LIFE WITHOUT BARRIERS

Relationships, Intimacy and Sexuality

Core to the Human Experience

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What brought you to this session today?

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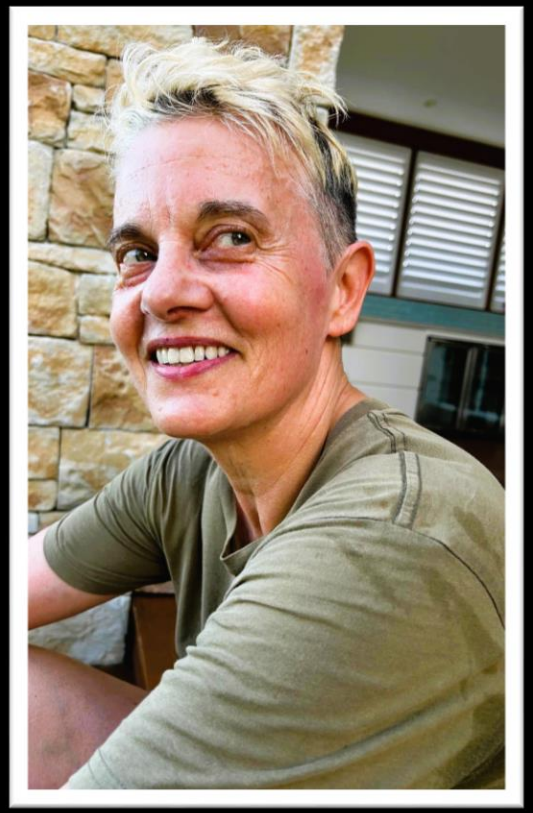
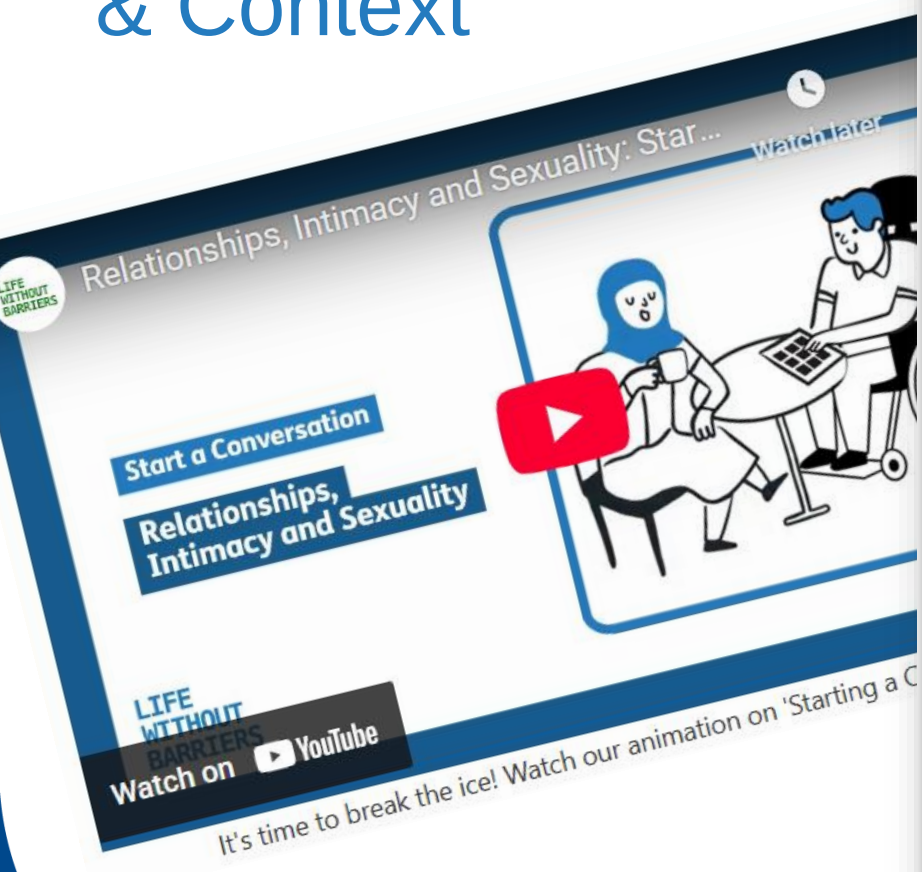
Jacqui Astolfi



Daniel

Vasileios Haldezos

Background & Context



LIFE WITHOUT BARRIERS

LWB Relationships, Intimacy and Sexuality – Policy Guideline

Policy Statement

The United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (the Convention) (2018) operates on the principle that a person with disabilities has the right to make choices about all aspects of life and that others are to respect that right. The Relationships, Intimacy and Sexuality policy (the policy) is founded on this principle.

The policy is also consistent with the objectives of the National Disability Insurance Scheme's (NDIS) Practice Standards (NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission) (2021), which state that each 'person's' autonomy is respected, including their right to intimacy and sexual expression.

This policy demonstrates Life Without Barriers' (LWB) unreserved commitment to the human rights of the people we support to engage in positive intimate relationships based on consent, respect and safety, to explore and express their sexuality and control decisions which affect their sexuality and relationships. LWB fosters a culture that equally respects, includes and empowers all individuals.

It is a requirement for all LWB Disability and Mental Health (DMH) staff to implement this policy and the Relationships, Intimacy and Sexuality procedure (**available in 2024).** LWB staff will provide the appropriate level of guidance (support), assistance and be genuinely open and responsive to enabling the people we support to explore their thoughts, feelings and needs regarding personal relationships to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Who needs to read this Policy?

All staff providing DMH services, individuals receiving supports, families and authorised decision makers, advocates and supporters.

The meaning of the terms used in this Policy

Relationships are the interconnected ties we choose to form with other people throughout our lives. These connections could range from casual interactions to deep, long-lasting bonds. They are shaped by shared experiences, mutual respect, and emotional exchange. The nature and depth of a relationship depend on how we communicate, empathise, support, and understand one another.

Intimacy is the deep, meaningful closeness we choose to share with someone else. It is a mutual exchange of genuine understanding and acceptance, a process of knowing and being known on a profound level. This intimacy may manifest emotionally, involving shared feelings and thoughts that lead to a sense of safety and understanding, or physically, characterised by touch and closeness. Regardless of its form, intimacy is a powerful bonding force in relationships, rooted in trust, vulnerability, and deep connection.

Sexuality is a fundamental part of our human experience that goes beyond just sex. It is the unique blend of our desires, attractions, experiences, and expressions. It includes who we are attracted to (sexual orientation), how we see and present ourselves (gender identities and roles), and how we experience and choose to express desire and pleasure. It is also about the ability to have safe, consensual, and enjoyable sexual experiences, free from any coercion, discrimination, or violence.

Confirming LWB's commitment to the human rights of the people we support to engage in positive intimate relationships based on consent, respect and safety.

TOMMY HILFIGER

CACHE VACHES

Q&A

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What's one practical action you will implement in the next month to support relationships and intimacy?

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Disability services. Support on your terms.