



2/8/21

To the Minnesota Legislature:

This is a letter of support for HF358 outlining the need for Comprehensive Sexuality Education for people of all abilities. According to a study done by the Justice Department in 2017, people with intellectual disabilities are sexually assaulted at a rate of seven times higher than their non-disabled peers. It is so important for all people to know how to recognize, react and respond to of sexual assault, abuse and harassment. It is imperative for the health of our community for students of all abilities to receive sexuality education that at minimum covers the topics of consent, boundaries, sexual assault, healthy relationships, outcomes of sexual activity, gender and sexual orientation.

I work for Mad Hatter Wellness as an educator and outreach specialist. Mad Hatter Wellness has a curriculum for people with disabilities called Sexuality for All Abilities. We are based out of St. Paul and do a lot of work in schools, group homes, with Special Olympics, mental health facilities, day programs and employment programs. The state of California recently passed a law similar to HF358, requiring Comprehensive Sexuality Education to all students in public schools. Mad Hatter Wellness is working closely with a number of schools in California to make sure this requirement is met for students in special education with positive reception.

We know that this is a crucial time in our country and state in moving towards seeing and believing people who are reporting sexual assault and abuse. People with disabilities are more vulnerable to sexual assault and all people need to be taught how to handle sensitive situations.

Mad Hatter Wellness strongly supports legislation that requires Comprehensive Sexuality Education for all students including students in special education and including students who are considered high needs or severely disabled.

Thank you for your time and consideration and support of HF358

Warm Regards,
Leah Bauman-Smith
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Sexuality for All Abilities Educator

