

Behaviors Related to Sex & Sexuality

PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

NATURAL & HEALTHY	OF CONCERN	SEEK GUIDANCE
Touches/rubs own genitals when diapers are being changed, when going to sleep, when tense or afraid.	Insists on touching/rubbing genitals in public after being told many times not to do this.	Touches/rubs self to the exclusion of normal childhood activities. Hurts own genitals by touching/rubbing.
Explores difference between males and females, boys, and girls.	Constant questions about genital difference after all questions have been answered.	Plays male and female roles in an angry or aggressive manner. Hates own/other gender.
Touches the "private parts" of familiar adults and children.	Touches the private parts of an adult not in the family, unknown child, or familiar people after being redirected. Asks to be touched themselves.	Sneakily touches adults. Forcefully touches others and demands that others touch him/her inappropriately.
Asks about the genitals, breast, intercourse, and babies.	Repeatedly asks answered questions about reproduction, sex, and body parts.	Asks unfamiliar people for sex education and explanation. Sexual knowledge too detailed for child's age.
Likes to be nude. May show others his/her genitals.	Wants to be nude in public after the parent repeatedly and consistently redirects behavior and sets appropriate boundaries.	Refuses to put on clothes. Secretly shows self in public after redirection.
Interested in watching people doing bathroom functions.	Interest in watching bathroom functions does not wane in days/weeks.	Refuses to leave people alone in the bathroom. Forces way into the bathroom.
Plays doctor while inspecting other's bodies.	Frequently plays doctor after setting appropriate boundaries. Secretly plays doctor in private.	Forces another child to play doctor or to take off his/her clothes.
Puts something in own genitals and rectum one time for curiosity or exploration.	Put something in genitals or rectum of self or others after being told "no".	Any coercion, force, pain in putting something in genitals or rectum of self or another child.
Plays house, acts out roles of Mommy and Daddy.	Humping other children with clothes on.	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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KINDERGARTEN - 4TH GRADE

NATURAL & HEALTHY	OF CONCERN	SEEK GUIDANCE
Asks about the genitals, breasts, intercourse, and babies.	Shows fear or anxiety about sexual topics.	Endless questions about sex after curiosity satisfied. Sexual knowledge too great for their age.
Plays doctor, inspecting other's genitals.	Frequently plays doctor after repeatedly being redirected.	Forces another child to play doctor, or to take off their clothes.
Shows others his/her genitals.	Wants to be nude in public even after redirection.	Refuses to put on clothes. Exposes self in public after many redirections.
Touches/rubs own genitals when going to sleep, when tense, excited, or afraid.	Continues to touch/rub genitals in public after being redirected. Rubs (humping) genitals on furniture or other objects.	Touches self in public and private to the exclusion of normal childhood activities. Attempts to, or actually rubs genitals on other people.
Plays house, may simulate all roles of Mommy and Daddy.	Humping other children with clothes on. Imitates sexual behavior with dolls/stuffed toy.	Humping naked. Intercourse with another child. Forces another child to have sexual contact with them.
Talks about sex with friends. Talks about having a girl/boyfriend.	Continues sexual talk even when redirected.	Talks about sex and sexual acts habitually. Repeatedly disciplined because of inappropriate sexual talk.
Draws genitals on human figures for artistic expression or because the figure is being portrayed in the nude.	Draws genitals on some nude figures or on drawing of clothed people. Genitals disproportionate to the size of the body.	Genitals stand out as the most prominent feature of drawing. Drawings of intercourse, group sex. Sadism/masochism shown.
Interest in touching genitals, breast, buttocks of other same age child or have the child touch his/hers.	Continuously wants to touch genitals, breasts, buttocks of other children even after redirection. Tries to engage in oral, anal, or vaginal sex.	Manipulates or forces another child to allow touching of genitals, breast, buttocks. Forced or mutual: oral, anal, or vaginal sex.
Kisses familiar adults and children.	French kissing. Talks in a sexualized manner. Fearful of hugs & kisses by adults. Upset by public displays of affection. Kisses unfamiliar adult or child.	Overly familiar with strangers. Talks/acts in a sexualized manner with unknown adults. Physical contact with adults causes agitation to child or adult.
Puts something in own genitals/rectum for the physical sensation, curiosity, or exploration.	Puts something in own genitals/rectum frequently or when it feels uncomfortable. Puts something in the genitals/rectum of another child.	Any coercion or force in putting something in genitals/rectum of another child. Causing harm to own/others genitals/rectum.

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5TH GRADE - 8TH GRADE

NATURAL & HEALTHY

Asks about sexual materials and information.	Curiosity about relationships and sexual behavior.	Sexual experimentation between adolescents of the same age and gender is common.
Will want clarification on the meaning of sexual words, acts, and personal values particularly with peers.	Asks about decision-making.	Asks about consequences of sexual behavior.
Self-stimulation in private is expected to continue.	Is keenly interested in learning about body changes.	Enjoys bathroom humor.

OF CONCERN

Seems distracted or distant at odd times.	Has a sudden change in eating habits: Refuses to eat, Loses or drastically increases appetite, Has trouble swallowing.	Sudden mood swings: rage, fear, insecurity or withdrawal.
Leaves "clues" that seem likely to provoke a discussion about sexual issues.	Writes, draws, plays or dreams of sexual or frightening images.	Develops new or unusual fear of certain people or places.
Refuses to talk about a secret shared with an adult or older child.	Talks about a new older friend.	Suddenly has money, toys or other gifts without reason.
Exhibits adult-like sexual behaviors, language, and knowledge.	Thinks of self or body as repulsive, dirty or bad.	Has nightmares or other sleep problems without an explanation.

Adapted from www.stopitnow.org



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9TH GRADE - 12TH GRADE

NATURAL & HEALTHY

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

Self-stimulation in private is expected to continue.

Becomes preoccupied with the opposite sex.

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

Is concerned about physical and sexual attractiveness.

OF CONCERN

Self-injury (cutting, burning).

Inadequate personal hygiene.

Drug and alcohol abuse.

Sexual promiscuity.

Running away from home.

Depression, anxiety.

Suicide attempts.

Fear of intimacy or closeness.

Compulsive eating or dieting.

Masturbation in a public place.

Sexual interest directed toward much younger children.

Adapted from www.stopitnow.org and www.texaschildrenspediatrics.org

