We need to talk to children and young people with disabilities about sexuality earlier and more often.

BACKGROUND
- Sexuality is a core part of human nature and a human right.
- Sexuality is not often addressed when providing care to children and young people with disabilities.
- To understand how to best support their sexuality needs, we brought together young adults with disabilities, parents, and healthcare professionals for a single-day accessible event called the Connection Day.

OBJECTIVES

Objectives of the event:
1. Share scholarly and experiential knowledge to facilitate discussion and new insights about sexuality and disability.
2. Identify need-based research questions for future exploration.
3. Identify and prioritize topics to create evidence-based educational resources.

METHODS

- Virtual event held synchronously.
- Six academic and/or lived experience speakers shared their knowledge about sexuality and disability and led a panel discussion.
- Attendees participated in small group discussions of 7-9 people to share their experiences, discuss research gaps, and identify research needs.
- All attendees participated in two voting exercises to select the group’s top research priorities and resource needs.

RESULTS

- Diverse group of 59 attendees participated.
- The top three identified research priorities will guide future research projects.
- Prioritized education resource needs will guide the creation of accessible sexuality and disability resources.

Let’s talk disability and sex:

A Connection Day to discuss sexuality and young people with disabilities.

ATTENDEES

- Clinical and research trainees 12%
- Healthcare professionals 31%
- Researchers 20%
- Parents/caregivers 10%
- Other professionals 12%
- Young adults with disabilities 15%

TOP RESEARCH PRIORITIES

- How to start conversations around sexuality early and listen to children and young people.
- How to create safe and accessible spaces, places, and resources.
- Focus on intersectionality (race, gender, sexuality, etc.).

TOP RESOURCE NEEDS

- Training modules for health care providers.
- Educational courses with LGBTQ+ and disability focus.
- Have creative component (peer role-modelling, comic books).

Authors: Celeste M Lumia1, Madison Giles1,2, Revi Bonder1, Dionne Gesink2, Keisha Goberdhan1, Marie Hooper4, Dilshad Kassam-Lallani1,5, Patricia McKeever1,5, Fiona J Moola1,2,4, Christine Providenza1, Louise Rudden1,5, Meenu Sikand1, Joanne Wincentak1, Amy C McPherson1,2,3.

1Bloorview Research Institute, 2Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto, 3Rehabilitation Sciences Institute, University of Toronto, 4Graduate Program in Psychology, York University, 5Lawrence S Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing, University of Toronto, 6School of Early Childhood Studies, Ryerson University.