TIZARD University of Kent

NDTi National Development Team for Inclusion

My Life My Choice

Supported Loving

Sexuality and Relationships- My Rights Charter

Sexuality & Relationships - My Rights

Two groups -the Tizard Centre at the University of Kent and the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) working with My Life My Choice - did some research looking at relationships for people with learning disabilities.

We both found that many people did not know their rights around sex and relationships.

With the help of the Supported Loving Network, we made the charter to help people understand.

Sexuality & Relationships - My Rights

The Human Rights Act (1998) is an important law that makes sure everyone has the same rights so they can live their life as they want and to have privacy. This law includes things like:

- **Your sexuality** - We mean the way we feel about our own body and what makes us feel good. It's also about whether we fancy men or women, both or neither.
- **Your body**
- **How you look/dress** - What clothes you like to wear or how you like look
- **Your relationships with other people** - It might be with friends, family, or someone you feel more strongly about

Glossary- Some words can be hard to understand, we have explained them

Rights- This means what the law says you can have or do

Beliefs- What people think and believe about things like sex and relationships

Race- This usually means what skin colour we have and where our families are from.

Your Sex- If you have a penis or a vagina

Gender – How male or female you feel you are. This is not the same as your sex.

Some people do not feel like either a man or a woman and call this non-binary

Sexuality - The way we feel about our own body and what makes us feel good. It's also about whether we fancy men or women, or both/ neither

Intimacy - Feeling close to someone

Partner – This can be a boyfriend / girlfriend or a husband / wife. This is anyone you are in a relationship with.

Sexual Partner – A person you have had sex with

Civil Partnership- This is a formal and legal relationship, like a marriage between two people, and can be between people of any sex

Sexually Transmitted Infections- Infections you can catch through sex

Abortion- When a women is pregnant and has an operation (or takes tablets) that makes her no longer pregnant

Sterilisation- An operation that means a person can not ever have children

MY RIGHTS

I have the right make my decisions

I have the right to make my own decisions about my relationships, sexuality or sex life

There might be some decisions I need help with. If this happens a meeting called a "capacity assessment" might be needed to see if I can make this decision

If I need a capacity assessment, I have a right to be there and be as involved as possible

MY RIGHTS

I have the right make my decisions

*If I have a capacity assessment and it is decided that **I am unable to make a decision** around sex or relationships*

It is my right to have support and education to help me to understand and be able to make my own decision. This might need to be tried several times. I must have this to be able to make a decision

***If I am still unable to make the decision myself** (this is called lacking capacity) I need help to keep myself safe*

It is my right that any decision made must help me to have as much choice and freedom as possible

MY RIGHTS

I have the same rights to a relationship as anyone else

I have the right to intimacy (feeling close to someone), relationships or sex, even if people, like my parents or staff, do not agree with my choice of partner

I have the right to choose my own partner no matter who they are, what they look like or what they believe in.

MY RIGHTS

I have the same rights to a relationship as anyone else

I have the right to have sex if I choose to, whether I am in a relationship or not (as long as both people agree)

I have the right to get married or have a civil partnership

I have the right to not be in a relationship

MY RIGHTS

I have the right to be taken seriously

Everyone should respect me and take my relationships or sexual life seriously

I may need help to meet people who I might like as a partner

I have the right not to talk about my relationship with others if I choose not to

My supporters should meet my on-going needs and any needs I may have as part of a couple, as this may change over time (e.g. as part of a couple we may need different help the longer we are together- like help to move in together)

MY RIGHTS

I have the right to privacy in my home with a partner

I have the right to shut my bedroom door

I have the right to a double bed

I have the right to private space and a lock on my bedroom door

MY RIGHTS

I have the right to privacy in my home with a partner

I have the right to have someone to stay over in my room

I have the right to keep any texts, phone calls and messages private

MY RIGHTS

I have the right to sex and relationships support that I understand

I have the right to ongoing relationship support & information on how to keep safe. This could be practical and emotional support

I have the right to make mistakes in my relationships

I have the right to say no or change my mind about what I do, just like anyone else can

I have the right to sex education in a way I understand

MY RIGHTS

I can choose the contraception that is right for me

I have the right to information I understand about contraception

I have the right to choose what contraception is best for me

I have the right to have information about having children, about avoiding pregnancy and getting an abortion if I choose

MY RIGHTS

I can choose the contraception that is right for me

I have the right to information about sexually transmitted infections and how to stop myself from getting sick

If a doctor suggests long term contraception, like the injection or implant, or something that lasts forever like sterilization, then it is especially important that I get good information and support to help me make an informed decision.

MY RIGHTS

I have the right to a express my gender and sexuality

I have the right to masturbate, and use legal pornography and sex toys if I want

I have the right to dress in any way I choose to express my sexuality

I have the right to express my gender I any way I choose

My Responsibilities

I need to understand what **consent** means – that *both me and a partner agree to anything sexual that we do together. My partner must be able to tell me that they agree using either words or signs*

I must understand about **sexually transmitted infections** and how to not spread them to a partner – usually by using a condom

I need to make sure anything sexual I do, either alone or with a partner, is in done in a **private place** – usually in mine or a partner's bedroom

My Responsibilities

I must make sure anyone I do anything sexual with is **over 16 years old - this is the law**

I must understand that having sex between a man and women can make a women pregnant. I must use **contraception** if I do not want this

What Next?

This charter was made to help people know what their rights are around sexuality and relationships.

People need to know so they can speak out if they are being stopped from having the same rights as everyone else.

We want you to share this charter with people you know so everyone knows their rights.

What Next?

Where can I share the charter?

- **With your friends and family**

- **With your advocacy group**

- **With your college / day service**

- **With your staff**

What Next?

What happens next?

Supported Loving

Supported Loving will ask organisations that support people to sign up.

Organisations can say that they AGREE and SUPPORT the charter and are working hard to make sure peoples rights are upheld and respected.

What If My Rights Are Being Ignored?

If your sexuality and relationship rights are being restricted you can talk to someone about this.

You could speak to:

- Your Support Staff or the manager of your support
- Your Social Worker (if you have one)
- An Advocate
- A Self Advocacy Group
- Someone you trust like an tutor at college
- Your Family
- Care Quality Commission
- A Solicitor

You can find out more about your human rights here: https://knowyourhumanrights.co.uk/