Thank you for your interest in our Special Interest Group.

Gender, sexuality, and relationships are central to health and well-being. Autistic people, their families, and healthcare professionals have expressed the need for research and guidance on these subjects. In the first two Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings, autism advocates, researchers, clinicians, and students/trainees collaborated on a stakeholder-informed research agenda, resource hubs, and innovative/inclusive methods to conduct research. This final meeting will focus on discussing guidelines for supporting gender, sexuality, and relationship wellbeing in autistic individuals and on consolidating our network.

A paper based on the two previous SIG meetings is published in Autism Research and can be downloaded for free at https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1002/aur.2340


You can find us on Facebook and LinkedIn: Please share your research, questions, and ideas here!

https://www.facebook.com/SIGautismsexandrelationships

https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12112454/
SCHEDULE FOR THE SESSION:

This SIG meeting will be structured as follows:

1. **Introductions** (20 minutes)
   a. We start with a short presentation offering an overview of the background and results of the earlier SIGS and recent publications, and examples of what autistic adults want professionals to know or understand relating to gender, sexuality, and relationships.

2. **Discussion groups** (45 minutes) will be organized in “break-out rooms”.
   a. The groups will be created automatically, and you will be guided to your group without having to figure it out yourself. We aim for every group to include autism advocates, researchers, and other stakeholders.
   b. A SIG-co-leader will join every group as moderator. We will use an online tool (Miro) to organize and collect ideas visually during the discussion. Group moderators will pay attention to verbal conversation and ideas presented in the text chat.
   c. The purpose of this brainstorm session is to generate ideas to serve as a basis for developing guidelines on promoting sexual health in the future. We plan to submit a proposal for the next INSAR policy brief call.
   d. **Groups will brainstorm on the following question:**
      i. If you were the ruler of the world, what would you do to promote sexual well-being in autistic individuals throughout their lives, given that your advisors stressed the importance of a sex-positive approach with attention to diversity in individuals, identity, sexual attraction.
      ii. Participants are invited to generate and discuss ideas in a framework based on age (childhood to elderly adults) and aspects of sexual health:
         1. physical maturation and functioning (e.g., pubertal development, sexual dysfunctions, pregnancy, menopause)
         2. solo- and partnered sexual functioning (e.g., masturbation, preparing for new experiences, sensory sensitivity)
         3. identity and self-image (e.g., sexual orientation, identity, self-image, gender identity)
         4. social aspects (e.g., finding a partner, relationship types, preventing abuse, societal views)
   e. After 44 minutes, a one-minute countdown will occur. This will tell break-out groups that it is time to return to the larger group. Everyone will be automatically redirected without needing to figure out how to get back to the larger group themselves.

3. **Large group discussion** (30 minutes):
   a. Miro-presentations will be shared by the moderators and briefly discussed. People can react through the chat.

4. **Wrap-up and discussion of continued efforts** (15 minutes).

The introduction, large group discussion, and wrap-up will be recorded and made available in the INSAR archive. The group discussions will NOT be recorded.
Recent Literature (not exhaustive)


INSAR 2020 Virtual SIG  
https://www.autism-insar.org/page/SIGvirtual2020


