

Privacy

For Adults with I/DD

- What does “private” mean?
 - A private place is somewhere you know you can be alone, with a door that closes, and a place where someone will knock or announce themselves before entering. A personal bedroom or the home bathroom are good examples of private places.
 - “Private” means more than being alone. Public places where you are alone (public restrooms, an alley, a movie theater) are still public places and private activities (such as undressing, masturbating and having sex) should NOT be done there.
 - A private place is *designed* for privacy.
 - Privacy does not only describe places. Privacy can also describe activities and conversations.

- We all have the right to privacy.
 - Privacy is an important aspect of all people’s lives. It is a basic human right and should be respected.
 - When privacy is respected it communicates a sense of dignity for the individual.
 - Understanding privacy means understanding that our body is special and we make the decision about who can touch us.

- Privacy is an important aspect of healthy sexuality.
 - Privacy provides an opportunity to be sexual and develop an intimate relationship.
 - People with intellectual and developmental disabilities often resort to rushed sexual encounters outdoors or in isolated semi-public places (i.e., unused rooms) because they lack access to a safe private place.
 - Understanding privacy is an important tool to help people with I/DD protect themselves against abuse.

Hingsburger, Dave (1995) Just Say Know! Understanding and Reducing the Risk of Sexual Victimization of People with Developmental Disabilities. Diverse City Press, Inc.

Hollomotz, Andrea and The Speakup Committee (2008) “May we please have sex tonight?” People with learning difficulties pursuing privacy in residential group settings. British Journal of Learning Disabilities, 37, 91-97.