

Who Do I Ask?

“When our son was 12, we participated in a parent group. Several of the discussions focused on how to teach about body parts, wet dreams, sexual feelings and so on. I didn’t think the group was for us, at the time, because our son had shown no sign of development; no interest.

Well, about three months later, when we were at the hospital for a checkup, he pinched a nurse’s bottom and whistled at her. I was shocked. The next day I called up the group leader and asked for a “refresher”. I jokingly accused her of coming into the house late at night and injecting Jim with hormones just to give us something to think about!

We have had talks with him now and he understands what we say. We should have done it long ago. I thought there was no point; that he wouldn’t understand. But I think now I was just uncomfortable. It took having to deal with his behavior to get me started.” -Helen

Where Do I Get Information?

Sexuality Education for Children and Adolescents with Disabilities

Some children have more needs than others. Some children with disabilities will be able to live more independently than others. One young person may be able to date and to cope with the responsibility of marriage. Another will be happy with having a close friend; still another will be content to be involved in social activities with a group.

Sexuality is a normal part of everyone’s life. To enjoy it, one must first understand it. If we become more knowledgeable and comfortable, it makes dealing with our child’s questions and problems so much easier. We can better trust that our responses will be appropriate.

Social Skills

“My daughter is only four but already I’m thinking about her adolescence. There must be some things I can teach her now to get us both ready.” -Brenda

How do you say “Hello.”?

What do you say next?

Who can you hug?

What’s the difference between “public” and “private”?

What kinds of things are okay to do in private, but not in public?

Putting Sexuality into Perspective

“When my daughter was about ten, I observed her touching her developing breasts and rubbing her vulva. At first I told her to stop; that it wasn’t nice. Then I realized that I did the same thing at about that age. The only difference was that I made sure no one saw me. Megan still needs help with bathing and dressing, so naturally I’m going to be aware of it more. Actually, when I got over being worried, I was really pleased she was curious about herself. How normal!” -Robin

Learning about sexuality means finding out what it means to be a boy or a girl.

Learning about sexuality is being curious about your body.
Learning about sexuality is running, playing, wrestling with friends in the neighborhood.
Learning about sexuality is coming to terms with the physical changes of puberty and wondering, "Am I normal?".

Relationships

"Mary, who is 18, keeps talking about having a boyfriend someday. She doesn't have a special boyfriend yet, but does have some acquaintances who are boys. We role-play what to do if a boy she doesn't know well tries to touch her on her breasts or genitals. She says, "No, that's private.". She is quite assertive and has a very high self-esteem, I think. We involve her in group social activities with both sexes and she is very comfortable with that right now. -Eva

What about girlfriends and boyfriends?
Can you make someone love you?
What is love?
How much do you tell about sex?

We have books, articles and other resources that we would like to share with you. We are also available to listen and help you with any specific topics you may need to discuss about your child.

Call your Care Coordinator at Special Medical Services: 1-800-852-3345 ext. 4488

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