

**Supporting and Communicating with People Who Have Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities**

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 DANE CO. DEPT. OF HUMAN SERVICES  
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Disclosure Information for:  
 Carrie E. Pomije, M.S.S.W

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- Learners must attend the entire one-hour session and complete an evaluation to receive contact hours. There will be a code to text confirming attendance. The code and phone number will be displayed at the end of the session.

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**Learning Objectives**

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- Crime statistics for people who have disabilities
- Defining intellectual and/or developmental disability (I/DD) in the state of WI.
- Why people who are disabled are at higher risk of abuse and neglect
- How to interview people who have I/DD

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### Statistics

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- ▶ Per the US Census Bureau in 2019 about 7.2% of US households have a child under 18 who have a disability <sup>1</sup>
- ▶ In 2019 about 4% of WI children had a disability <sup>2</sup>
- ▶ The CDC estimates among children age 3-17, 1:6 have at least 1 developmental disability (DD) <sup>3</sup>

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### Vera Institute of Justice

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- ▶ Children who have a disability (of any type) are ~ 3 x more likely to be sexually abused as children. <sup>4</sup>
- ▶ Children who have an intellectual disability or a behavioral health diagnosis are 5 x more likely to be sexually abused. <sup>5</sup>
- ▶ Children who have a developmental disability are 3.8 x more likely to experience emotional abuse or neglect. <sup>6</sup>

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### Crime Victim Statistics

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- ▶ Per the US Dept., of Justice, people with cognitive disabilities have the highest rate of violent victimization among disability types measured. <sup>7</sup>
- ▶ People who have an I/DD are sexually assaulted at 7 times the rate of people without disabilities <sup>8</sup>

<https://www.npr.org/series/575502633/abused-and-betrayed>

- ▶ 65% of rapes against people with disabilities were committed against those who had multiple types of disabilities; double the rate than for those with a single disability. <sup>9</sup>

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### Reporting and Conviction

- ▶ Language use and police reports. Reports "follow the victim."
- ▶ Use words like has an IEP, supported employment, supported living, receives services through the children or adult disabilities system, etc.
- ▶ Avoid using terms like: functions like, has an IQ of \_\_\_\_.

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### What is an Intellectual/Developmental Disability (I/DD)? <sup>10</sup>

- ▶ A condition beginning in childhood (before age 22) and lasts throughout the individual's life.
- ▶ Likely to continue indefinitely.
- ▶ An IQ of less than 70.

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### What is considered an I/DD in the State of Wisconsin? <sup>11</sup>

- ▶ Traumatic Brain Injury
- ▶ Cerebral Palsy
- ▶ Epilepsy
- ▶ Autism
- ▶ Prader-Willi Syndrome
- ▶ Intellectual Disability
- ▶ Other neurological condition related to an I/DD or requiring similar supports.

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An I/DD is defined as having major functional limitations in 3 or more of the following areas of daily life skills:

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- ▶ Self care
- ▶ Receptive and expressive language
- ▶ Learning
- ▶ Mobility
- ▶ Self-direction
- ▶ Capacity for independent living
- ▶ Economic self-sufficiency

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Why are children with disabilities more likely to be abused?

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- ▶ Devaluation by society
- ▶ Lack of credibility
- ▶ Isolation
- ▶ Increased number of people in their lives

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Why are children with disabilities more likely to be abused?

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- ▶ Dependence on others
- ▶ Learned compliance
- ▶ Communication deficits
- ▶ Lack of education around sexuality and appropriate boundaries

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## Questions

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## Interviewing Strategies

- ▶ Don't let an IQ or "they function like a ..." influence your interaction.
- ▶ SLOW DOWN
- ▶ Calm body posture
- ▶ Be clear who you are, why you are there, assure they are not in trouble

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## Interviewing Strategies

- ▶ Move to a quiet, neutral, distraction free place, if possible
- ▶ Establish rapport
- ▶ Begin with non-threatening questions.
- ▶ Allow the person to tell their story from start to finish without interrupting.
- ▶ Expect that the story may not be linear.

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## Interviewing Strategies

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- ▶ Use a neutral bridge, "What happened next?" "Tell me more about that?"
- ▶ Paraphrase what they said; if unsure, ask. Check in frequently.
- ▶ Speak in short sentences, use simple words, one idea at a time
- ▶ Be concrete; don't use idioms

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## Reminders

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- ▶ Having an intellectual disability does not mean a person cannot remember details of a traumatic event.
- ▶ People who have an intellectual disability know the difference between a truth and a lie.
- ▶ Know your own limits. If you are not able to conduct an interview impartially, ask another member of your team to conduct the interview.

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## Closing Reminder

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If you are going to work with me, you have to listen to me. And you just can't listen with your ears, because it will go to your head too fast. You have to listen with your whole body. If you listen slow, with your whole self, some of what I say will enter your heart.

~ Christine Meyer

Courtesy of Inclusion Press. To purchase a poster of this statement contact: Inclusion Press [www.inclusion.com](http://www.inclusion.com)

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## Questions

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8. NPR Abused and Betrayed <https://www.npr.org/series/575502430/abused-and-betrayed> 2018 report by NPR Investigative Journalist Joseph Shapiro.
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11. Ibid.
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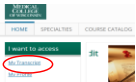
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