
Ridgewood Public Schools

COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAM

Co-sponsored by The Valley Hospital, with support from the Ridgewood Education Foundation and the Federated Home and School Association



Wellbeing

Communicating About Puberty with Special Needs Youth


Presented by Melissa Keyes DiGioia and Tracy A. Higgins

December 11, 2017

7:00-9:00 PM

Education Center, 49 Cottage Place, Ridgewood, NJ

This presentation will help parents find ways to communicate with adolescents to help prepare them for the changes that accompany puberty and to share strategies for caring for their bodies. In this session, we will provide basic information about the transformations that accompany puberty and discuss ways parents can communicate about puberty and caring for one's body with their youth with special needs.



Melissa Keyes DiGioia, CSE is a Certified Sexuality Educator by the American Association of Sexuality Educators, Counselors and Therapists. As Co-Founder and Director of Education, she facilitates professional development workshops and education sessions on varying sexuality and sexual health topics and specializes in program delivery for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Melissa is author of *Taking a Special Education Approach a guide for religious educators implementing Our Whole Lives Sexuality Education for Grades 7-9 (2nd Ed.)* to adapt lessons and methodology for audiences with special needs.



Tracy A. Higgins is a Licensed Professional Counselor trained in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) and Applied Behavior Analysis. She specializes in sexual trauma and abuse prevention for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD). Ms. Higgins has worked as a therapist for the past 10 years and is responsible for the development of specialized services for survivors of sexual violence and at risk adolescents and adults with I/DD. Tracy serves as a consultant to varying agencies, organizations and schools.



Office of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

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