



Vision for Equality
Serving People with Disabilities and Their Families



Family Network
Supporting Families Throughout the Lifespan

Action Plan Update

SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION & HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS



Who...

A Program of Vision for Equality

Funded by Office of Developmental Programs

Family members across the Commonwealth

LifeCourse Ambassadors

Diverse Life Experiences



What...

Workshops for families

Technical Assistance to Office of
Developmental Programs

Mentor Families and their loved ones

Team Mentoring

System Navigation & Developing/Identifying
Supports and Services



Why...

“For individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), the role of family is unique and often central in the support and care provided across the lifespan. Family members play key roles in identifying and securing opportunities for their family members to participate in meaningful ways within their community and ensuring access to self-determined lives.” ~**Wingspread Report**

Action Plan Overview...



The primary element to our plan is
a Learning Opportunity



Collaboration with other
stakeholders



Peer Mentoring & Team Mentoring



Begin with the
End in Mind

Outcome:

A Peer-to-Peer learning opportunity and mentoring opportunities that can mitigate the risk of sexual abuse by building skills around safety, self-advocacy and healthy relationships



Objectives for Workshop

- Skill building for people with disabilities of all ages and life stages
- Provide strategies able to be implemented immediately
- Provide information vetted by a professional
- Provide a way individuals with disabilities and their families to make and follow a plan...

“If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail!”

~Benjamin Franklin



Organizational Approach

Learn ...All We Can!

Educate...Everyone We Can

Advocate...For Change

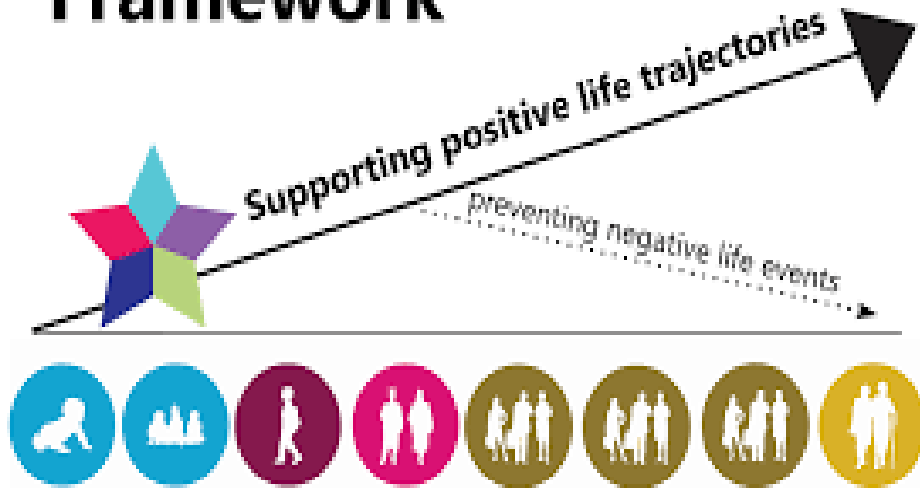
Demonstrate...Through Actions



First things first...Talk to an Expert

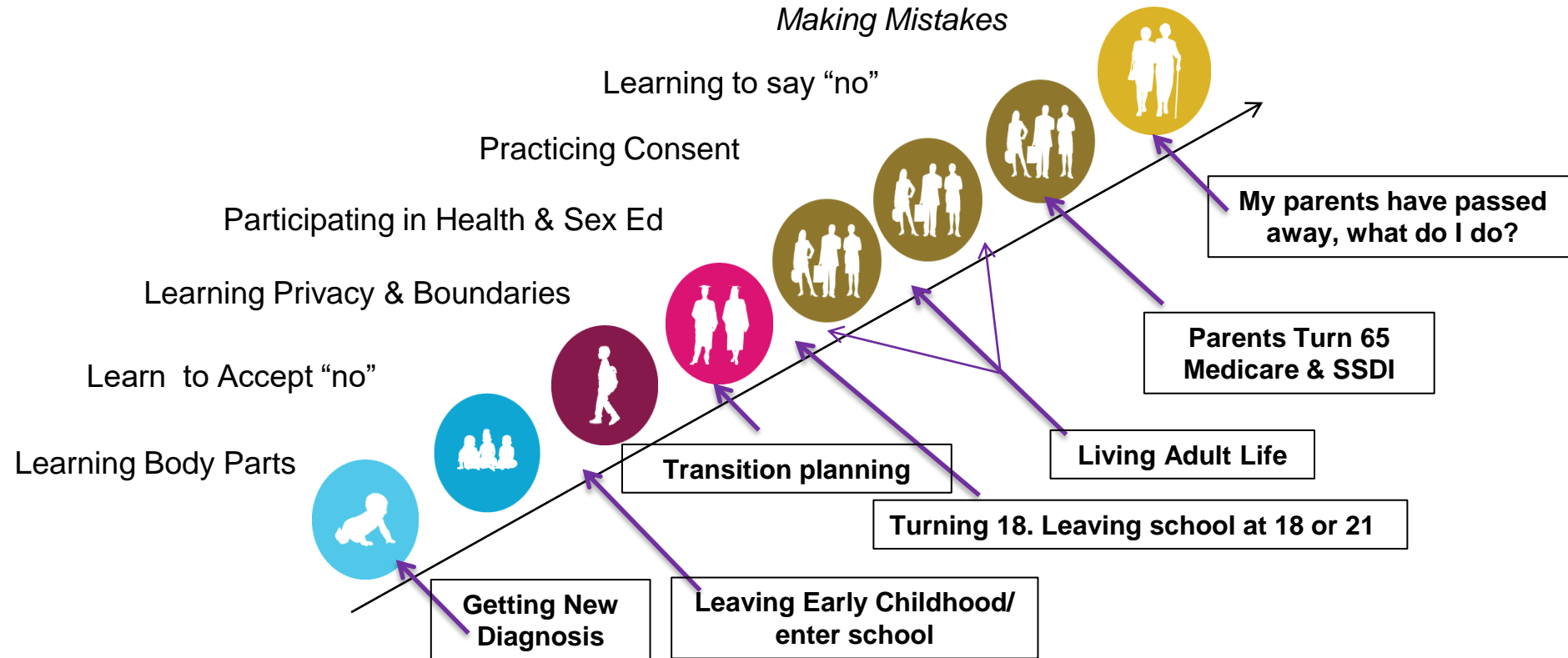
Peter Gerhardt, Ed.D., is the Executive Director of the EPIC School in Paramus, NJ. Dr. Gerhardt has nearly 40 years of experience utilizing the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis in support of adolescents and adults with autism spectrum disorders in educational, employment, residential, and community-based settings. He is the author or co-author of a number of articles and book chapters on the needs of adolescents and adults with ID and ASD and has presented nationally and internationally on this topic. Dr. Gerhardt serves as Co-Chairman of the Scientific Council for the Organization for Autism Research and is on numerous professional advisory boards including the Cambridge Center for Behavioral Studies. He received his doctorate from Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey's Graduate School of Education.

LifeCourse Framework



Lens of
LifeCourse

Life Experiences and Life Transitions



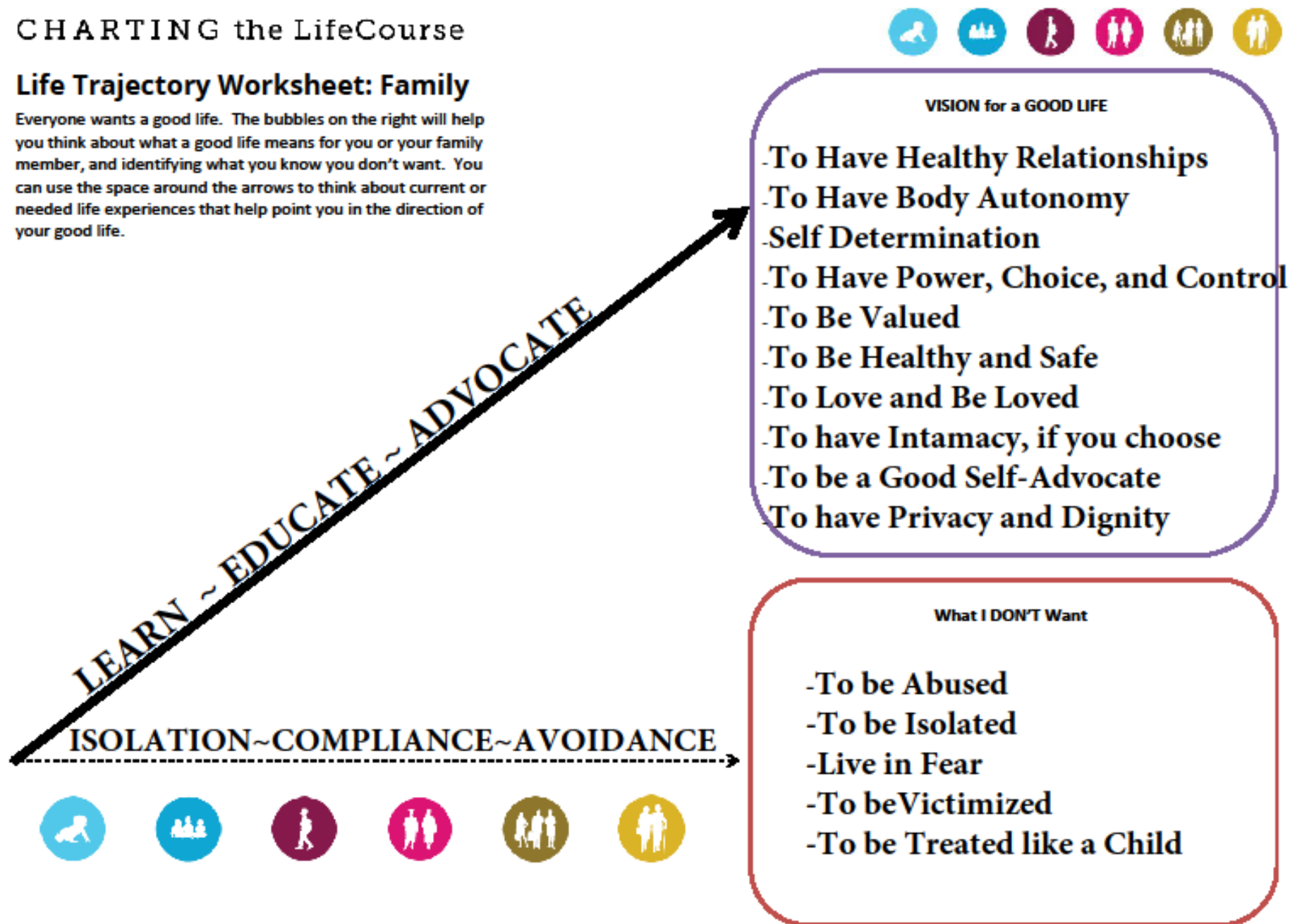
"Anticipatory Guidance for Life Experiences"



CHARTING the LifeCourse

Life Trajectory Worksheet: Family

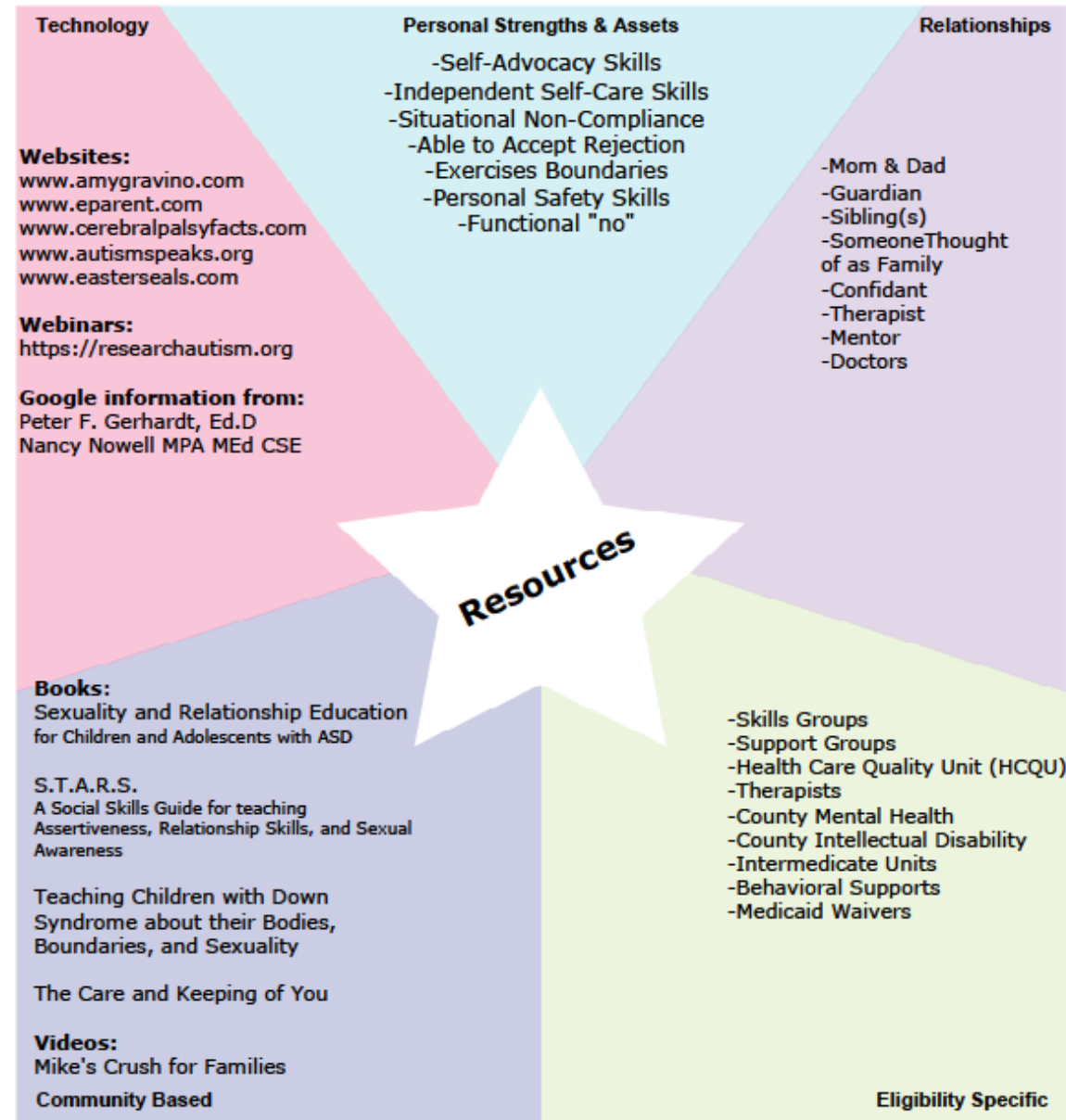
Everyone wants a good life. The bubbles on the right will help you think about what a good life means for you or your family member, and identifying what you know you don't want. You can use the space around the arrows to think about current or needed life experiences that help point you in the direction of your good life.





Integrated Supports

People need supports to lead good lives. Using a combination of lots of different kinds of support helps to plot a trajectory toward an inclusive, quality, community life. This tool will help families and individuals think about how to work in partnership to support their vision for a good life.



Learn

Risks & Vulnerabilities –(example:Even if Your Loved one only Watches Pre-School Shows they can Easily be Exposed to Pornography)

Facts vs Myth (example:Myth -The belief that people with disabilities are not sexual comes from the idea that they are child-like – viewed as an “eternal child”. This view ignores the need to acknowledge one’s sexuality and denies their full humanity

Educate

What is a Healthy Relationship

Facts About Sexual Health & Sexuality

Self-Advocacy Skills

General Skill Building



What is a Friend?

Be careful with the word “Friend”

Individuals with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities, especially autism, can be concrete thinkers who interpret things literally.

Some responses of adults with autism during an assessment* of sexual knowledge



http://www.camboday.com/UnderstandingSex/healthsex/img/sex_sofa.jpg

Q: Tell me about this picture.

A: “[T]he people were on the couch ‘being friends.’”

(Konstantareas & Lunsy, 1997, p. 411)

Gerhardt, P. (Sexuality on the Spectrum)



Definitions

Sexuality is an integral part of the personality of everyone: man, woman, and child. It is a basic need and an aspect of being human that cannot be separated from other aspects of human life. Sexuality is not synonymous with sexual intercourse [and it] influences thoughts feelings, actions, and interactions and thereby our mental and physical health” (WHO, 1975)

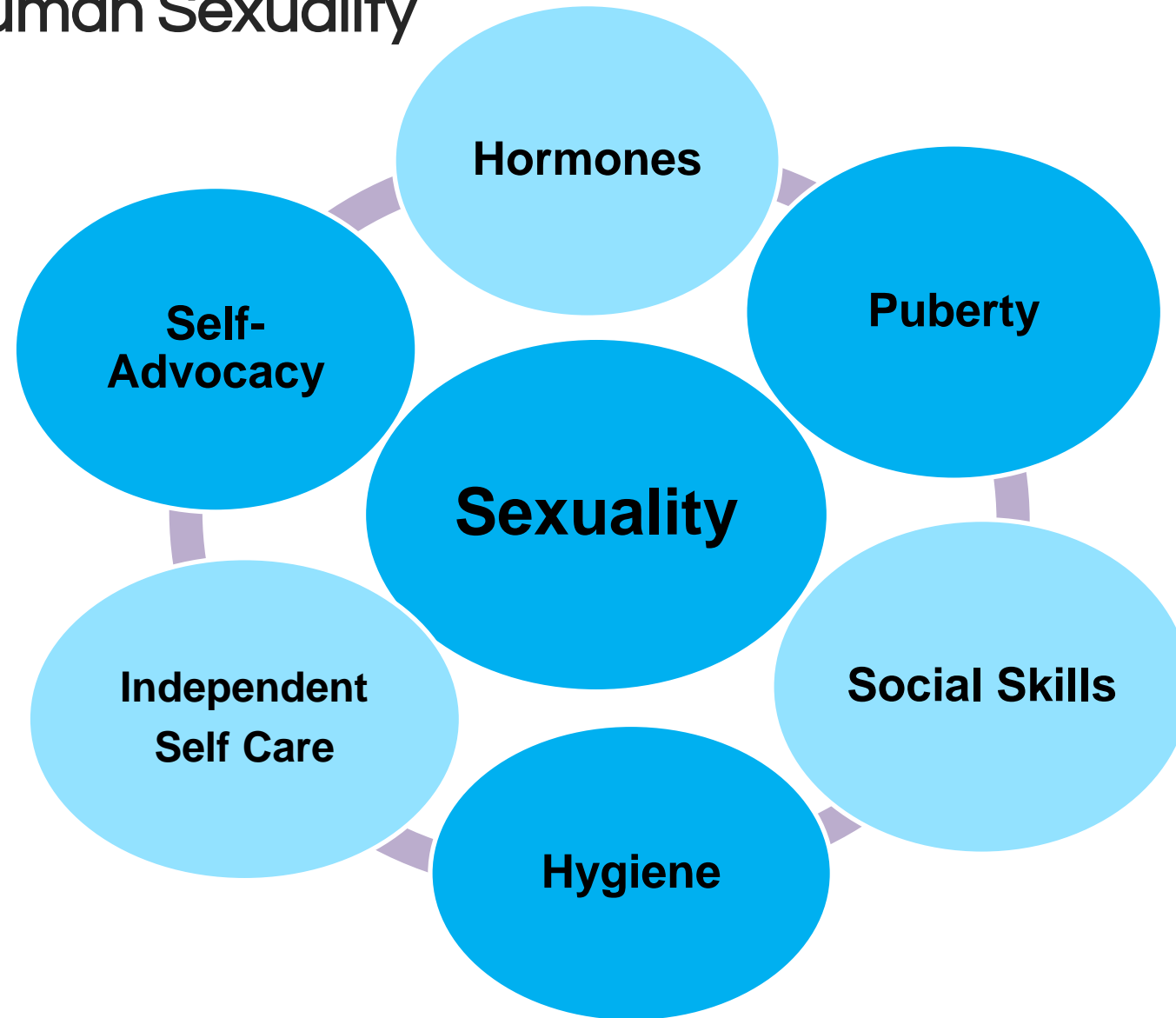
Sex can simply mean gender, whether you’re male or female. Sex can also mean the physical act of sexual intercourse

Sexuality Education, intellectual disability & autism...

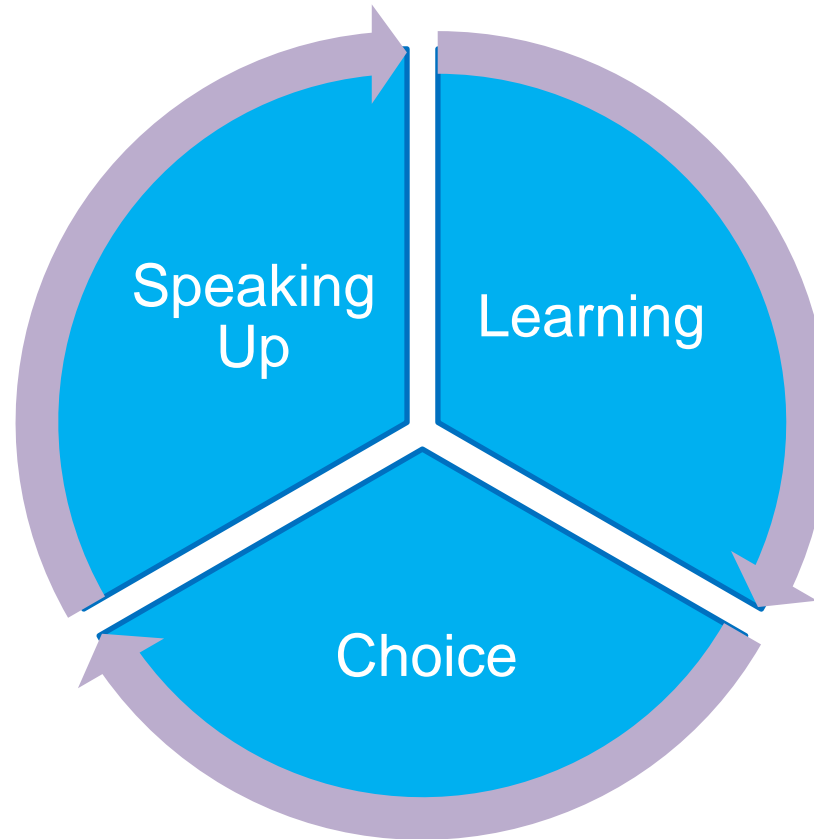
“...right now, there’s no curriculum that truly addresses the issues in a functional way, and there’s little research on the topic. With sexuality, you’re not just teaching information. You’re also teaching values and social competence.”

Dr. Peter Gerhardt, Ed.D

Human Sexuality



Self-Advocacy Skills

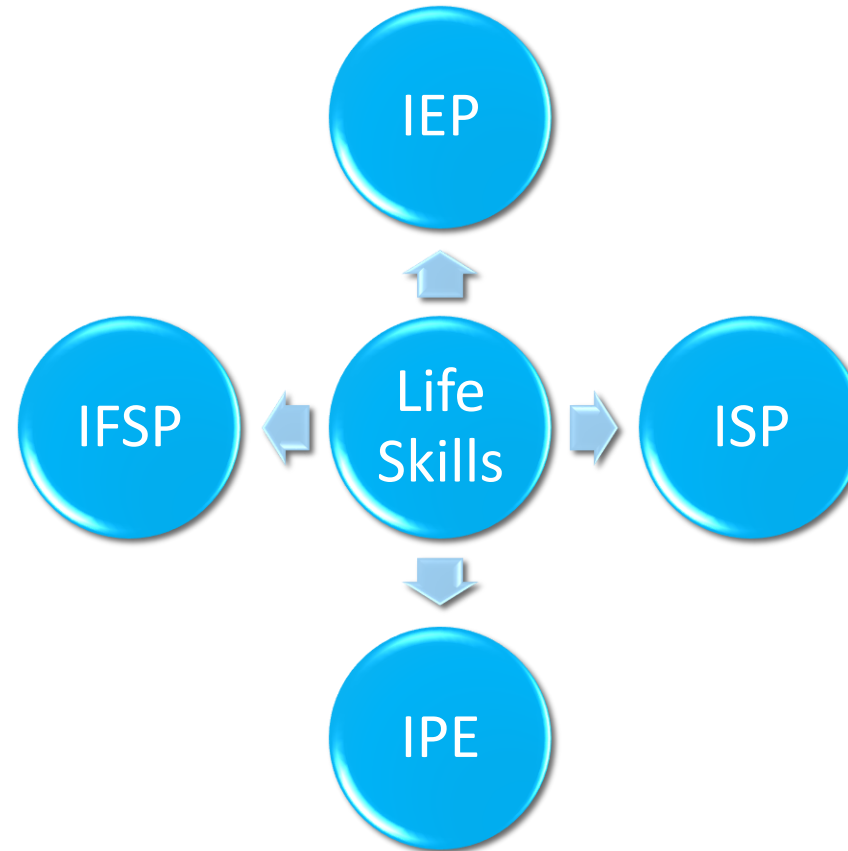


Building skills - Example

- As early as possible be clear & consistent with rules about privacy
- Dress or undress in bathroom or bedroom
- Caregivers should model knocking on doors and getting consent before entering
- Functional “No” & Situational Non-compliance



Advocate: Safety Skills ARE Life Skills!



Demonstrate

- LEAD by example
- Model the behaviors you expect from others
- Demonstrate how others can do this to help their loved one take control of their health & sexuality
- The Pa Family Network's success is largely due to demonstrating through our lived experience
- We show caregivers how we've done it-Never how they should do it!



Where are we now...

Pa Family Network has presented 21 workshop to over 300 attendees

Workshops held for Adult Siblings by Adult Sibling Advisor

Workshops presented by our bilingual Advisors with the use of simultaneous translation or in Spanish to the Spanish community upon request



Where are we now...(2)

Some collaborations include Arc of Chester County, Centers for Independent Living, Regional Collaboratives, Abilities in Motion, Right to Education groups, Autism Support Groups

Mentoring Sessions to incorporate skill development and new opportunities into LifeCourse Portfolios

Continued Workshops, mentoring, and new opportunities for learning



If you have seen or heard anything that gives you cause to suspect that an adult with a physical or mental disability is a victim of abuse of any kind, please call the **Statewide Adult Protective Services Hotline at: 800-490-8505**. Voluntary reporters can remain anonymous.



Vision for Equality

Serving People with Disabilities and Their Families
visionforequality.org

Funded by Philadelphia Intellectual disAbility Services



**IF YOU SEE
OR HEAR
SOMETHING,
DO SOMETHING!**

Call **Statewide Adult
Protective Services:**
800-490-8505

**WE CAN
STOP ABUSE!**

Abuse Cards Developed & Distributed by Vision for Equality



Just the tip
of the
iceburg



Thank you!

For more information or to reach the Pa Family Network...

844-PAFAMILY

www.Visionforequality.org