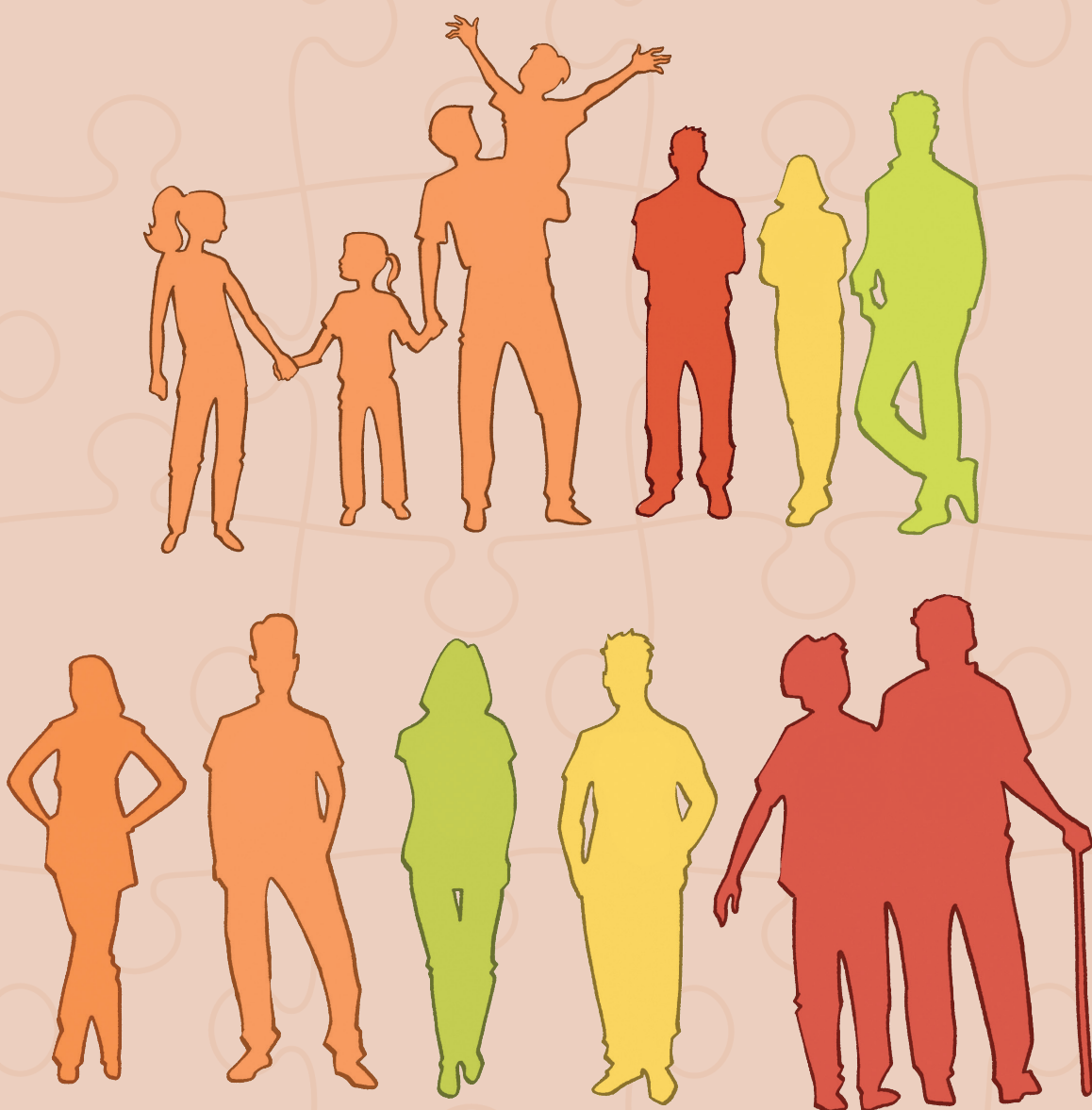


DIFFERENT TYPES OF ABUSE



РЦСЕ

Ресурсни центар за специјалну едукацију

INTRODUCTION

This lesson plan is for educators and support people working with young people with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum. It focuses on *Understanding different types of abuse*, and follows the International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (ITGSE) framework under the theme of *Violence and staying safe*. The lesson helps students learn how to recognise different kinds of abuse, like physical, emotional, sexual, verbal, spiritual, financial abuse, stalking, and harassment. It teaches that abuse is never okay, how to spot warning signs, and what to do to get help. The lesson supports students to stay safe, speak up, and build healthy, respectful relationships.

This lesson plan uses evidence-based practices (EBPs), which are recognised as best practice for teaching students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum. It supports teacher delivery through structured resources, scenario-based activities that incorporate peer modelling, visual supports, and age-appropriate educational videos developed by [Amaze.org](https://amaze.org).

This lesson is part of *Sex education for students with intellectual disability and on the autism spectrum: A practical methodology guide*, a resource that supports educators to deliver accessible, inclusive, and trauma-informed sex education to students aged 15 and over with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum. Grounded in evidence-based practices, the Guide promotes the rights of students to sexual autonomy, safety, and well-being, aligning with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Sustainable Development Goals, which call for inclusive education, gender equality, and good health for all. The lesson content also reflects the key concepts outlined in the International Technical Guidance on Sexuality Education (ITGSE), ensuring that teaching is comprehensive, rights-based, and responsive to the learning needs and aspirations of students with disability.

[Full Guide](#)

The Guide was developed within the project funded by ERASMUS+, co-financed by the European Union; project number and title of the project: 2023-1-CZ01-KA210-VET-000153711: Sex education for students with intellectual disability and on the autism spectrum: A practical methodology guide.



Co-funded by
the European Union

Disclaimer

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Suggested citation

Strnadová, I., Bernoldová, J., Hayes, S., Revická, M., Eisner, P., Šimáčková, H., Đorđević, M., Sretenović, I., Nedović, G., Potić S., Ondřejková, M., & Jurčová Z. (2025). *Sex education for students with intellectual disability and on the autism spectrum: A practical methodology guide*. Nebuď na nule, z.s.

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Different types of abuse



What does it mean?

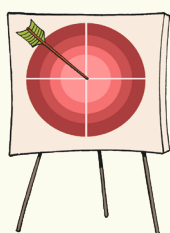
Abuse can significantly harm a person's physical and mental health and overall well-being. Forms of abuse include physical, emotional, verbal, spiritual, sexual, and financial abuse, as well as stalking and harassment. Developing knowledge, understanding, and skills to identify abuse, acknowledging that it should not occur, and learning how to get help promote self-determination and enhance overall well-being. Additionally, it supports young people with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum to have healthy relationships throughout their lives.



Why is it important?

People with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum may have difficulties identifying and reporting abuse due to a lack of knowledge of healthy relationships, appropriate boundaries, consent and what constitutes abuse¹. Additionally, they may have difficulties expressing that they have experienced abuse due to challenges with communication skills, the proximity of their abusers and being discouraged from reporting². These challenges put people with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum at a greater risk of experiencing abuse³. It is crucial that students are explicitly taught to identify the differences between healthy and unhealthy behaviours in relationships, and the signs of abuse. Omitting this topic can put students with intellectual disability and/or on the autism spectrum at a higher risk of experiencing abuse and not reporting when it happens.

Learning outcomes based on teacher's and student's perspectives



Learning outcomes

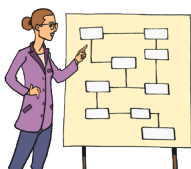
Students can list and define different types of abuse (e.g. physical, emotional, sexual, financial).

Students can explain the characteristics and signs of different types of abuse.

Accessible learning outcome

I know the different types of abuse.

I know the signs and behaviours of different types of abuse.



EXAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Topic: **Different types of abuse**

Note for teachers:

Some students in your class might have experienced sexual assaults, abuse or rape. It is crucial that you provide students with a 'content warning' about the topic and that if they need a break or do not want to participate in these lessons, they do not have to. Additionally, it is important that you know the correct procedures for how to support students (school counselors, hotlines and referral to additional support) and report incidents of sexual assault, abuse or rape. Be aware of the protocols for reporting disclosures.

It should be stressed to students that their school can offer them support if they have experienced abuse.

Learning outcomes	EBP/teaching strategy	Resources needed
Students can list and define different types of abuse (e.g., physical, emotional, sexual, financial).	Visual supports Peer modelling	Video player Appendix 1: Signs of abuse Appendix 2: Support during abuse
Students can explain the characteristics and signs of different types of abuse.		

Lesson sequence

Introduction: Explain to the class that you will be talking about things that could upset them or make them angry. If they need a break, they can take one, and if they want to talk to a teacher after the lesson, the teacher will be happy to listen.

Ask the class what they know about abuse.

Prompts:

- Have you heard that word before?
- What does it mean?
- Do you know any types of abuse?
- What are some behaviours you may see in an abusive relationship?



Activity 1: Intimate partner violence and how to get help

As a class, watch the [Intimate partner violence](#) video on Amaze.org.

What did we learn from this video?

Prompts:

- What does intimate violence mean? “It is a pattern of behaviours used by one partner to control and maintain power over another partner in an intimate relationship”.
- What are some of the types of abuse someone can experience? (Physical, emotional, stalking and harassment, sexual and financial).
- What are some ways you can get help if you or someone you know is experiencing intimate partner violence? (School councillor, trusted adult, or a support service).



Activity 2: Behaviours of abuse

The teacher distributes [Appendix 1: Signs of abuse](#) to the class. Students will work individually or in a small group to match the visuals and key words to the different categories of abuse (Physical, emotional, stalking and harassment, sexual and financial).



Activity 3: Class discussion – Behaviours of abuse

After students have completed the sorting activity, have the class come together to discuss.

Prompts:

- What visuals/words did you put under the different categories of abuse?
- Do we agree? Why or why not?



Activity 4: How to get help if you experience abuse

You will discuss with the class the different ways students can get support if they have experienced abuse. You will need to research what is available at your school and in your local area.

This should include:

- Talk to a teacher
- Talk to an adult you trust
- Talk to the school counselor/school psychologist
- Community services within your local area



Activity 5: Way to get support if you experience abuse

The teacher distributes [Appendix 2: Support during abuse](#) to the class. The teacher reads a scenario aloud to the class, students can volunteer to come up and practice how to get help and support if you have experienced abuse based on that scenario. Teachers will prompt students to think about the support that is available for students.

Scenario 1: Abuse at home	Scenario 2: Abuse in a relationship	Scenario 3: Abuse in a relationship
David is 16 and wants to start dating. His mum won't let him. One day David's mum comes into the bathroom while he is having a shower. She touches his penis while he is in the shower. Prompts: • Is this behaviour okay? • What type of abuse is this? • How could David get help?	Gabby has been dating Charlie for a year. Gabby really likes Charlie, but Charlie can make Gabby very sad sometimes. When Charlie gets angry, they will turn up uninvited to Gabby's workplace or when she is with her friends. Charlie will then yell at Gabby and call her mean names. Prompts: • Is this behaviour okay? • What type of abuse is this? • How could Gabby get help?	Candice lives with her girlfriend Tammy. Tammy can be very controlling of Candice. There have been times when Candice is out with friends, and she realises that Tammy has stolen her credit cards and money. Prompts: • Is this behaviour okay? • What type of abuse is this? • How could Candice get help?

Conclusion: Recap the key learnings of this lesson with the class.

Ask students if they can recall some of the different types of abuse and different ways to get help if they are experiencing abuse.

Remind students that they can talk to you if they need support.



Teacher reflection

Reflect on the lesson asking yourself:

- Did the lesson cater to the diverse learning preferences and needs of the students?
- How can I build on this lesson to support students to continue to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills for identifying abuse and ways to get help?
- Do I need to adjust the scenarios, so they are more relevant to my students?
- Were there any parts of this lesson that should be recapped or repeated to help students consolidate their learning?

References

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Appendix 1: Signs of abuse

[BACK](#)

Physical abuse	Emotional abuse	Stalking and harassment
Sexual abuse	Financial abuse	

Hitting, pushing or punching you

Stealing your money

Hiding your wallet

Calling you mean names

Screaming at you

Touching you when you don't want
to be touched



Following you

Forcing you to have sex



Throwing things at you

Showing up uninvited





Appendix 2: Support during abuse

[BACK](#)

Scenario 1: Abuse at home

David is 16 and wants to start dating.
His mum won't let him.
One day David's mum comes into the bathroom while he is having a shower.
She touches his penis while he is in the shower.

Scenario 2: Abuse in a relationship

Gabby has been dating Charlie for a year.
Gabby really likes Charlie, but Charlie can make Gabby very sad sometimes.
When Charlie gets angry, they will turn up uninvited to Gabby's workplace or when she is with her friends.
Charlie will then yell at Gabby and call her mean names.

Scenario 3: Abuse in a relationship

Candice lives with her girlfriend Tammy.
Tammy can be very controlling of Candice.
There have been times when Candice is out with friends, and she realises that Tammy has stolen her credit cards and money.