



*The Special Kids Network*

Making Connections for Pennsylvania's Children with Special Health Care Needs

# Reducing the Risk of Sexual Violence Against People with Developmental Disabilities: Staying Safe

**Pam Klipa**

**Public Policy and Systems Advocacy Specialist  
The Arc of Pennsylvania**

**Karla Vierthaler, MPA**

**Outreach Coordinator  
Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape**

**Live, Online Session**

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# Moderator for Today's Session



## Lynn A. Jones-Hoats

**Special Kids Network  
System of Care Coordinator  
Southeast Region**

**1-877-986-4550**

**717-763-1661 Ext. 130**

**Cell 610-248-3626**

**E-mail: [ljones-hoats@gotoskn.org](mailto:ljones-hoats@gotoskn.org)**



# Presenters

## **Pam Klipa**

**Public Policy & Systems Advocacy Specialist for Education  
& Early Childhood**

**The Arc of Pennsylvania**

**Suite 8 – Executive House**

**101 South Second Street**

**Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17101**

**Phone: 717-234-2621**

**E-mail: [pklipa@thearcpa.org](mailto:pklipa@thearcpa.org)**

## **Karla Vierthaler, MPA**

**Outreach Coordinator**

**Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape**

**125 North Enola Drive, Enola, PA 17025**

**Phone: 717-728-9740 ext. 125**

**E-mail: [kvierthaler@pcar.org](mailto:kvierthaler@pcar.org)**



# Staying Safe

## A Presentation of Project Illumination

**Karla Vierthaler**  
Outreach Coordinator

Pennsylvania Coalition  
Against Rape



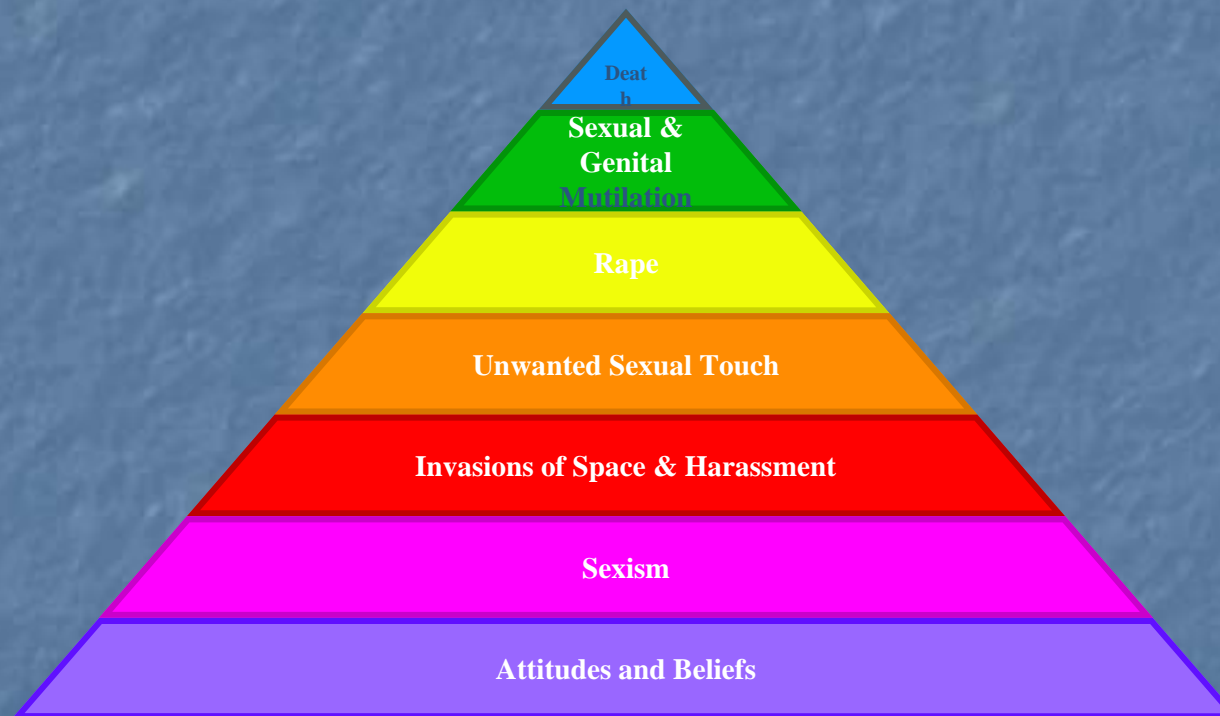
# What we're about to talk about...

- Isn't easy
  - Isn't fun
  - May be difficult
- 
- If you have a response to this material, please take care of yourself.
  - If you want to talk to someone confidentially, please call 1-888-772-PCAR (7227)

# Sexual Violence

- Occurs any time a person is forced, coerced, and/or manipulated into any unwanted sexual activity.
- The continuum of sexual violence includes rape, incest, child sexual assault, ritual abuse, date and acquaintance rape, statutory rape, marital or partner rape, sexual exploitation, sexual contact, sexual harassment, exposure, and voyeurism.

# Continuum of Sexual Violence



## *Rape is committed if sexual intercourse occurs*

- By forcible compulsion
- By threat of forcible compulsion that would prevent resistance by a person of reasonable resolution
- When the complainant is unconscious or where the person knows that the complainant is unaware that the intercourse is occurring
- Where the person has substantially impaired the complainant's power to appraise or control his or her conduct by administering or employing, without the knowledge of complainant, drugs, intoxicants or other means for the purpose of preventing resistance
- Who suffers from a mental disability which renders the complainant incapable of consent

# Sexual Assault

- a person commits a felony of the second degree when that person engages in sexual intercourse or deviate sexual intercourse with a complainant without the complainant's consent.

# PA Sexual Violence Statutes

## Rape

- sexual intercourse with force or threat of force
- Felony 1

## Sexual Assault (the "no means no" act)

- Sexual intercourse without the complainant's consent
- Felony 2

## Incest

- Sexual intercourse w/ ancestor, descendant, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew
- Felony 2

# PA Sexual Violence Statutes

## Aggravated Indecent Assault

- Digital penetration of body part for non-medical, hygienic or law enforcement procedures
- Felony 2

## Involuntary Deviate Sexual Intercourse

- Oral and anal intercourse, penetration of genitals by a foreign object
- Felony 2

# PA Sexual Violence Statutes

## Indecent Assault

- Indecent contact or causes indecent contact
- Misdemeanor 2

## Indecent Exposure

- Exposing genitals in public place
- Misdemeanor 2

## Open Lewdness

- Any offensive lewd behavior determined by community standards
- Misdemeanor 3

## Consent

- Can't be induced by force, duress or deception
- Can't be given by someone who is unable to make a reasonable judgment because of youth, mental defect or intoxication
- No specific words to signify consent
- Can be withdrawn at anytime

## No resistance required

- Victim doesn't have to fight the defendant off

## Prompt Complaint

- No requirement for prompt complaint to public authority

Questions??

*Did you know?*

Learning about sexual violence...

A Brief Quiz

This quiz and the entire presentation will be interactive...

And we'll talk you through how to participate!

1 in \_\_\_\_\_ women and 1 in \_\_\_\_\_ men will be sexually assaulted after the age of 18.

a) 50 and 100

b) 20 and 64

c) 10 and 40

d) 6 and 33

- Tjaden, Patricia and Thoennes, Nancy, November 1998. Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence Against Women: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Justice, Office of the Justice Programs, US Department of Justice.

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Nearly \_\_\_\_\_ in 10 rape and sexual assault victims knew their attacker.

a) 3

b) 5

c) 7

d) 9

*Rennison, Callie, "Criminal Victimization 1999: Changes 1998-99 with Trends 1993-99", Bureau of Justice Statistics, US Department of Justice, August 2000.*

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1 in \_\_\_\_\_ girls and 1 in \_\_\_\_\_ boys  
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- a) 10 and 30
- b) 6 and 14
- c) 4 and 6
- d) 2 and 5

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Only \_\_\_\_% of total rape/sexual assaults were reported to police. Rape or sexual assault was the violent crime least often reported to law enforcement.

- a.) 45
- b.) 28
- c.) 20

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**The chances that a woman will develop Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) after being raped are between \_\_\_\_\_% and \_\_\_\_\_%.**

- a) 20 and 50
- b) 15 and 30
- c) 50 and 95

Population Reports: Ending Violence Against Women, 2000.

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- a) 20 and 50
- b) 15 and 30
- c) **50 and 95**

Population Reports: Ending Violence Against Women, 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_% of women with developmental disabilities will be sexually assaulted in their lifetime, 50% higher than the rest of the population

- a.) 37--54
- b.) 50--75
- c.) 68--83

U.S. Department of Justice, 1998

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**c.) 68--83**

U.S. Department of Justice, 1998

This is 50% higher  
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the population

Of that number, forty-nine percent will experience \_\_\_\_\_ or more abusive incidents.

a.) 3

b.) 7

c.) 10

Valenti-Hein & Schwartz, 1995

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\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ percent of abusers are known and trusted by the victim who has developmental disabilities

- a.) 97 to 99
- b.) 60 to 70
- c.) 30 to 50

Baladerian, 1991

\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ percent of abusers are known and trusted by the victim who has developmental disabilities

a.) 97 to 99

b.) 60 to 70

c.) 30 to 50

Baladerian, 1991

Only \_\_\_\_\_ percent of sexual abuse cases involving people with developmental disabilities will ever be reported.

- a.) 3
- b.) 12
- c.) 17

Valenti-Hein & Swartz, 1995

Only \_\_\_\_\_ percent of sexual abuse cases involving people with developmental disabilities will ever be reported.

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Questions??

# What do we know about sexual violence?

Please share the last news story you heard involving sexual violence

What do these stories  
have in common??

Sexual Violence is about  
power and control not  
sexual attraction

Sexual assault is a violent act where  
sex is the weapon

What could make people with  
disabilities more vulnerable to  
sexual violence?

*Any thoughts?*

# Some reasons...

- Respect for authority
- Lack of autonomy due to care giving
- Not taught boundaries or unsure of boundaries due to care giving
- Taught not to say no

# Prevention!

- Teach and talk repeatedly about sexuality and what is appropriate behavior—this can prevent victimization and perpetration
- Recognizing sexually aggressive or bullying behaviors and address them
- Don't be too trusting—perpetrators take jobs where they can have access to vulnerable populations (screening)
- Don't be afraid to ask if you suspect abuse—people will open up if you offer yourself as a safe confidant

No one can promise that a sexual assault can be prevented, but.....

The risk of sexual assault can be reduced by:

- Telling the offender NO - NO
- Getting Away - GO
- Telling someone - TELL

Questions??

What are some signs  
that someone has been  
sexual abused?

*Please name some...*

# Signs and symptoms of sexual abuse

- Emotional reactions
- Physical reactions
- Social responses
- Sexual disturbances
- Psychological reactions
- Physical problems
- Social responses
- Sexual disturbances
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

# Keep in mind...

- Everyone responds to trauma differently.
- There are no absolute signs and symptoms of sexual abuse.
- If you have any concerns about someone, ask them privately and respectfully

# ASKING ABOUT SEXUAL ABUSE

- Has anyone made you feel uncomfortable?
- Is there anyone in your life who you are afraid of?
- Has anyone made you do things you did not want to do? Or has done things to you that you didn't want?

# Responding to a Disclosure of Sexual Abuse

- Believe the person
- Let them know it's not their fault
- Don't make promises you can't keep
- Allow the person to make as many decisions about the next steps as possible

# What else?

- If the assault was within 72 hours, go to the hospital for a rape exam.
- If the assault was after three days but still recent, go to the hospital for medical treatment.
- Call a rape crisis center for support.

# Reporting

- Any abuse or question of abuse (of anyone under 18) can be reported to ChildLine
- Any abuse or question of abuse can be reported to the police

**Remember**, you can always call your local rape crisis center for confidential advice, counseling and prevention education around sexual abuse

Questions??

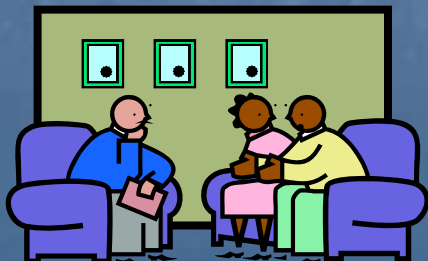
Do you know where the rape  
crisis center is in your  
community?

(yes or no)

# Pennsylvania's Sexual Violence Centers

52 sexual violence centers serving all 67 counties

- Court, medical and legal accompaniment
- Crisis intervention
- Long- and short-term counseling for groups and individuals
- Assistance with filing for Victims Compensation
- Hotline accessible 24 hours a day/7 days a week
- Prevention education
- Multi-disciplinary victim assistance teams



# Best strategies to partner with a center around sexual violence

- Attempt to begin a relationship with them before seeking services
- Understand that sexual violence centers come from an empowerment background
- Recognize that sexuality education must come before prevention education

# Keep in mind...

- Victims with disabilities sometimes recant because the process of telling is scary and traumatic
- Just because the police and/or district attorney don't take the case, doesn't mean it didn't happen

# A Guide for Friends, Family & Care Providers of Sexual Violence Survivors who have Disabilities

- How sexual violence is different for people with disabilities in green boxes
- Great tool for working with victims and understanding sexual violence

<http://www.pcar.org/resources/disabilities/030206-2275-lo%20res.pdf>

THANK YOU!!!

Karla Vierthaler

Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape

1-800-692-7445, ext. 125

[kvierthaler@pcar.org](mailto:kvierthaler@pcar.org)