

Behaviors Related to Sex & Sexuality

PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

NATURAL & HEALTHY

Touches/rubs own genitals when diapers are being changed, when going to sleep, when tense or afraid.

Explores difference between males and females, boys, and girls.

Touches the “private parts” of familiar adults and children.

Asks about the genitals, breast, intercourse, and babies.

Likes to be nude.
May show others his/her genitals.

Interested in watching people doing bathroom functions.

Plays doctor while inspecting others’ bodies.

Puts something in own genitals and rectum one time for curiosity or exploration.

Plays house, acts out roles of Mommy and Daddy.

OF CONCERN

Insists on touching/rubbing genitals in public after being told many times not to do this.

Repeatedly asks questions about genitals and asking to see others’ genitals.

Touches the “private parts” of an adult not in the family, unknown child, or familiar people after being redirected. Asks to be touched themselves.

Repeatedly asks answered questions about reproduction, sex, and body parts.

Wants to be nude in public after the parent repeatedly and consistently redirects behavior and sets appropriate boundaries.

Interest in watching bathroom functions does not wane in days/weeks.

Frequently plays doctor and inspects others’ bodies after repeatedly being redirected.

Puts something in genitals or rectum of self or others after being told “no.”

Humping other children with clothes on.

SEEK GUIDANCE

Touches/rubs self to the exclusion of normal childhood activities. Hurts own genitals by touching/rubbing.

Forces or demands others to show their genitals or repeatedly exposes genitals to others.

Sneakily touches adults. Forcefully touches others and demands that others touch him/her inappropriately.

Asks unfamiliar people for sex education and explanation. Sexual knowledge too detailed for child’s age.

Refuses to put on clothes. Secretly shows self in public after redirection.

Refuses to leave people alone in the bathroom. Forces way into the bathroom.

Forces another child to play doctor or to take off his/her clothes.

Any coercion, force, pain in putting something in genitals or rectum of self or another child.

Simulated or real intercourse without clothes; oral sex.

Adapted from “Understanding Children’s Sexual Behavior” by Toni Cavanagh Johnson, Ph.D.



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Behaviors Related to Sex & Sexuality

KINDERGARTEN - 4TH GRADE

NATURAL & HEALTHY

Asks about genitals, breasts, intercourse, and babies.

Plays doctor, inspecting others' genitals.

Shows others his/her genitals.

Touches/rubs own genitals when going to sleep, or when tense, excited, or afraid.

Plays house, may simulate all roles of Mommy and Daddy.

Talks about sex with friends.
Talks about having a girl/boyfriend.

Draws genitals on human figures for artistic expression or because the figure is being portrayed in the nude.

Interest in touching genitals, breast, buttocks of other same age child or have the child touch his/hers.

Kisses familiar adults and children.

Puts something in own genitals/rectum for the physical sensation, curiosity, or exploration.

OF CONCERN

Repeatedly asks questions about genitals and asking to see others' genitals.

Frequently plays doctor after repeatedly being redirected.

Wants to be nude in public even after parents' redirect.

Continues to touch/rub genitals in public after being redirected. Rubs (humping) genitals on furniture or other objects.

Humps other children with clothes on. Imitates sexual behavior with dolls/stuffed toy.

Continues sexual talk even when redirected.

Draws genitals on clothed and/or nude figures. Genitals disproportionate to the size of the body.

Continuously wants to touch genitals, breasts, buttocks of other children even after redirection. Tries to engage in oral, anal, or vaginal sex.

Talks in a sexualized manner with others. Fearful of hugs and kisses by adults. Upset with public displays of affection. Kisses unfamiliar adult or child.

Puts something in own genitals/rectum frequently or when it feels uncomfortable. Puts something in the genitals/rectum of another child.

SEEK GUIDANCE

Endless questions about sex after curiosity satisfied. Sexual knowledge too great for their age.

Forces another child to play doctor, or to take off their clothes.

Refuses to put on clothes. Exposes self in public after many scoldings.

Touches/rubs self in public and in private to the exclusion of normal childhood activities. Attempts to, or actually rubs genitals on other people.

Humps naked. Intercourse with another child. Forces another child to have sexual contact with them.

Talks about sex and sexual acts habitually. Repeatedly disciplined because of inappropriate sexual talk.

Genitals stand out as the most prominent feature of drawing. Drawings of intercourse, group sex. Sadism/masochism shown.

Manipulates or forces another child to allow touching of genitals, breast, buttocks. Forced or mutual: oral, anal or vaginal sex.

Overly familiar with strangers. Talks/acts in a sexualized manner with unknown adults. Physical contact with adults causes agitation to child or adult.

Coerces or forces putting something in genitals/rectum of another child. Causes harm to own/others' genitals/rectum.

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Behaviors Related to Sex & Sexuality

5TH - 8TH GRADE

NATURAL & HEALTHY

Very interested in sex and sexuality.
Asks about sexual materials and information.

Wants clarification on the meaning of sexual words, acts, and personal values, particularly with peers.

Is keenly interested in learning about body changes.

Curious about relationships and sexual behavior.

Feels okay or very embarrassed when caregivers want to talk about puberty and/or sexual topics.

Touches/rubs own genitals when alone.

Sexual experimentation between adolescents of the same age and gender is common.

Asks about consequences of sexual behavior.

Enjoys bathroom humor.

Plays games online with known friends.

OF CONCERN

Spends considerable amount of time seeking sexual images online.

Makes sexual gestures and uses sexual words at home/school/public.

Thinks of self or body as repulsive, dirty or bad.

Refuses to talk about a secret shared with an adult or older child.

Refuses to talk to caregivers about sexual topics. Angry with caregivers for wanting to talk about puberty and/or sexual topics.

Continues to touch/rub genitals in public places after being told "no."

Talks about a new older friend.

Starts to explore sexual behavior, despite knowing the consequences.

Repeats jokes that are vulgar and promote violence.

Plays games online with people they have not met in person/strangers.

SEEK GUIDANCE

After receiving consequences, continues to view pornography; watches violent or child porn, or takes pictures/videos of own genitals/sexual behavior.

Repeatedly uses sexual language or behaviors despite consequences.

Talks about specific adult sexual acts with details.

Exhibits adult-like sexual behaviors, language and knowledge.

Cries and runs away as if scared and/or disgusted regarding puberty and/or sexual topics.

Touches/rubs genitals in public after receiving consequences, such as: being ridiculed by peers and censored by authorities. Inserts unsafe/unhygienic objects in own genitals.

Develops new or unusual fear of certain people or places.

Participates in illegal sexual behaviors.

Any sexual behavior that demonstrates violence and/or power over another.

Pretends to be someone that they are not online, including their age, sexual experience, gender, or sexuality.

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Behaviors Related to Sex & Sexuality

9TH - 12TH GRADE

NATURAL & HEALTHY

Talks about sex with friends.
Exaggerates sexual experiences with peers.

Is concerned about physical and sexual attractiveness.

Posts online about a girlfriend/boyfriend.

Self-stimulation in private is expected to continue.

Looks at/masturbates to nude pictures/videos.

To explore sex and sexuality, goes to video sites, Internet, social media, movies, music, television, or magazines.

Babysits or watches younger children.

Participates in same age/developmental level consensual behaviors.

Sexual experimentation between adolescents of the same age and gender is common.

May be influenced by peers to try risky behaviors (alcohol, tobacco, sex).

OF CONCERN

Talks about sex to known adults or peers, and continues to do it when asked to stop.

Talks/jokes about sexting and/or receiving sexting images.

Uses sexually suggestive language online about self, peers, or others.

Wants to masturbate at inappropriate times such as at school, work, or church.

Masturbates to nude pictures/videos and leaves them around where others can see them, after being told not to do so.

Spends considerable amount of time seeking sexual images online, including pornography, to detriment of school, work, family, and friends.

Makes friends/plays unsupervised games with much younger children, as a preference to youth their own age.

Talks about, jokes about, or plays online games where non-consensual behavior takes place.

Sexual promiscuity with peers.

Suddenly has money, toys, or other gifts without reason.

SEEK GUIDANCE

Says he/she is older, continuously seeks sexual conversation with adolescents/adults in person and/or online.

Takes pictures and/or videos of own and/or others' sexual behavior.

Posts materials online that are sexually explicit and/or violent in nature about self/others.

Masturbates in front of siblings/peers/others, or in public places.

Masturbates when it becomes painful, violent, or causes physical harm.

After receiving consequences, continues to view pornography; watches violent or child porn.

Any sexual behavior with younger children or children of different developmental abilities.

Coerces/tricks (emotionally or physically) others to watch/act out sexual behavior.

Sexual activity with adults/unknown people.

Participates in, or is forced into sexual acts in exchange for money/things.

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