going to talk about -- well, here's the question. Max, do you want to take it away?

>> MAX BARROWS: Yeah, I can do that.

So, again, you know, panelists now -- you're going to share your tips on how someone should explain how they feel about someone, if they -- how they feel to someone that they feel they may not -- that they may like. And, you know, when I ask this question, just think of yourself when I say the word "I" in this question. Think of yourself when answering this question, like how do I explain how I feel someone I like? So the question, yes, of course, is: How do I explain how I feel to someone I like? And "I" meaning you think.

I'm going to start with David. David, do you want to start out with that?

>> DAVID FRYE: Like I said before, I've been in a lot of situations where I liked somebody, whether they didn't like me. And to take that criticism, if that person doesn't like you. And don't go into details like: Why don't you like me? If that person doesn't like you, I wouldn't want to go into statistics about, you know, why that person doesn't like me. But you might -- and you just got to pick yourself up and move on because there is somebody out there for everybody.

>> MAX BARROWS: Good answer. Very good answer. Thank you.

Amanda, what about you? Anything to add to that question?

>> AMANDA DANIELS: Yes. Well, for me, if I get to know the person, that somebody likes me, I would take it slow and get to know them. And if they don't want to date, then we can have friends. And if we go on more dates or whatever, that's good. If he finds somebody else and I find



somebody, there's more fish in the sea.

>> MAX BARROWS: Well, that's very --

>> THELMA GREEN: That's a good one.

>> AMANDA DANIELS: (laughter). Me and you need to hitch up, girl.

>> THELMA GREEN: You laughing so hard, Max didn't even get to me yet.

>> MAX BARROWS: I was going to get to you, yes.

>> THELMA GREEN: No. But she was laughing so... (laughter). Okay.

>> MAX BARROWS: Go ahead, Thelma.

>> THELMA GREEN: What was the question again? She made me laugh. I forgot.

>> MAX BARROWS: The question is: How do I explain -- think of yourself. How do I explain how I feel to someone I like?

>> THELMA GREEN: Well, I would sit them down and talk to them and let them know how I really feel and express myself. And it would be up to them whether they accept or not. But basically I ain't really had to do that with nobody because usually they come to me, so far.

>> AMANDA DANIELS: That's true. Same with me.

>> THELMA GREEN: (laughter).

>> MAX BARROWS: Tia, what about you? Unless you had anything you wanted to add, Thelma. I didn't want to cut you off.

>> THELMA GREEN: I'm good.

>> MAX BARROWS: Tia, anything you want to add?

>> TIA NELIS: I would talk to the person and tell them -- explain to them why I like them, giving them some information about why I like them and if they would be interested in going out together and finding out what their interests are and what they like to do.

And then from there, then I would say are you interested? And if they're not, I would say, okay, thank you for talking with me and I'd move on to find somebody else because I think that it has to be both ways when you're trying to find a person to go out with or be with. You both have to have some kind of same interest to hit it off. And if you don't have the same kind of interest or you aren't caring about what the other person does or likes, then maybe it's not the right relationship that you want to get into.

>> MAX BARROWS: Great.

>> LINDSEY MULLIS: Thanks, Tia. I think you bring up really great points. From our panel of experts we came up with tips as well how you can explain someone how you feel by practice role-playing with someone else. Practicing what you want to say is a great way to do that and feel about confident about it and talk to your trusted person to make sure you are talking through those things



and make sure that you're using kind and respectful communication. So, for example, sometimes we see in movies things where people use pickup lines or maybe they'll smack someone they like on their rear end and use physical ways how they feel about someone. That's not always respectful. Make sure to avoid that. And be prepared for whatever the response is. I think our panelists hit on that. It could be an answer of yes, it could be no. Don't continue to pursue someone who says no. It's okay if they said no. That's okay. Like Amanda said, there's other fish in the sea. You move on to see who is a better fit and have some other things in common like Tia was mentioning.

>> THELMA GREEN: And sometimes you can have -- you can talk to them, you don't have to be boyfriend, girlfriend. You can just talk and be a friend.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: Katherine, I think you're talking this one. Just a reminder we only have about four minutes left.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Yeah. So this question is what do you do if your partner is ready to have sex but you aren't? And I did hear a couple people talk about that. I think Thelma said that she was -- in the first question, I'm not ready. You are just going to have to wait, right? Did you say that, Thelma?

>> THELMA GREEN: I think I did say something like that. I mean, I would talk to them nicely and let them know. And if they feel they can't wait, then -- and I'm not ready, then you got to move on and find someone else.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Mm-hmm, yep. Great. Other panel members? Anyone have a couple things to say? We just have a few minutes.

>> AMANDA DANIELS: Me. I do.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Yes.

>> AMANDA DANIELS: For me, if I'm not ready to have sex and they are, I'll say. Well, I don't want it because I want to be -- and I would like protection.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Mm-hmm. So, again, knowing what you want so then you can speak up. If you don't know and you are like uh, uh. David? Tia?

>> TIA NELIS: I think you also have to be prepared to know ahead of time what -- if that situation is going to come up, like, what you would say. And then if you're not prepared -- I mean, if you're not ready to have sex, you just say I'm not ready and to know that you shouldn't give into the pressure of somebody wanting to push you into being ready for something that you're not willing to do right away.

So I think that you should be able to say I'm not ready. And if you can't accept that, then I don't think we should be in this relationship anymore.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Thank you, Tia. David?



>> DAVID FRYE: And for me, I think that's respecting your boundaries. You know? If you're -- if you're ready or if that person's not ready and that person says I'm just not ready, that's respecting your boundaries. And if it's forced on you, that's a whole different subject.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Right. Yes. Thank you.

>> THELMA GREEN: Agree with David on that one.

>> AMANDA DANIELS: Yep.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: So just quickly, because we've got two minutes, I'm just going to say because this really has been said by the panel. But part of a healthy relationship is respecting your partner's wants and what your partner wants and doesn't want and also being respected for what you want. So that's a healthy relationship.

And figure out how you can solve problems when you have disagreements. And then we put a bunch of resources, but one of them is the National Center for Independent Living, and they have some videos for self-advocates and one is on consent. And I know we talked about that before. But like David said, force is never okay. Some people might try to bribe you or guilt you or pressure you. And that's not true consent. True consent is freely chosen so no one is bribing you, forcing you, pushing you. They are listening and respecting your boundaries.

>> DAVID FRYE: It's not just sex that I see it online. A lot of people ask, well, if you want to see me, you're going to have to pay me. And that's -- that's another thing that we need to stay away from people -- especially being online when people are asking for money or something like that.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Absolutely.

>> DAVID FRYE: It's not good.

>> THELMA GREEN: And it's not -- they're not caring about you. All they want to do is make money.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Mm-hmm. Yep. I don't know who's wrapping up but I think it's 3:30. Awesome.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: 12:30 on the West Coast. 3:30 for some of you. Thank you, all, so much, our panelists. This was an incredible conversation. I just feel like there were so many questions that came up in the chat that we didn't get to, which just makes me realize, like, this is so important. This conversation has been so important, and there's so much more, I think, that we could -- we could spend hours talking about this.

I just want to note that there are tons of resources in the slides. I wasn't able to load them into the chat. But those are going to be sent out on the listserv and posted to the AUCD website.

>> THELMA GREEN: Can we do this one again? Because I think this is a good education piece for people.



>> LINDSEY MULLIS: I did just put the link to the SIG in the chat as well.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: Thank you so much.

>> AMANDA DANIELS: I'm happy to have you guys do this for us. It was very nice for you to invite us.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: This was wonderful. Thank you to our panelists. And thank you to Erica, Max, and Katherine who have -- this is the ninth Webinar. We've spent lots of time together. It's been really wonderful. I don't think this is the last time that we're all going to collaborate and do work on this topic because obviously there's just so many more to talk about.

>> THELMA GREEN: Amen.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: It's been wonderful. Please grab the link in the chat that Tanisha posted and do an evaluation so we can get your feedback. That's really important to us. And keep an eye out for the recording and the slides which will have all the resources we talked about linked in those slides. I'm sorry we weren't able to get to everybody's questions. I'm really appreciative we had time to hear from all of our panelists today.

Have a wonderful rest of your day, everyone.

>> MAX BARROWS: Thank you very much.

>> THELMA GREEN: Thank you.

(Chorus of goodbyes)

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: Couldn't have done it without you!

>> AMANDA DANIELS: Bye.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: I think this was our most popular one.

>> MAX BARROWS: I had a question that has nothing to do with this but I'll ask it later.

>> LINDSEY MULLIS: It was definitely the most active chat so facilitating that from a cell phone was interesting.

>> MAX BARROWS: Hi, Julie.

>> I didn't want to miss the last one.

>> MAX BARROWS: Are you still up in Alaska?

>> I'm in Idaho. I'm semiretired.

>> MAX BARROWS: Oh, cool.

>> I'm enjoying life. And trying not to work too hard.

>> MAX BARROWS: Can I ask this question out of curiosity? It has nothing to do with this.

Did anyone on the -- I don't know how many people on the West Coast. But there was a lunar eclipse that happened this morning. Did anyone see that? I watched it on the Internet. But there was one that happened -- well, it was on the West Coast. You couldn't see it on the East Coast.



But it happened on the West Coast.

>> I was fast asleep.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: 1:00 a.m. to 4:00 a.m. is a little early for me. And I just love astronomy but I love sleep more.

>> MAX BARROWS: It was a blood moon.

>> They set an alarm at our house and got up. I should have gone with them. I was awake the whole time because my husband and daughter left to go drive out to the desert to get away from light pollution. I should have just gone with them. (laughter).

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: Very cool. All right. Ana and Tanisha, thank you so much. You two rock. You're awesome.

>> MAX BARROWS: All righty.

>> Bye, everyone.

>> MAX BARROWS: Bye-bye.

>> LINDSAY SAUVE: Thank you.

>> KATHERINE McLAUGHLIN: Great, great job.

>> ERICA THOMAS: Thank you, Thelma.

>> THELMA GREEN: Thank you. Bye.

