

Review of: "Advanced Needs for Disadvantaged People: Guaranteeing a Sexual and Affective Life Through Disability Services"

Stella Nicolau¹

¹ Universidade Federal de São Paulo

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The article addresses a very important issue, which is the need to guarantee sexual and reproductive rights for people with disabilities. Congratulations on tackling this complex subject of human sexuality!

There are some statements that should be revised regarding impressions and feelings on the subject of sexuality ("The main emotions you feel listening to these stories are anger, sadness, and pain."/ "A bit like when we hear about sex in the third age, that is, something that we find inconceivable according to the "traditional" schemes adopted. In some cases, we even find it unspeakably disgusting and I bet that more than one reader will have instinctively twisted their mouth in a motion of infinitesimal disgust! "), and the conclusions should be more concise so that the text maintains its focus.

Suggested title: Why do families and services resist guaranteeing the sexual and reproductive rights of people with disabilities?

Two points addressed in the text are very relevant:

1. the need for sex education for young people with disabilities and their families. Sex education should consider sexuality as a human right for all people, including people with disabilities who need support for their daily activities and also support in making decisions about their lives. Sex education should include professionals from services for people with disabilities, their families, and people with disabilities. Sex education should address the values and prejudices of the community and be based on the rights already guaranteed to people with disabilities, even if families and professionals initially resist (right to consensual sexual intimacy, right to privacy, right to contraception and prevention of sexually transmitted infections, right to maternity/paternity, respect for sexual orientation and gender identity).
2. Always be aligned with legal frameworks. This text didn't mention the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, approved by the United Nations in 2006 and ratified by Italy through Law 18 in 2009. The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** (UNCRPD) is an international human rights treaty that exists to promote, protect, and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all disabled persons. It was adopted on 13 December 2006 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York and opened for signature on 30 March 2007.

"Article 22 (UNCRPD) Respect for privacy 1. No person with disabilities, regardless of place of residence or living

arrangements, shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence or other types of communication or to unlawful attacks on his or her honour and reputation. Persons with disabilities have the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 23 (UNCRC) Respect for home and the family 1. States Parties shall take effective and appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities in all matters relating to marriage, family, parenthood and relationships, on an equal basis with others, so as to ensure that: (a) The right of all persons with disabilities who are of marriageable age to marry and to found a family on the basis of free and full consent of the intending spouses is recognized; (b) The rights of persons with disabilities to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to age-appropriate information, reproductive and family planning education are recognized, and the means necessary to enable them to exercise these rights are provided; – 16 – (c) Persons with disabilities, including children, retain their fertility on an equal basis with others.

Article 25 (UNCRC) Health. States Parties recognize that persons with disabilities have the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health without discrimination on the basis of disability. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure access for persons with disabilities to health services that are gender-sensitive, including health-related rehabilitation. In particular, States Parties shall: (a) Provide persons with disabilities with the same range, quality and standard of free or affordable health care and programmes as provided to other persons, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health and population-based public health programmes;"