

Supporting Healthy Sexual Development for Youth with Disabilities: Conversations, Consent, Identity, and Expression

July 16, 2026

10:00-11:30am MT

This 90-minute session will provide an overview of how to support healthy sexual development for youth with disabilities through respectful, developmentally appropriate, and inclusive sexual health conversations. In addition to addressing the sexual health education that every young person needs, the session will highlight areas that may require more intentional attention for youth with disabilities, including consent, boundaries, privacy, safety, communication, relationships, healthy expression, and identity development. The session will also consider how these conversations can be approached with cultural humility, respect for family and community values, and awareness of the diverse contexts of First Nations youth, families, and communities.



Learning Outcomes:

- Describe why youth with disabilities require access to the same core sexual health education as all youth, including information about bodies, puberty, relationships, consent, safety, healthy expression, and identity
- Identify additional sexual health topics that may need to be addressed more explicitly for youth with disabilities, including privacy, personal boundaries, public versus private behaviour, vulnerability to exploitation, supported decision-making, and communication about needs and preferences
- Recognize the importance of supporting healthy sexual expression and identity development for youth with disabilities in ways that are respectful, strengths-based, culturally responsive, and grounded in dignity
- Consider how conversations about sexuality, disability, consent, safety, and identity can be approached with cultural humility and respect for First Nations youth, families, communities, and service contexts

Speakers:

Dr. Shaniff Esmail, PhD, MSc, OT(C) - Dr. Esmail is an occupational therapist and Professor in the Department of Occupational Therapy, Faculty of Rehabilitation Medicine, at the University of Alberta.



Target Audience: This session will be useful for community members, family members, caregivers, healthcare providers, social service professionals, educators, and others who support youth with disabilities, particularly those working with and alongside First Nations youth, families, and communities

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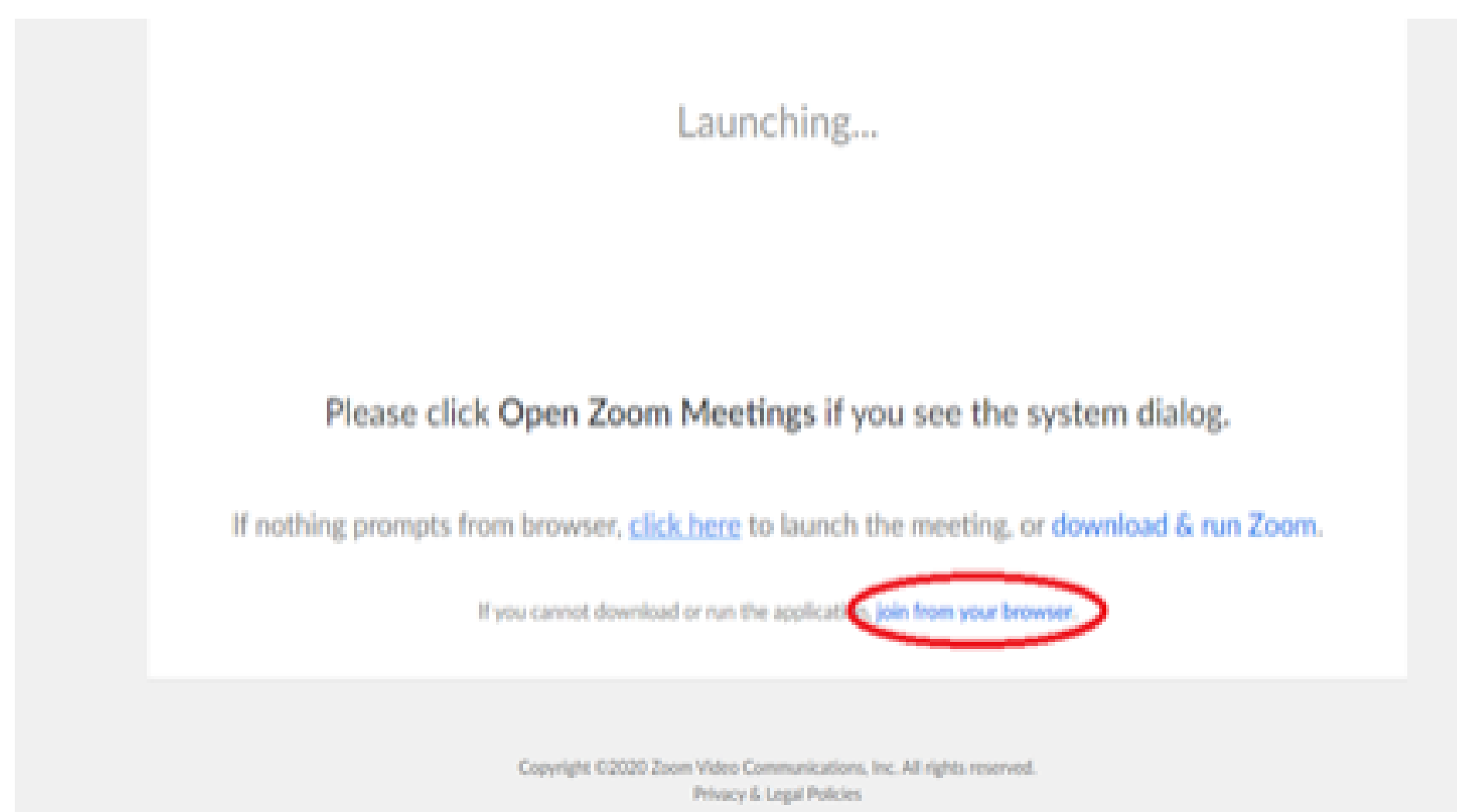
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