



The Specifics of communication in relation to sexuality III:

Helping professions in relation
to sexuality including persons
with intellectual disability –
Readiness for practice

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The Specifics of Communication in Relation to Sexuality III:

Helping Professions in Relation to Sexuality,
Including Persons with Intellectual
Disability: Readiness for Practice

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Introduction

Motto:
“Sex is fascinating. Or so it would seem based on how much
we talk about it and what we say.”

Rebecca F Plante
Gary Alan Fine

Our third joint publication builds on previous research and enriches the basic research on helping professions in relation to sexuality with a focus on the personality and attitudes of an individual in the context of readiness for professional practice. At the beginning, let us briefly recapitulate the previous publications.

The first publication (Štěrbová, D., & Rašková, M., et al., 2014) entitled *Specifics of communication in relation to sexuality I: Helping professions in relation to sexuality including persons with intellectual disability* focused on sexuality in the context of communication aspects among helping professionals. The authors focused on the following four key areas: sexuality from a general perspective, education and training, communication, and introduction to an empirical research. The first part of the publication provided definitions of selected terms concerning helping professions, sexual issues, and areas related to sexuality as well as sexual abuse including abuse of persons with intellectual disability. Attention was also on the area of attitudes and sexuality in families of individuals with health disability. The publication also focused on the issue of sexuality and education as defined by applicable curricular documents including specific approaches to educating persons with disability. The publication was also issued in English.

The second publication (Štěrbová, D., & Rašková, M., 2016) entitled *Specifics of communication in relation to sexuality I: Helping professions in relation to sexuality including persons with intellectual disability – from empirical research* builds on the first publication and focuses on communication and approaches to human sexuality in the general population and in persons with intellectual disability. The key issue is the acceptance of homosexuality by society and the problem of communication about homosexuality. The publication also focused on the current state of school-based education and healthcare and social services, also in the context of persons with intellectual disability. The authors of the publication were awarded the 2018 Award of the Rector of Palacký University Olomouc.

Both publications focused on issues that had not been subject to scientific research in the Czech Republic before. In the writing of the publication the authors used their long-term professional knowledge and experience and were supported by other professionals.

The third publication focuses specifically on respondents' attitudes and values in relation to sexuality in general and sexuality in persons with intellectual disability, and on respondents' comfort and problems with communication about human sexuality. In the context of attitudes and values the authors were specifically interested in professional barriers to human sexuality; attitudes, beliefs, and values concerning human sexuality, and diversity of people's attitudes, beliefs, and values relating to human sexuality, including the issue of understanding the importance of the nature and form of education of human sexuality as part of teacher training. In the context of respondents' comfort and problems with communication about human sexuality in general and in persons with intellectual disability the authors focused on problematic areas in communication about sexuality issues with pupils, the skills required for appropriate communication with pupils, as well as the ability to pass on information about all aspects of human sexuality.

We firmly believe that the subject of the third publication, which is based on educational practice, is also highly relevant. Similarly to the previous publications, the issue is associated with a degree of

taboo and a diversity of opinions and attitudes. We believe that any differences in opinions may serve as an impulse for further professional discussion. Nevertheless, we hope that from the perspective of modern education and psychology of the 21st century the publication will bring novel ideas in thinking about human sexuality.

Dana Štěrbová and Miluše Rašková