Teaching about Privacy
For Families and Caregivers of Children with I/DD

What does “teaching about privacy” mean?
- Learning the difference between public and private is an important stage in developing a sense of modesty and learning what is socially appropriate.
- Teaching privacy can begin as early as age two or three; for example, learning the correct names for body parts and that certain body parts are private.
- Modeling privacy is an important tool to help children learn the concept.

The concept of privacy can be applied to four areas: one’s body, behavior, place, and conversation.
- Children can learn which parts of the body are private. For example, the parts of the body that can be covered by a swimming suit are private.
- Children can learn who can see the parts of their body that are private. For example, their parents can help them bathe and dress or their doctor can perform a medical exam.
- Children can learn the difference between public and private behavior. For example, it is okay to brush your hair in public, but not to undress in public.
- Children can learn the difference between public and private places. A private place is where no one can see you and where no one can enter without your permission. For example, the bedroom and bathroom at home are private places.
- Children can learn the difference between public and private conversation. This will help teach the child socially appropriate behavior and help foster inclusion in social situations.

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.