

***Doin' It Well:  
Approaching Sexual  
Violence Prevention from a  
Sex Positive Framework***

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# Learning Objectives

- ◆ How to incorporate a “sex positive” approach to sexual violence prevention education
- ◆ Skills for balancing discussions about healthy sex and unhealthy sexual violence, including how to guide audience members through these discussions
- ◆ Information to create a model program outline appropriate to use with their target audiences

# Who's In the Room?

- ◆ What kind of an agency do you work within?
- ◆ Who is your audience?
- ◆ Do you have specific training in rape prevention education?
- ◆ Do you have specific training in providing sexual health education?

# Imagining a World Without Rape



# Sexual Violence Prevention

- ◆ Stopping perpetrator from perpetrating, simply.
- ◆ Social issue: requires social change
- ◆ Prevention: Not just the absence of something, presence of something new

# What is Good Sex?

- ◆ Make a List
- ◆ Many struggle with making this list
- ◆ When we ask college students they say...

# Good Sex Is...

- ◆ Mutual pleasure
- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Everybody orgasms
- ◆ Passionate
- ◆ Protection
- ◆ Love

They also say...



# Good Sex Is...

- ◆ “Eiffel Tower”
- ◆ “69”
- ◆ Whip Cream
- ◆ Handcuffs, whips, chains
- ◆ Lots of sex

But... (they add)

This is not the kind of sex college students are having



# Sex Is Complex

- ◆ Difficult for participants to talk openly about what good sex is
- ◆ No one has asked them to think about this before
- ◆ Taking an active role in defining their sexual encounters may be unnerving
- ◆ There are many rewards and challenges to open introspection and communication

# Barriers to Healthy, Supportive Sexuality Education

- ◆ All-male spaces
- ◆ Hyper-sexualized culture with very little accurate sex education
- ◆ Double-bind faced by women

# Contextualizing Healthy Sexuality Within Everyday Sexual Violence Prevention

- ◆ Good sex in a “world without rape”
- ◆ Yes must mean yes, if no is to mean no.
- ◆ How would this change rape crisis work if healthy sexuality was a primary focus?

# Stay (Sex) Positive

- ◆ Sexuality is an important component of physical and emotional development
- ◆ Everyone should have access to medically accurate sexual health info
- ◆ Fostering and promoting consensual, healthy sexual interactions
- ◆ Combating messages that sex should be shameful, bad, or violent

# Challenges of Sex Positive + Rape Prevention Approach

- ◆ Perceptions about both approaches
- ◆ Sexuality seen as fun/funny; rape is serious and traumatic.
  - What a drag!
  - May feel distracting from the “real issue”
- ◆ Rape is an act of violence, not sex, but...

# Rape Is Not Sex, And...

- ◆ Our culture promotes a power-over view of sex (this is sexy)
- ◆ “Good sex” in the media often violent
- ◆ For men who commit rape, not identified as “rape”
- ◆ Rape is an extension of our society’s views of sex and gender

# Misperceptions of Sex Education

- ◆ Sex educators=“anything goes”
- ◆ Stuck on “as long as it’s two consenting adults”
- ◆ Calling out sex negativity & violence somehow limits positive sexuality


# Misperceptions about Sexual Violence Prevention

- ◆ Anti Sex
- ◆ Anti Men
- ◆ Has nothing to do with sexual health or sexuality information

We must work with our sexual health colleagues to build understanding and collaboration



# Challenges (cont.)

- ◆ Requires facilitator to balance fun, “good sex” dialogue with more serious topic of rape
  - ◆ Facilitators and audience members like to compartmentalize sexual health information & rape information
  - ◆ Difficult to integrate concrete info with a “rape culture” framework in ways the audience can grasp
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# Collaboration Barriers

- ◆ AASECT trashed @ anti-porn conference
- ◆ Feminist Against Pornography trashed by some in AASECT
- ◆ Our lenses are different
- ◆ We need to challenge ingrained rape culture in ways that are not sex shaming

# Successes

- ◆ Audiences eager to learn about both violence & good sex
- ◆ Sex Educator adds credence to the sexual violence prevention mission
  - Of course the sex educator isn't "anti-sex"
- ◆ Promotes discussions that enhance sexual violence and sexual health education (i.e. "sex negative messages in porn").
- ◆ Models that sex is natural & healthy, and sexual violence has no place in "good sex"

# **BUILDING UNDERSTANDING**

**Sex Education  
Sexual Violence**

A stylized silhouette of a mountain range in a darker shade of teal, located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

# Applying To Your Context

- ◆ How can you incorporate a sex positive approach in any classroom while remaining age/context appropriate?
  - Teach “respect” skills along with any “refusal” skills
  - Acknowledge sexuality as important aspect of identity

# Developing ability to talk about both simultaneously

- ◆ Requires cross training
- ◆ Sexuality educators get sexual violence training more frequently than visa versa
- ◆ Sexuality education often lacks a feminist perspective

# Training

- ◆ 40 hour
  - Sex Educators should attend!
  - Include sex positive messages/activities
- ◆ AAASECT, SSSS & other conferences for violence prevention folks
- ◆ CME's, public health, Planned Parenthood trainings
  - Even if it seems non-related

**WE CAN'T DO IT ALL!**





# We're all Responsible for Healthy Sexuality

- ◆ Everybody deserves a happy, healthy sex life, need to work to ensure it.
- ◆ Social responsibility – among friends, family, etc. – to change the ways we encourage “good sex”
- ◆ Working with colleagues doing this work – encouraging them to get cross-trained

# “Wasted Sex”: A Model Program

- ◆ Needed to discuss alcohol consumption, sexuality, & sexual violence
- ◆ Partnered with alcohol educator
- ◆ Developed workshop integrating our approaches
- ◆ Available via...

# Resources

- ◆ Yes Means Yes  
[yesmeansyesblog.wordpress.com](http://yesmeansyesblog.wordpress.com)
- ◆ Moving Upstream Newsletter  
[www.vadv.org](http://www.vadv.org)
- ◆ Doin' It Well [www.doinitwell.blog.com](http://www.doinitwell.blog.com)
- ◆ Our Whole Lives (OWL)
- ◆ The Survivor's Guide to Sex (Haines)
- ◆ Wendy Maltz [www.healthysex.com](http://www.healthysex.com)

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