

STUDENT & ATHLETE

**KJK**<sup>®</sup>

DEFENSE

Understanding Sexuality and ASD:

# CONSIDERATIONS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS ON THE SPECTRUM

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# ABOUT THE PRESENTERS

Understanding Sexuality & ASD: Considerations for College Students on the Spectrum



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# Title IX professionals should be aware of the unique challenges posed by individuals with ASD involved in Title IX matters, as complainants and respondents.

**17%**

of young adults with autism enroll in a four-year college

**11%**

of college graduates are now neurodiverse





# DIFFICULT TO DIAGNOSE - AND IS OFTEN MISSED

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**Adaptive functioning refers to the ability of a person to interact with the world and support oneself with or without supports**

**Individuals with ASD may have differential adaptive ability versus intellectual ability**

An individual with ASD may be highly intelligent with poor adaptive functioning.

# CHALLENGES FOR THOSE ON THE SPECTRUM

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**Sensory challenges - noise, smells, sounds**

**Communication -shame and embarrassment of disclosing a disability, expressing sexual needs**

**Norms in public vs. private spaces**

**Understanding non-verbal communication and verbal nuances**

**Dating and boundaries**

**Online issues**



NETFLIX



# MORE VULNERABLE TO VICTIMIZATION

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35%

**of individuals with autism have  
been the victim of a crime**

01

ASD individuals may be vulnerable to abuse and manipulation (may be naïve, may mimic others without realizing any issues in doing so, may not be able to tell if an intimate partner is lying or manipulating them, etc.)

02

ASD individuals may be victimized due to behavior perceived as antisocial

# RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

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01

**ASD individuals benefit from instruction from individuals specialized in teaching ASD students**

02

**ASD requires specific instruction on expectations of sexual behavior (informal social “rules,” as well as legal expectations) as well as the reasons why social rules exist in society**

03

**Repetition and review will assist in comprehension and internalizing of guidelines**



## Question:

**How many of you  
have worked on Title  
IX matters involving  
students on the  
autism spectrum?**

# SPECIFIC CHALLENGES IN THE TITLE IX PROCESS

# HEALTHY SELF ADVOCACY

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01

**Self-advocacy requires a student to communicate clearly and assert the student's interests, needs, and rights**

02

**Self-advocacy requires sharing of thoughts and feelings without exploding**

03

**How to support students? Considering allowing student advisors to take on a more active role in the advising process**

**SEXUAL  
NORMS ARE  
EXCEEDINGLY  
COMPLEX AND  
LARGELY  
UNSPOKEN.**



SCENARIO 1:

**STALKING**





SCENARIO 2:

# HOUSING ISSUES



SCENARIO 3:

# SEXUAL HARASSMENT



SCENARIO 4:

# SEXUAL ASSAULT



SCENARIO 5:

# CUSTOM PROGRAMS



SCENARIO 6:

# VULNERABILITY WITH PROFESSORS



**BOTTOM LINE: A TYPICAL  
TITLE IX PROCESS FAILS THE  
NEURO-DIVERGENT**

# RESOURCES

## Understanding Sexuality & ASD: Considerations for College Students on the Spectrum



### College Autism Spectrum

- <https://collegeautismspectrum.com/>

### National Alliance on Mental Illness

- <https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-Conditions/Related-Conditions/Autism>

### Autistic Self-Advocacy Network

- <https://autisticadvocacy.org/resources/>
- <https://autisticadvocacy.org/resources/books/navigating-college/>

### Organization for Autism Research

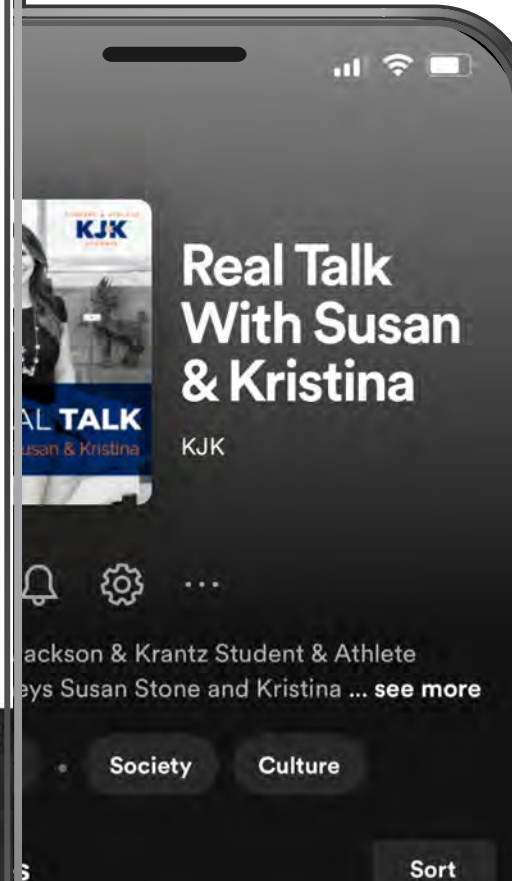
- <https://researchautism.org/postsecondary-education/>
- <https://researchautism.org/resources/a-guide-for-transition-to-adulthood/>

# QUESTIONS?

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Instagram:  
**@StoneSupler**



Podcast:  
**Real Talk with  
Susan & Kristina**