

HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE

# ALARMING

Rates of sexual assault against people with intellectual/developmental disabilities?



## THE RESEARCH

People with intellectual disabilities are sexually assaulted at a rate seven times higher than those without disabilities (Shapiro, 2018).

## WHY ARE THEY AT RISK?

There's not a simple answer for why. But, we do know there are risk factors that increase the likelihood of assault. For some, risk factors include:

1. Lack of education about anatomy,
2. Lack of sexual education, and
3. Lack of personal safety education.

## BUT ALSO,

We also know that frequent **medical touch** may be necessary for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, oftentimes making them compliant to any touch.



## MYTH # 1

People with developmental disabilities do not need to know about their bodies or boundaries.

## MYTH # 2

People with developmental disabilities cannot report if they are being groomed or have been assaulted.

## THE TRUTH

Many people with developmental disabilities can understand simplified information that may protect them--such as recognizing what grooming is, what their boundaries are, and the name of their body parts. They can even report uncomfortable situations if provided with step-by-step instructions.

## WHAT CAN I DO?

We all can normalize sex education for youth and adults with developmental disabilities and report when we suspect abuse has happened to a person with a disability. Let's create safer environments and more awareness within our community. Join the Community of Care at [www.CoastalFamilyPartners.com](http://www.CoastalFamilyPartners.com).

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