# How does a gay man with cerebral palsy get a sex life?



In a recent segment in Disability Horizons, Tuppy Owens, an expert in the intersection of disability and sexuality, addressed a query from a 26-year-old gay man named Ben, who lives with cerebral palsy in Manchester. Ben expressed concerns about his caregivers’ discomfort in discussing his sexual needs and desires, which he feels are essential to his freedom and personal autonomy.

Ben articulated that while his carers acknowledge his sexuality, their hesitation to engage in conversations about it culminates in a lack of adequate support, particularly when it comes to navigating tools to enhance his sexual experiences or even exploring the idea of hiring sex workers. He remarked on his upbringing in an environment where discussions about sexuality were open and positive, contrasting it with the current restrained dynamic with his caregivers.

In her response, Tuppy provided a wealth of resources and strategies aimed at fostering more open dialogues about sexuality between Ben and his care team. She highlighted the importance of initiating conversations by gradually introducing topics related to his social life and personal pleasure. By helping his caregivers navigate their discomfort, Ben could encourage them to engage openly in discussions concerning his sexual needs.

Owens revealed that she has developed resources like the Sexual Respect Tool Kit, designed for health and social care professionals, which encourages them to approach sexual health topics with more confidence. This toolkit is supplemented by a training video that addresses the detrimental effects stemming from the denial of sexual expression for individuals with disabilities.

Regarding practical support, Tuppy offered advice about sex toys and tools that may assist in Ben's sexual experiences. She described various methods that could be employed to facilitate the use of vibrators without requiring continuous support from caregivers, thus promoting greater independence.

To explore companionship, Tuppy recommended Outsiders, a club she founded, designed for socially and physically disabled individuals to meet and form relationships. She also pointed towards online platforms where Ben might connect with potential partners, emphasising the plethora of resources available for individuals within the LGBTQ+ community seeking companionship and intimacy.

Owens noted the importance of advocacy and agency in the pursuit of a fulfilling sexual life, commending Ben for his proactive approach in seeking support and advice. She referenced journalist Josh Hepple, who has successfully navigated similar challenges and serves as a source of inspiration for individuals with disabilities seeking to explore their sexual identities.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://raggeduniversity.co.uk/2016/12/19/dr-tuppy-owens-sex/> - This interview with Dr. Tuppy Owens highlights her work in supporting disabled people's sexual lives, emphasizing the importance of addressing societal barriers and promoting sexual freedom for individuals with disabilities.
* <https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/author/tuppy-owens> - Tuppy Owens is recognized for her contributions to sexual health and disability, including founding the Outsiders Club and the Sexual Health and Disability Alliance, which align with her advice on fostering open discussions about sexuality.
* <https://www.vice.com/en/article/tuppy-owens-interview> - This article details Tuppy Owens' efforts in advocating for the sexual liberation of people with disabilities, including setting up the TLC Trust for accessing sexual services and promoting awareness through various initiatives.
* <https://www.noahwire.com> - This source provides the context for Tuppy Owens' advice to Ben, focusing on the importance of open dialogue about sexuality and the resources available for individuals with disabilities.