

Normative & Non-normative Sexual Behavior in Children and Adolescents


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We are all sexual beings

Asexual Healthy Sexuality Hypersexual / Deviant Sexuality


General Guide about Normative Behaviors

- Occurs between children who:
 - Play together regularly
 - Similar age and size
 - Similar developmental stage
- Spontaneous and unplanned
- Is infrequent
- Is voluntary
- Is easily diverted




Concerning Behaviors

- Frequent
- Injurious
- Intrusive
- Coercive
- Behavior continues after intervention/redirection




Conversations about Sexuality

- Developmentally appropriate
- As accurate/truthful as possible
- Practice to reduce anxiety
- Start communication young
- Stay one step ahead



Ask First

- Open-Ended Questions
- What does that mean?
- What were you doing?
- Where did you learn that?



Promoting Healthy Sexuality-- Preschool

- Boys and Girls are different
- Accurate labeling
- Rules about boundaries
- Respond to questions about bodies



Preschool Safety

- Safe and Unsafe Touches/Body Safety
- My body is mine
- It's ok to say no to touches
- Who to tell if you don't like something



Safety Messages Ages 4-6

- Who it is ok to touch you
- Safe vs. Unsafe touches
 - Ok vs. Not ok
 - Good vs. Bad

Safety Messages--Ages 7-12

- Coping with unwanted sexual attention
- Safety boundaries
- Internet/social media safety
- Dating rules
- Risky social situations



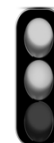
Safety Messages--Adolescents

- Safe and Unsafe Behavior
- Coercion in relationships
- Internet Safety
- Consent
 - Voluntary—does not fear repercussions
 - Truly optional—can say no
 - Not under the influence



Framework for Behaviors Related to Sex and Sexuality

- Natural and Expected
- Concerning: Requires Evaluation
- Requires Intervention



0-4 Year Old Green Light

- Touching private parts—in home and in public
- Rubbing private parts—hands or objects
- Showing private parts
- Touching women’s breasts
- Removing Clothes/Comfortable being nude
- Attempting to see people undressing or in bathroom

0-4 Year Old Green Light

- Asking Questions about bodies and bodily functions--Talking about pee and poop
- Wanting to touch or look at body parts of same age children
- Make believe games—family, parents,
- Asking about where babies come from
- Saying “Naughty” words



0-4 Year Old Orange Light

- Masturbation over other activities
- Preoccupation with Sexual Behavior
- Persistently trying to watch others



- Following others into private spaces
- Pulling down other children’s pants

0-4 Year Old Orange Light

- Touching other children’s genitals
- Touching adults private parts persistently or invasively
- Touching own private parts obsessively
- Touching animals private parts after intervention

0-4 Year Old Red Light

- Self-injurious or compulsive masturbation Persistent talk/play with sexually explicit themes
- Simulation of sexual touch or activity
- Touching other children’s private parts
- Forcing, coercing other children or telling them to keep it a secret.
- Any talk or activities that involve

5-9 Year Old Green Light

- Increased sense of privacy
- Body touching and touching own genitals
- Masturbating—generally in private
- Curiosity about other children’s genitals
 - Role playing
- Questions about sexuality, relationships, reproduction
- Telling stories or asking questions

5-9 Year Old Green Light

- "Potty" Language
- Viewing explicit content
- Modesty
- Beginning to use social media to talk to same gender peers
- Gender segregated play "cooties"
- Pretends to be the opposite sex

5-9 Year Old Orange Light

- Masturbation over other activities
- Sexually Explicit talk, play or art
- Persistent nudity, touching private parts in public
- Persistently trying to watch others
- Following others into private spaces
- Pulling down other children's pants

5-9 Year Old Orange Light

- Persistently using sexual/flirting language that is too advanced
- Touching own, others, or animals private parts after redirection
- Using social media with unknown individuals

5-9Year Old Red Light

- Self-injurious or compulsive Masturbation
- Masturbating in front of others
- Sexual notes, drawings and text messages that involve any level of aggression
- Sexual talk, behavior, or interactions with younger children.
- Simulation of sexual activity

5-9Year Old Red Light

- Sexual Activity with animals
- Electronic transmission of sexual material
- Plays with feces, urinates outside of the toilet

10-13 Year Old Green Light

- Focus/need for privacy
- Masturbation in private
- Curiosity and information seeking
- Beginning dating relationships
- Exhibitionism in presence of known same age peers
- Electronic interactions with peers.
- Some anxiety when witnessing adult affection
- Insertion of items into own genitals

10-13 Year Old Orange Light

- Masturbation over other activities and/or involving self injury
- Sexually intimidating interactions
- Persistent sexual talk, art, play
- Accessing age restricted materials
- Expressing fear re: pregnancy or STD's

10-13 Year Old Orange Light

- Seeking attention/flirting with older individuals
- Kissing or mutual masturbation with unknown peers
- Oral sex or sexual intercourse with same age peer
- Social media contact with unknown individuals



10-13Year Old Red Light

- Self-injurious masturbation
- Engaging vulnerable others in sexual conversations, activities
- Force or coercion of others into sexual activity
- Sexual contact/interactions with younger children or more developmentally delayed children
- Sending or publishing sexual material

10-13Year Old Red Light

- Sexual contact with animals
- Exchange of sex
- Possessing, accessing sexualized images of children

14-17Year Old Green Light

- Need for Privacy
- Masturbating in private
- Accessing information about sexuality
- Viewing materials for sexual arousal
- Sexually explicit conversations with same age peers
- Dating/interest in one on one relationships
- Sexual activity with same age
- Social media in relationships

14-17 Year Old Orange Light

- Sexual preoccupation that interferes with daily function
- Intentional spying on others
- Explicit communication or actions that are intimidating or unwanted
- Unsafe sexual behavior
- Sexual behavior with someone 2 years different in age

14-17 Year Old Orange Light

- Arranging to meet someone from online
- Sending images of another person without their consent.

14-17 Year Old Red Light

- Self-injurious or compulsive Masturbation
Preoccupation with sexually aggressive and/or illegal pornography
- Sexual contact with different ages or developmental differences
- Manipulating, lying, grooming individuals for sexual activity
- Sending sexually explicit materials w/o that persons consent

14-17 Year Old Red Light

- Sexual contact with animals
- Exchange of sex
- Possessing, accessing, or sending images of younger

Developmental Compression

- Postman ('04): popular culture has allowed children (middle) increased exposure to sexual content, similar to adults via a vis video, internet, tv, magazines
- Early eroticization
- Precocious sexualization (Friedrich, McClellan)

Role of Sexual Exposure

- Exposure correlates with early sexual intercourse (younger than 14)
- More so for Euro-American youth
- African American youth are exposed to more media, less impact.
- AA more impacted by parental expectations and behavior of friends.
- Greater exposure—precoital sexual behavior and increase in sexual risk taking

Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System

- Sexual Intercourse
 - 45.6% of HS students (48.5 m; 42.9 w)
 - 6.6% reported initiating before age 13
 - Among sexually active students, 25.6% used drugs or alcohol during last intercourse
 - Reported intercourse is decreasing; 45.6% in '01; 54.1% in '91;
 - 17% of 7th and 8th grade students
 - Approx. 1 in 5 before 15th birthday
 - More than 1 in 10 who had intercourse before 15, describe it as non-voluntary or unwanted

Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System

- 75% of males and 59.4% of females left unsupervised for <5 hours per week reported having sexual intercourse
- 87.6% of males and 72.5% of females left unsupervised >30 hours reported having sexual intercourse
- 43% of males and 27.9% of females reported last having had sexual intercourse in their homes

Masturbating

- Normative Behavior
 - Move towards privacy
 - As adolescents, thoughts become important
- Retrospective study prior to the age of 18.
 - 90-94% of boys
 - 51-60% of girls

Strachon & Staples. (2012). Masturbation. Pediatrics. Vol 33 (4). 190-191

Pornography

- Adolescents
 - Normative vs. Non-Normative Pornography
 - Power and Control
 - Objectification
- Adults
 - Possession in the home
- Contributor to Deviant Arousal Patterns

Sexting

- Explosion of research
- November 2014—Atlantic
 - Healthy
 - Expression of sexuality
 - Step in Relationships
 - Mutuality
 - Unhealthy
 - Use of coercion
 - Unidirectional

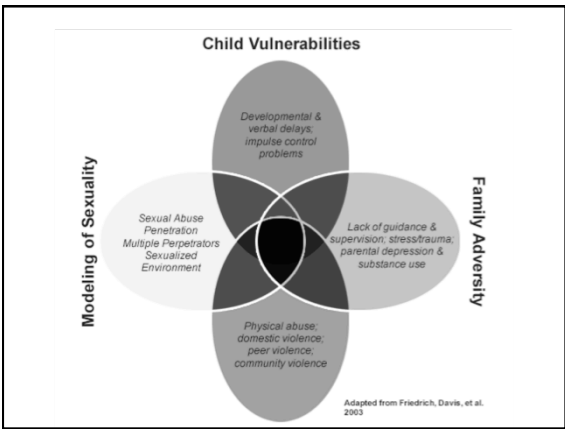
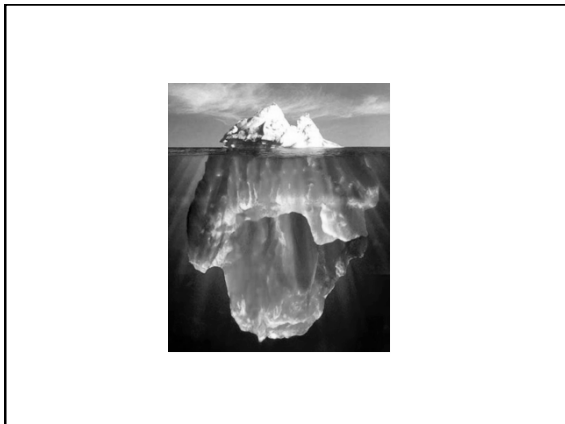


Intervention

- What stands in the way of providers addressing the sexual behaviors of children?
- What stands in the way of parents seeking help for sexual behaviors?

Contributors to Sexual Behaviors

Sources: Listiak, Friedrich, Cavanaugh-Johnson, AAP



- ### Child Vulnerabilities
- Predisposition
 - Prenatal/Prenatal Complications
 - Head Injuries
 - IQ
 - Neurotransmitters
 - Testosterone
 - Impulse Control

- ### Child Factors
- Are more common with youth who have high internalizing and externalizing scores.
 - 96% of 6-12 yr olds with SBP met criteria 1 or more MH issues
 - 76% conduct Disorder
 - 40% ADHD
- Kellog, N.D., Clinical Report—The Evolution of Sexual Behaviors in Children. Pediatrics, Vol 124 (3) 2009, 992-995

- ### Developmental Issues
- Boundaries
 - Social Skills
 - Impulse Control
 - Learning
- Kellog, N.D., Clinical Report—The Evolution of Sexual Behaviors in Children. Pediatrics, Vol 124 (3) 2009, 992-995

Exposure to Violence

- 58-68% of children with Sexual Behavior Problems were exposed to Intimate Partner Violence
- Sexual abuse is a rarer trajectory to SBP
 - Ranges from 28%-48%
 - Typical Latency of 2 yrs between abuse and origin of SBP

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Adolescent Sexual Acting Out

- History of Maltreatment (Becker, Kaplan, Tenke, Tartaglino, Finkelor)
- Exposure to pornography, 74% of JSO's (Becker & Stein)
- Exposure to Substance Abuse (Becker & Stein)
- Exposure to Aggressive Models
 - 88% of serious sexual offenses had another s.o. in extended family
 - 50 % of adult S.O report sexual deviant behavior as adolescents
 - Delinquency and Lack of Impulse Control are contributors

Community Factors



- Poverty
- Crowding
- Violent Neighborhoods

Family Dynamics

- Caregivers history of stress/trauma
- Parental Depression
- Substance use
- Isolation
- Shame-based behaviors
- Authoritarian or passive father
- Rigid Religiosity
- Denial

Contributors to Sexual Behavior

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Family violence— <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – dysregulating effect – externalizing behaviors – Boundaries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Family sexuality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – co-sleeping – co-bathing – liberal tv/video standards – witnessing intercourse – availability of porn |
|---|---|

Family Environment

- Attitude towards nudity
 - Boundaries
- Supervision
 - Secrecy
- Stressors
 - Illness, violence, criminality, substance use

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Family Environment

- Neglect and poor supervision
- Different than indiscriminate attention seeking

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Caregiver Dynamics

- Parental Behavior
- Adult romantic relationships
- Sexual Abuse in caregivers
 - Hypersexuality vs. inhibited
 - Enmeshment vs. individuation

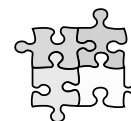
Assessment of Sexual Behavior



- If you don't ask they won't tell

Interview

- Own the Discomfort
- Presumptive Questioning
 - Children
 - Adolescents and Adults
 - Heterosexual vs. Homosexual Experiences
- Use Client's Language
- Clarify Purpose
- Double Check



Assessment of Sexual Behaviors

- Age
- Developmental Stage
- Family Environment
- Parental Behavior and Responses
- Function and Disruptive Nature of Behavior

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Who, What, When, and Why

- Who
 - Sexual behavior with developmentally dissimilar or involve coercion
 - "Keep the secret"
- Gender
- Relationship



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Who, What, When, and Why

- What
 - Physical or Emotional Coercion
 - Oral-Genital Contact or penetration
 - Penile-Genital Contact or penetration
 - Digital Contact or penetration

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Who, What, When, and Why

- When
 - Supervision
 - Opportunity
 - Sneakiness
 - Planning

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Who, What, When, and Why

- Why
 - Sexual Gratification or stimulation
 - Pleasure
 - Curiosity
 - Control
 - Impulsivity
 - Attention Seeking

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Types and Frequency of Sexual Behavior

- Self Stimulation
- Personal Space/Intrusiveness
- Language or image of sexual behaviors
- Interest in genitals of self or others
- Boundaries
- Parental Response
- Situational Factors

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Assessment Involves Caregivers

- Parental Interactions
 - Values regarding sexuality
 - Sexual Behavior
 - Ability to set, monitor, and maintain limits
 - Establishing boundaries and rules

Additional Factors

- Access to Sexually Explicit Material
- Age appropriate sexual education
- Dysfunction in the home
- Hx of Abuse/Neglect

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Risk

- Denial of event; responsibility; continuation of the problem
- Low Empathy
- Social Competence--loneliness, intimacy deficits
- Emotional Self Regulation
- Anger Management
- Substance Abuse
- Access and Supervision
- Deviant Arousal

Intervention

- *Thinking about a case that you have had, what contributors to child sexual behavior do you think existed?*
- *How would you address those contributors with caregivers?*



Resources

- Harborview Center for Sexual Assault
- National Center for Sexual Behavior of Youth (NCSBY.org)
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN.org)

Questions??

