

## 8.13 Problematic Sexual Behaviour for Students Under 12 Sexual Development by Developmental Age

Sexual behaviours are considered normal when they are mutual, lighthearted, and occur between children of similar size, age, and developmental level.

Developmental Age	Typical Development
<p style="text-align: center;">&lt;5</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Exploring, touching, showing of private parts in public and private</li> <li>* Rubbing private parts with hands or against objects</li> <li>* Explore each other through games (e.g., Play doctor, house)</li> <li>* Experimenting with and talking about “pee” and “poo”</li> <li>* Learning to control and interest in bodily functions</li> <li>* Show signs of bathroom/potty humour</li> <li>* Lack of inhibition about nudity</li> <li>* Attempting to see others when they are naked or undressing, showing curiosity about adult bodies</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;">5-6</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Masturbation, occasionally in presence of others</li> <li>* Beginning to learn society’s restrictions</li> <li>* Need for privacy/modesty is developing</li> <li>* Continue exploring private parts with children their own age</li> <li>* Mimicking dating behaviour (e.g., kissing, holding hands)</li> <li>* Talking about private parts and using “naughty” words</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;">7-8</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Some interest in consensual sexual play (e.g., truth or dare, doctor)</li> <li>* Knows more about physiology and how the body works</li> <li>* Attempting to see other people naked or undressing</li> <li>* Looking at pictures of naked or partially naked people</li> <li>* Wanting more privacy</li> <li>* Some children may touch their genitals for the purposes of pleasure, this happens more often privately rather than in public</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;">9-12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Viewing and listening to increased sexual content in media, including in written work</li> <li>* May talk about sexual information with peers</li> <li>* As puberty begins, an increased need for privacy and independence is often expressed</li> <li>* Reluctant to talk to adults about sexual issues</li> <li>* Interest in relationships, may want to have a boyfriend/girlfriend/partner</li> <li>* Masturbation will likely occur in private</li> </ul>

**\*\*Children who have a disability or who have experienced trauma or other disruptions to their development or socialization may be at an increased risk of vulnerability to problematic sexual behaviours. Adults who care for these children have a duty of care to provide relevant information and assistance as outlined in the problematic sexual behaviour response plan.**



## References

For more information on problematic sexual behaviours, please refer to the following links.

[AP 4004: Sexual Misconduct](#)

[Appendix 4004 A: Sexual Misconduct Procedures for Employees](#)

[Appendix 4004 B: Sexual Misconduct Students Over 12 Years](#)

[Appendix 4004 C: Sexual Misconduct Students Under 12 Years](#)

## Resources

*Responding to Children's Problem Sexual Behaviour in Elementary Schools: A Resource for Educators* (1999). Special Programs Branch, Ministry of Education.

SD#35 Langley Schools, School District Response to Problematic Sexual Behaviour in Children Under 12. With permission.

Rappaport, Nancy & Minahan, Jessica (2013). *Practical Suggestions for Understanding and Teaching Students with Sexualized Behaviour*. Phi Delta Kappan (V94: N5). Accessed March 2017

*Children's Sexual Behaviours: A Parent's Guide* (2014). Government of Prince Edward Island. Accessed March 2017

*Safety Skills: Information for Parents of Young Children* (2002). Child Abuse Prevention and Counselling Society of Greater Victoria.

Kids in the Know