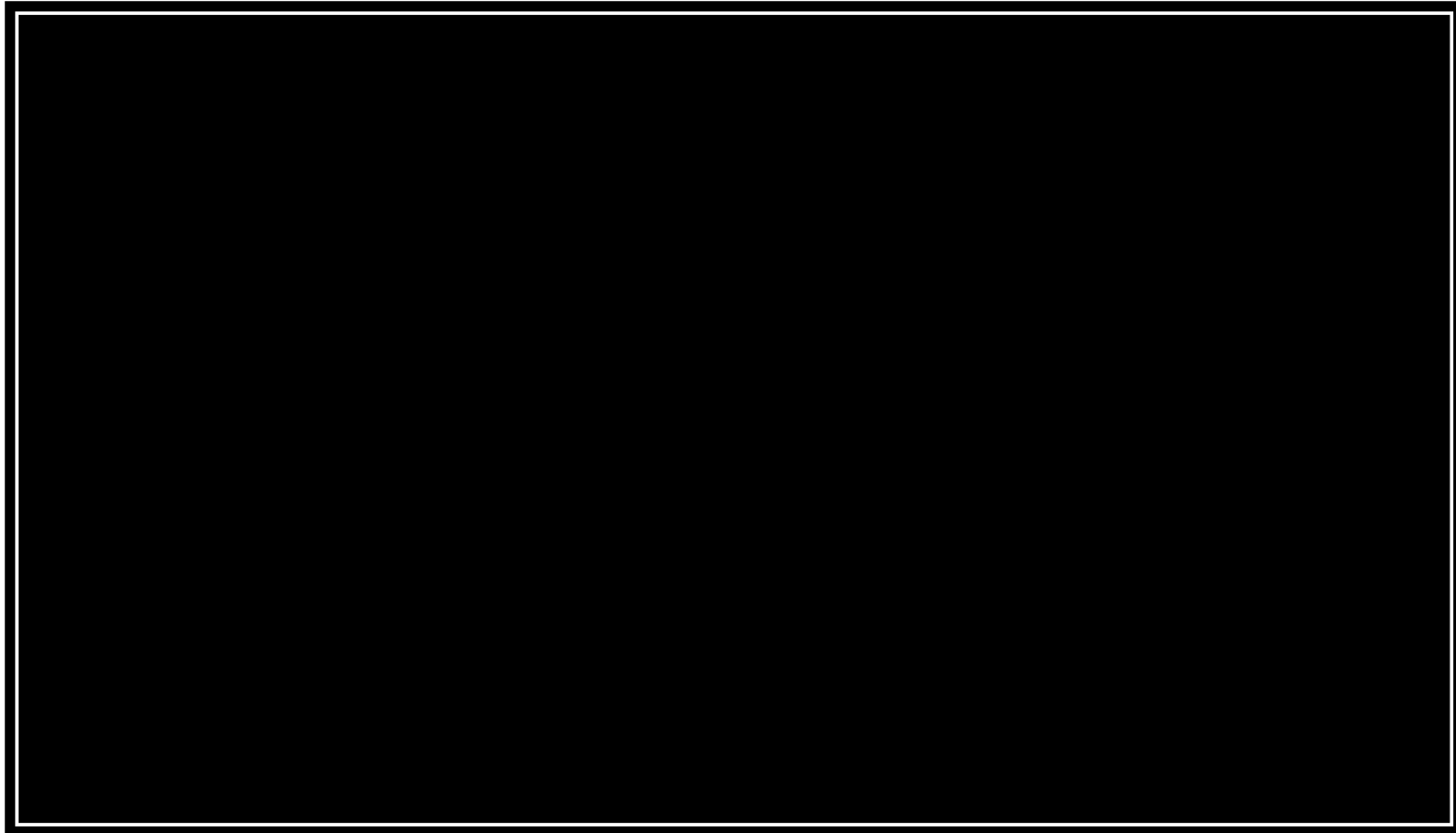




Let's Talk about Sex...and Older Adults

AMANDA CATRON, B.S. CHILD & FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

Safe Sex for Seniors PSA Icebreaker



Learning Objectives

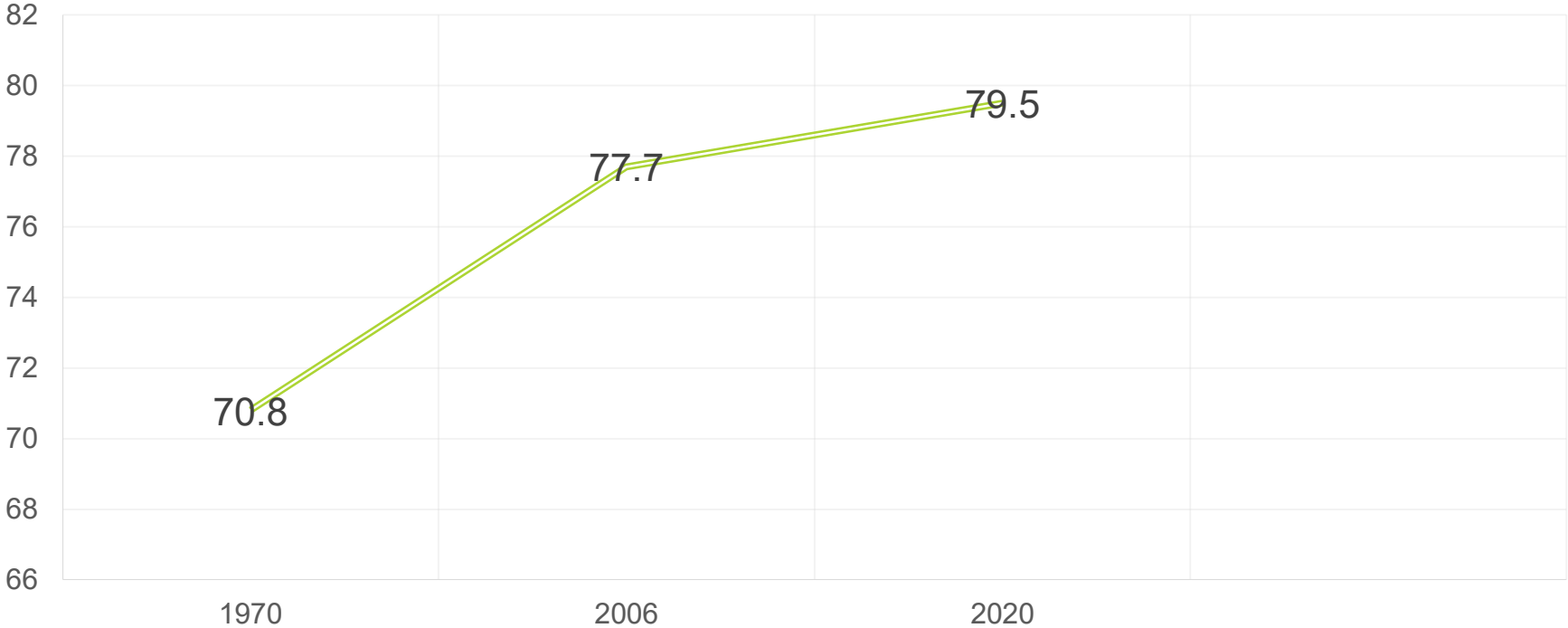
- ▶ Have a greater awareness of the changing demographic composition (population aging) in America and how it is related to the need for sex education in later life.
- ▶ Walk away with a better understanding of how this presentation will highlight the benefits to aging individuals and their families when they have exposure to sex education and resources.
- ▶ Be exposed to evidence-based information and techniques that can be implemented in work with older adults to address issues surrounding sex education in later life.

Myths about Older Adult Sexuality

- Too Frail
- Asexual
- Humorous
- Filthy or perverted
- No longer desirable
- Sex is not a priority

Life Expectancy Pattern

LIFE EXPECTANCY IN U.S.



(U.S. Census Bureau, 2018)

Other Measures of Life Expectancy

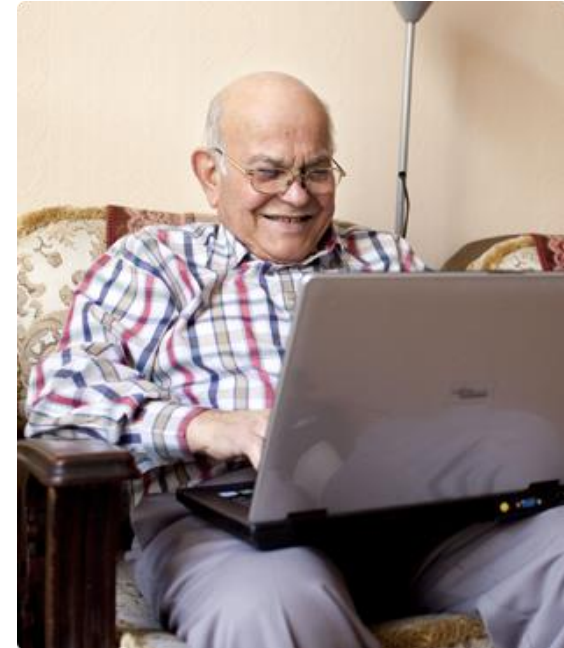
- ▶ Active life expectancy
 - ▶ Years one is able to perform activities of daily living without health-related difficulty
 - ▶ Currently 65 years
 - ▶ Expected to increase by 2.5 years by 2022
- ▶ Sexual life expectancy
 - ▶ “The average number of years remaining spent as sexually active” (DeLamater & Koespel, 2014).

Times are Changing

- ▶ Sexual revolution
- ▶ In 2016 there were over 64 million people ages 60+ in the U.S.
- ▶ Estimated 60+ population is 83.7 million by 2050
- ▶ Social media use in older adults

Reasons for Online Dating

- ▶ Serious relationship
- ▶ Friendship/companionship
- ▶ Casual dating
- ▶ Intimacy/sexual relations
- ▶ Secure/private



What is Sex?

- ▶ Intercourse
- ▶ Vaginal
- ▶ Anal
- ▶ Oral
- ▶ Other forms of sexual/physical intimacy
- ▶ Masturbation
- ▶ Foreplay



What about Intimacy?

- ▶ Intimacy: emotional response to being loved or cared for
- ▶ Sexual intimacy
 - ▶ emotional closeness
 - ▶ physical aspects
 - ▶ Intercourse
 - ▶ Cuddling
 - ▶ Caressing and touching
 - ▶ Genital stimulation
 - ▶ Simple touch of another human



Sex Across the Lifespan

- ▶ Longer living and better health
- ▶ “Critical for good relationship” 67% of men and 50% of women
- ▶ “Part of quality of life” 85% of men and 61% of women
- ▶ Shift in attitudes and beliefs
- ▶ “Sexuality is a need in humans that persists across the lifespan.”
- ▶ Intimacy rarely recognized as a right that does not diminish with age
- ▶ Right to sexual expression

(Connolly et al., 2012)
(Cooper, Kent & Crusse, 2016)
(Roney & Kazer, 2015)
(Syme, 2014)

Sexually Active Older Adults

- ▶ 73% of 57-64 year olds
- ▶ 53% of 65-74 year olds



(Ports, Barnack-Tavlaris, Syme, Perera, & Lafata, 2014)

Benefits of Healthy Sexual Activity

- ▶ Increased relaxation
- ▶ Improved cardiovascular health
- ▶ Lower levels of depression
- ▶ Decreased pain sensitivity
- ▶ Increased self-esteem
- ▶ Better relationships



Risky Sexual Behaviors/Factors

- ▶ Unprotected sexual encounters
- ▶ Lack of awareness: STD's/STI's, condom use
- ▶ Widowhood
- ▶ Use of erectile dysfunction drugs

STD's and STI's

- ▶ “An infection that is passed during sex”
- ▶ Any sexual orientation
- ▶ Any male/female
- ▶ Any age
- ▶ Any race

Sexually Transmitted Diseases or Infections

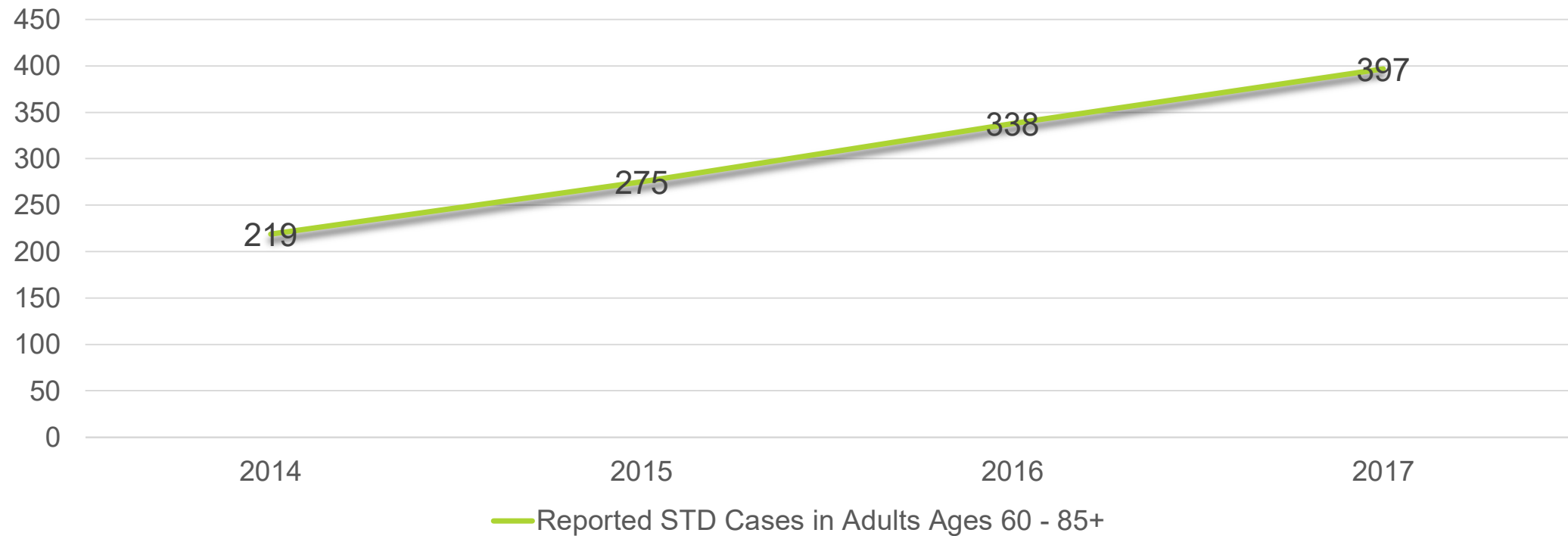
- ▶ Bacterial Vaginosis (BV)
- ▶ Chlamydia
- ▶ Genital Herpes
- ▶ Gonorrhea
- ▶ Human Papillomavirus Infection (HPV Infection)
- ▶ Pelvic Inflammatory Disease (PID)
- ▶ Syphilis
- ▶ Trichomoniasis
- ▶ HIV/AIDS
- ▶ Hepatitis B and C

STD/STI Symptoms

- ▶ Sores around penis, vagina, rectum, mouth
- ▶ Unusual discharge
- ▶ Burning during urination
- ▶ Itching around genitals
- ▶ Vaginal bleeding
- ▶ Flu-like feelings



Georgia Department of Public Health: Reported Sexually Transmitted Disease Cases in Older Adults



(Georgia Department of Public Health, 2018)

Why the Increase in STD's?

- ▶ Remaining sexually active due to living longer and healthier lives
- ▶ Assistance from Viagra and other medications
- ▶ Retirement communities
- ▶ Lack of sexual education and information on condom use
- ▶ Social stigma

Healthcare Providers- Why Not Discuss Sex?

- ▶ Rarely offer information on sexual health to older adults
- ▶ Tricky or awkward to discuss
- ▶ Believe that sex is not at top of priority list
- ▶ Societal ideas and beliefs
- ▶ Too personal
- ▶ Religious beliefs

Older Adults- Why Not Discuss Sex?

- ▶ Limited view of safe sexual practices
- ▶ Stigma
- ▶ Fear of judgment



Tips for Caregivers/Healthcare Providers

- ▶ Develop rapport
- ▶ Language use
- ▶ Foster positivity in sexuality and sexual expression
- ▶ Don't assume heterosexuality
- ▶ Check your own biases

Remember PATH

- ▶ **P:** Provide older adults with a supportive atmosphere when discussing sexual health
- ▶ **A:** Advocate for services to be provided
- ▶ **T:** Take time to listen and talk about sexual health
- ▶ **H:** Healthcare providers should understand own beliefs and biases in order to work supportively with older adults

PLISSIT Model

- ▶ **P**ermission
 - ▶ Ask permission to discuss sexual health
- ▶ **L**imited **I**nformation
 - ▶ Provide limited information directly related to problem
- ▶ **S**pecific **S**uggestions
 - ▶ Directly relate to answers provided from open-ended questions
 - ▶ Simple, direct, being mindful of health literacy
- ▶ **I**ntensive **T**herapy
 - ▶ Not always a necessary step
 - ▶ Make referrals if/when therapy is necessary

If We Talk About It

- Disrupt ageist mentality
- Break social stigma
- Foster positivity and acceptance
- Inclusiveness in all portions of the lifespan
- Educate on safe sexual practices
- Help lower STD/STI rates in older adults

Let's Talk About Sex!

- ▶ Find a partner to work with for this interactive activity.
- ▶ One partner will be the older adult and one partner will take the role of caregiver/healthcare professional.
 - ▶ Could be an adult child, doctor, friend, etc.
- ▶ Let's break the ice and have a conversation...about sex!

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