



The Autistic Sexual Bill of Rights

You have rights when it comes to your body. No one can take these rights from you. While these rights are true across neurotypes, there are certain facets that are especially important for autistics. This bill of rights focuses on the rights as they pertain to the autistic experience. **NOTE:** A right does not mean that your behavior will not have consequences. You have the right to wear what you want, but if you wear a bikini to work you may be fired. Consider how exercising your rights will affect others.

- I have the right to make decisions about my body. Those decisions include what to wear, what to eat, how to move, who can and cannot touch me and in what ways, if and when to get pregnant, and more.
- I have the right to information about the possible consequences of the decisions I make with my body.
- I have the right to sexual education that helps me to understand my body and experiences. I have the right to ask questions and get additional information about sexuality. I have the right to access this education in a non-segregated fashion.
- I have the right to choose the sexual experiences I want and do not want to have. I have the right to change my mind about what I want.
- I have the right to privacy. I do not have to share information about my body, my sexuality, my sexual activities, or my relationships with others if I don't want to.
- I have the right to experience sexual pleasure. This could be by myself or with others.
- I have the right to be sexually active, or to not be sexually active as I choose.
- I have the right to determine my own values about sexual behavior.
- I have the right to set my own boundaries. I can say yes and no, and I can change my mind. I can agree to some sexual activities and say no to others. I can have a conversation with my partner about what I want and do not want.
- I have the right to health care as it pertains to sex and reproduction, without judgment or barriers.
- I have the right to initiate sexual activity with a consenting partner.
- I have the right to communicate with my partner about sexual experiences in the ways that work for me. This may include alternative or augmentative communication.
- I have the right to freedom from discrimination based on sex, sexuality, or gender.
- I have the right to choose whether or not to marry and have children, as well as how many children.
- I have the right to protection. If someone violates my sexual rights, violates my boundaries, or sexually assaults me, I have the right to medical and legal care. If someone has assaulted me, I can call the National Sexual Assault Hotline 1-800-656-4673.

Learn more about ASD and healthy relationships at www.ausm.org.

Creating a Personal Sexual Bill of Rights



Each individual has their own preferences, needs, and boundaries. While we all have the rights listed above, you also have the ability to decide what is integral to you in a relationship and in your sexuality. These are the rights that you consider important in your own bill of rights. If you want to build your own bill of rights, you can start by answering some questions. Feel free to print this sheet and write your answers below.

In what ways do you like to be touched?

In what ways do you dislike being touched?

What behaviors make you feel loved?

What behaviors dysregulate your senses?

What is your preferred communication style?

Do you use an AAC device? Do you need access to it during sexual experiences?

Do you have a history of abuse or assault? If yes, are there certain things that trigger your memories of the abuse or assault?

Are there certain things that you want to remain private (for example a journal, your phone, or a specific area of your living space)?

Are there certain sexual behaviors that you will not do?

How often do you like to be sexual?

How do you prefer your partner to initiate sex? Do you prefer to initiate sex? What kind of information do you need in advance?

Wants vs. Needs

Some of these questions may elicit strong answers. Others you may not have a response to. That's OK! Write down how you feel and what you think. Add in other preferences or needs that come to you. Once you've have some ideas of your wants and needs written down, the tricky part is identifying what is a want and what is a need.

A **NEED** is something that you believe your relationship or sexuality will not survive without. If your partner does not fulfill your needs, you are likely to end the relationship.

-Remember, your partner may not feel the same way about whether or not something is a need. It's important to recognize that they have rights too. You cannot demand that someone engage in sex with you, spend a certain amount of time with you, or violate their boundaries because you feel you need it.

Let's say you have PTSD, and a specific behavior is a trigger. You may decide you need to have a relationship that is free of that trigger and choose to leave relationships that include that trigger.

Not every relationship will fulfill all of your needs. Needs can change over time as we grow and change as individuals, and as a relationship grows and deepens. Your feelings about whether a relationship meets your needs can also change, and those feelings can change in your partner as well.

A **WANT** is something you like, something you prefer, but something you can do without. For example if you prefer to have sex once a week when you're in a relationship, that's a want.

Do your best to identify which of your answers to the above questions identify wants and which ones identify needs. **Keep in mind that your partner also has the rights identified on the first page of this document.** Even if you feel that you need sex at a certain frequency, you do not have the right to demand it from anyone else. Needs are generally things that will not infringe on other's rights.

Needs

Wants



Your Sexual Bill of Rights

Now you can build your personal Sexual Bill of Rights. Each of your needs is a right. For example, if you use an AAC device to communicate, one of your rights might be: "I have the right to use my AAC device during sexual activities."

Here are some examples of what your rights might look like:

- I have the right to expect my partner to be loving and respectful.
- I have the right for my partner not to tickle me because I don't like it.
- I have a right to use the red/green/yellow communication method during sexual activity to communicate my consent.

You can also include your wants, but make sure they have their own section and are clearly labeled as wants rather than needs. This document can be updated or changed whenever you decide. It's for you to remember what you need and want. If you decide, you can share it with a partner to discuss your needs and wants. Fill in your rights below. You can include as many or as few as you want. Add any other notes or thoughts below.

-
- I have the right
 - I have the right

