



SEXUAL RIGHTS STATEMENT

People with disabilities have the right to:

1. Have body integrity, privacy and personal choice respected, including the right to know how to protect oneself.

"I have the right to say what happens to and with my body. I have the right to privacy in showing and sharing my sexuality. I have the right to make my own choices about my sexuality. I have the right to learn how to keep myself safe from someone hurting me sexually and to use what I learned to help keep me safe."

2. Be free from sexual harassment, abuse, assault and other forms of sexual violence.

"I have a right to be safe and feel safe. It is wrong for anybody to hurt my body or my mind. Some things that hurt my body or mind are

- looking at or touching my private parts without permission
- making me touch someone else's private parts
- making me have sex without my permission
- saying things about my private parts
- showing me sexual pictures that I don't want to see

3. Explore and define one's own sexuality, sexual orientation, gender identity and sexual expression without judgement or discrimination.

"I have the right explore and to say if I am a man, a woman, a combination of both, or neither. I have the right to choose who I want to have a sexual relationship with. I have a right to choose how I define my sexuality and sexual expression, and have those choices respected."

4. Decide whether and when to be sexually active.

“I have the right to decide if I do or don’t want to have sex or sexual activity. I have a right to change my mind.”

5. Choose one’s own sexual partners and have privacy and dignity related to dating and sexual intimacy.

“I have a right to choose who I want to date, where I go on dates, and to have privacy when I go on dates. I also have a right to not go on dates and not have sexual intimacy. I have a right to have my choices on who I date, where I go, and my sexual intimacy respected. Sexual intimacy can include hugging, touching, and kissing.”

6. Have safe and pleasurable sexual experiences.

“I have the right to be safe and feel good when having sex or sexual activities.”

7. Decide whether, when and whom to marry and then having equality in any marriage.

“I can decide if I want to get married, when I want to marry, and who I want to marry. My marriage will be equal to anyone else’s marriage.”

8. Decide whether, when and by what means to have a child or children, how many children to have and the spacing of one’s children.

“I have the right to decide if I want to have children or not. I can also decide when and how many children I want to have. I can decide how I want to have children whether it be by myself, naturally, adoption, surrogacy, or a with medical help.”

9. Have readily available and equal access to education and information about sex, safe/healthy sexual relationships and reproductive health including but not limited to: resources, services, counseling, family planning, contraceptive services, sex therapy services, and sexual equipment as well as resources specific to the prevention of, investigation of and trauma-informed response to sexual abuse.

"I have a right to learn about sex, safe and healthy sexual relationships, and reproductive health. I have to learn about condoms, birth control, and other ways of preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases to keep both myself and my partner safe. I have a right to learn about ways to help prevent sexual abuse. If I have experienced sexual abuse, I also have a right to ask for and get help and services in a way that works best for me. Help and services can include counseling and support from a sexual assault center.

10. The right to receive that education, information, services and resources in a way that is free from discrimination, recognizes and supports one's own choices and interests, and promotes trauma-informed practices.

"I have a right to get information and learn in a way that I can best understand through videos, large print, audio, pictures, easy-to-understand language, or a combination of all. I can choose what education, information, services and resources I want, and a right to have those choices respected."

11. Have the highest attainable standard of sexual health.

"Sexual health is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality. It is not just about being free of sexually transmitted diseases or not being able to have sexual activity in a way that works best for a person. I have a right to a positive and respectful approach to my sexuality and sexual relationships. I have the right to pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. I have a right to my sexual health being respected, protected, and fulfilled.

12. Have an effective remedy for violations of fundamental rights.

“I have a right speak up and speak out if someone has hurt my body or my mind. I have a right to tell someone if my rights have been violated. Some of the places or people I can tell include

- Family or friends
- Staff at my agency
- Doctor, nurse, counselor or therapist
- The Human Rights Committee at my agency
- The Illinois Department of Human Services
- Illinois Guardianship and Advocacy Commission
- Equip for Equality

References:

- World Health Organization. “A Time to Lead: A Roadmap for Progress on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Worldwide” (2006; Updated 2010)
- The National Disability Authority. <http://www.nda.ie/>. Item 18.9.
- Illinois Imagines: Sexual Rights of Women with Disabilities
- Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities Code (405 ILCS 5/2-100, 101.1, 102, 103, 112 and 5/4-211)

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