



Your child's developing sexuality: What to expect

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Key Topics

- When does sexuality begin?
- What sexual behaviours are normal?
- What sexual behaviours are concerning?
- How is this different for children with disability?
- Understanding behaviours

Developmental Stages

- **Everyone goes through each developmental stage**
 - **Infancy**
 - **Childhood**
 - **Adolescence**
 - **Adulthood**

- **Age milestones vary**
 - **Not met**
 - **Not met yet**
 - **Partly met**
 - **Met**

When does sexuality begin?

- At birth
- Children learn sexual behaviours through observations, relationships, and play
- Sexuality develops on three levels
 - Biological (e.g., body)
 - Social (e.g., relationships)
 - Psychological (e.g., emotions, self-identity)

What is expected?

What to consider....

- Spontaneous
- Curiosity
- Explorative
- Light-hearted
- Between equals in age, size, ability
- Mutual
- Not frequent
- In a private place
- Redirected easily/ responds to adult intervention

What is concerning?

What to consider....

- Frequent and persistent
- Harmful
- Negatively impacts on others
- Unequal (age, size, ability)
- Limited or no response to adult redirection

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Traffic Light System



red

sexual behaviours that are problematic or harmful, forceful, secretive, compulsive, coercive or degrading **signal the need to provide immediate protection and follow up support**

orange

sexual behaviours that are outside normal behaviour in terms of persistence, frequency or inequality in age, power or ability **signal the need to monitor and provide extra support**

green

sexual behaviours that are normal, age appropriate, spontaneous, curious, mutual, light hearted and easily diverted experimentation **provide opportunities to talk, explain and support**

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Age

Green Light Behaviours

0 – 4

- Touches body / genitals
- Comfortable being nude
- Want to touch familiar children's genitals (play, toilet and bath times)
- 'Show me yours' games
- Asks to touch breasts, bottoms, genitals of familiar adults

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Age	Orange Light Behaviours
0 – 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Masturbation in preference to other activities• Persistently watching others toileting, nude, sexual activities• Touching other children/adult's private body parts in preference to other activities



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Age	Red Light Behaviours
0 – 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compulsive masturbation (self-injury) persistent in nature and duration• Forcing other children to engage in sexual touch/activity• Presence of a STI



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Age	Green Light Behaviours
0 – 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Touches body / genitals • Comfortable being nude • Want to touch familiar children’s genitals (play, toilet and bath times) • ‘Show me yours’ games • Asks to touch breasts, bottoms, genitals of familiar adults
5 – 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Touches body / genitals • Increased sense of privacy about bodies • ‘Show me yours’ games • Telling stories using toilet words or names for private parts
10 – 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing need for privacy • Masturbation in privacy • Use of sexual language • Interest in boyfriend / girlfriend • Occasional flashing / mooning peers
14 – 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for privacy • Masturbation in privacy • Viewing videos for sexual arousal • Sexual activity with someone of similar age and developmental ability

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0 – 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Masturbation in preference to other activities • Persistently watching others toileting, nude, sexual activities • Touching other children/adult’s private body parts in preference to other activities
5 – 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent nudity and/or exposing private parts in public • Pulling other children’s pants down • Persistently mimicking sexual flirting behaviour too advanced for age • Using internet with unknown people which may include giving identifying details
10 – 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent masturbation in public / cause self-injury • Persistent expression of fear around STIs or pregnancy • Oral sex and/or intercourse with a known partner of similar age / developmental ability • Using internet with unknown people which may include giving identifying details
14 – 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual preoccupation which interfere with daily function • Intentional spying on other while engaged in sexual activity, • Nudity • Using internet to receive or send sexually explicit information

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5 – 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent bullying involving sexual aggression, participation or simulation of sexual activity • Presence of a STI • Persistent sexual activity with an animal • Compulsive masturbation, seeking an audience / self-harm
10 – 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compulsive masturbating • Forced or coercion of others in sexual activity • Sexual contact with animals • Possessing, accessing or sending child exploitation materials
14 – 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compulsive masturbating • Forced or coercion of others in sexual activity • Sexual contact with animals • Possessing, accessing or sending child exploitation materials • Arranging a meeting with an online acquaintance without the knowledge of a peer / parent.

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Other considerations

- Difficulties with understanding social norms, boundaries, public and private, personal space
- Limited opportunities to learn from peers and others
- Poor impulse control and distractibility
- Not always able to communicate needs
- Lack of sexual education

Understanding behaviour and context is key

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Questions to Consider

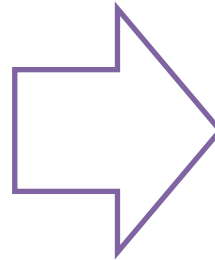
What happened?

When did it happen?

Who was involved?

Where did it happen?

How did it happen?



WHY

Understanding Behaviour

Boredom	Confusion
Reduces Anxiety or Anger / self-soothing	Attempting to engage with peers
Lack of boundaries / rules	Loneliness
Curiosity	Medication (can increase or decrease libido)
Need for stimulation	Creates a routine
Medical issue	Exposure to sexual abuse
Lack of knowledge and education	Imitation
Pleasurable, exciting	Lack of privacy

Green Light - Educate

- Be brief and factual
- Be positive
- Use anatomical language
- Identify the behaviour

‘Adam, you had your clothes off in the playground’

‘Taking your clothes off is what you do in a private place, your bedroom, your bathroom’

- Redirect the Behaviour

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Orange Light - Monitor

- Remain calm and consistent
- Supervise during 'risky' times
- Understand the behaviour

Teach social skills

Educate

Teach private and public

Get professional / counselling support

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Red Light Behaviours – Immediate

- Stop the behaviour
- Reinforce rules
- State that the behaviour is harmful
- Therapeutic support
- Seek help from child protection services or police
- Provide a safe environment

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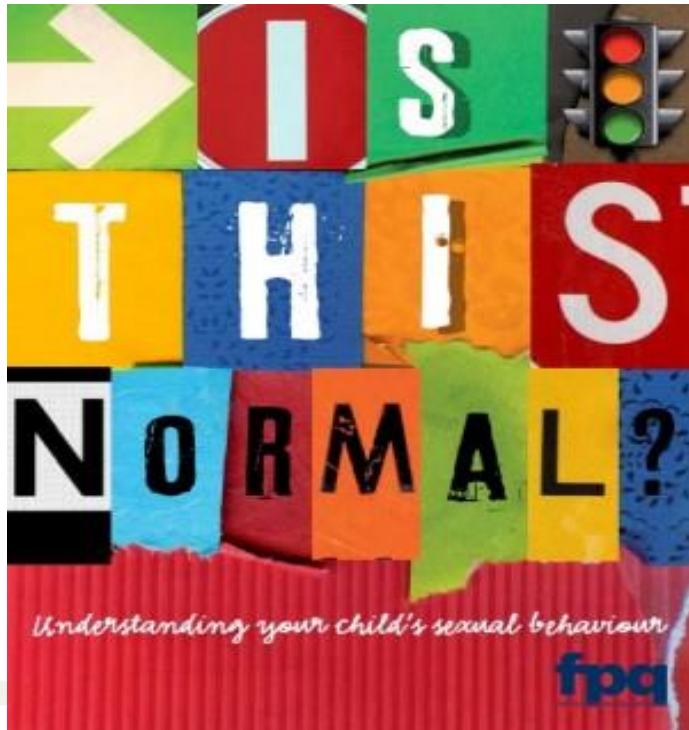
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Is this Normal?

Understanding your child's sexual behaviour



Available as a
book or as an
App

People 1st Programme

Expected sexual behaviour		Outside the expected sexual behaviour		Sexual behaviour that requires professional help	
<p>Behaviours are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curious and information gathering rather than sexual. • Light hearted and easily distracted. • Occur between equals in terms of age, size and cognitive ability. 	<p>Interest In:</p> <p>Wanting to touch or look at the private parts of other children or familiar adults.</p> <p>Where babies come from and gender differences.</p> <p>Language:</p> <p>Uses "slang" words for toilet, body parts or sexual functions.</p> <p>Engages In:</p> <p>Stroking, touching or rubbing own genitals.</p> <p>Enjoying being nude.</p>	<p>Behaviours are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequent. • Excessive in duration. • Moving towards being illegal. • Unequal in terms of age, size and cognitive ability. • Preoccupation i.e. signs of being unable to carry out usual activities because of the behaviour. 	<p>Persistent Interest In:</p> <p>Showing/touching own or other's genitals in public after being told not to.</p> <p>Following others into the toilet to look at or touch them.</p> <p>Wanting to be nude in public.</p> <p>Questioning related to genital difference even after all questions have been answered appropriately.</p> <p>Language:</p> <p>Uses explicit sexual/play language beyond their years.</p>	<p>Behaviours are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compulsive • Predatory • Excessive • Coercive • Threatening • Degrading • Show a marked age or cognitive difference between those involved. • Behaviours that are illegal. 	<p>Preoccupation and predatory Intent with:</p> <p>Touch/rubbing own and/or other's genitals to the exclusion of normal childhood play and activities.</p> <p>Attempting to touch the genitals of adults including strangers.</p> <p>Making demands of others to touch or be touched sexually.</p> <p>Sexual behaviour between young children involving penetration with objects.</p> <p>Asking unfamiliar people sexually explicit questions.</p> <p>Engages in sexual conversation with peers.</p> <p>Pulling other's pants down or skirt up against their will.</p>
<p>Adult response</p> <p>Reaction of adults is critical and provides an opportunity to give positive feedback and age appropriate information in a calm manner.</p>	<p>Talks about having a girl/boyfriend.</p> <p>Showing other's their genitals.</p> <p>Playing mummies and daddies (exploring gender roles).</p> <p>Spontaneous erections may occur.</p>	<p>Adult response</p> <p>These behaviours are signs of concern. There is a need to observe and gather information to determine the antecedents and implement an appropriate response i.e. redirection, education and counselling.</p>	<p>Engages In:</p> <p>Touching another's genitals.</p> <p>Persistent peeping.</p> <p>Imitating sexual behaviour with dolls or stuffed toys.</p> <p>Persistent rubbing of own genitals.</p>	<p>Action</p> <p>Immediate intervention and referral is required.</p>	

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Let's Practice

Group Activity

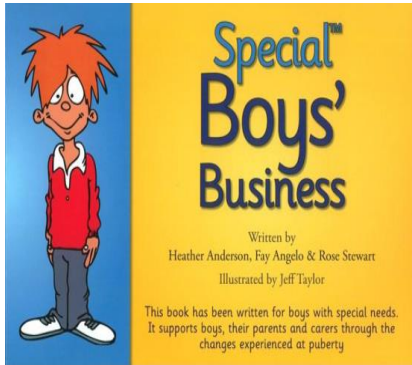
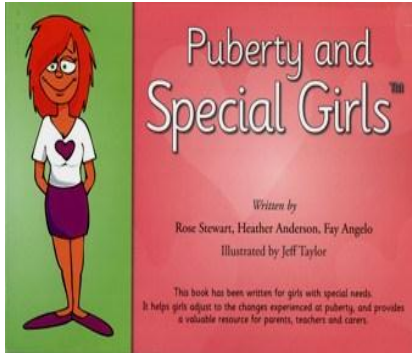
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Where do we start?

- Additional supports in teaching
 - Repetition
 - Start early
 - Practice
 - Model behaviour
 - Teach in small amounts
 - Be positive
 - Teaching opportunities
 - Be specific
- Adapt communication
 - Signing
 - Pictures
 - Social stories
 - Visual prompting



Questions?



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