



2009 Parent & Community Conference

Sexuality / Healthy Relationships and
individuals with disabilities

Featuring:

David Hingsburger

Internationally known author, lecturer and expert on the
issues of disability rights, self advocacy and issues related
to sexuality and individuals with developmental disabilities.

Monday, April 20, 2009

9:00am - 4:00pm

Registration begins at 8:30am

Fee: \$25 - Early registration

\$30 - Day of the conference

Spanish translation available

University of Connecticut - Stamford Campus

Washington Boulevard and Broad Street

Stamford, CT 06901

For reservations / questions call Monica at
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About the presenter:

A resident of Toronto, Canada, Hingsburger, 56, has worked on issues relating to disability and provided support to people with disabilities for more than 30 years, publishing more than 30 books and numerous articles in that time. But these issues became acutely personal for him about three years ago when he began using a wheelchair to maneuver in the world.

"I had spent my entire life providing service and suddenly, I became a core recipient," Hingsburger said. "Disability is not an issue for me, but the fact that I had to place my care in the hands of other people is different. I understand, at a real level, what that trust means."

The director of clinical and educational supports at Vita Community Living Services in Toronto, an organization serving people with intellectual disabilities, Hingsburger said public awareness of the abuse of people with developmental disabilities may be greater than it was 30 years ago, but the response has been inadequate.

"The question is: How do we stop it from occurring in the first place?," he said. "There has to be a willingness to deal head-on with all of the issues of abuse."

For instance, society is much more willing to tolerate the use of derogatory language toward people with developmental disabilities than it is racist comments. "The use of the word 'retarded' is not recognized with the same kind of social horror," Hingsburger said. He writes an award-winning blog "Chewing the Fat" (davehingsburger.blogspot.com). The recipient of numerous awards for his pioneering work in the area of sexuality and disability, Hingsburger said that while society focuses on the differences among people with developmental disabilities, it makes mistakes by failing to recognize the common ground.

Sexuality is but one example. Parents of children with developmental disabilities have typical concerns when it comes to their children's sexuality, "except that it is magnified 10 or 20 times.

"Doctors tell these parents that their children will stay children forever and never grow up," he said. "Parents don't think about sexuality. Then, when it raises its ugly head, they're in crisis. They're very aware of their child being tricked and victimized."

Hingsburger's advice for these parents is similar to that given to other parents: Begin the education process as young as possible. "Recognize it at 2 — not when the child is 12," he said.



2009 Parent Community Conference Registration Form

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