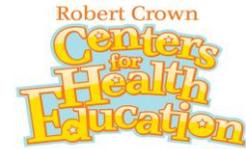


## Developmental Stages of Sexuality\*



<b><i>Developmental Stage</i></b>	<b><i>Developmental Tasks</i></b>	<b><i>Educational Approach</i></b>
Ages 0-1 <i>Infant</i>	Basic Trust Attention Soothing Nurturance	Infants are beginning to learn about sexuality. Parents are their main teachers. Naming parts of the body, holding and hugging begins to develop trust. Model healthy relationships in the home now and throughout child's life.
Ages 2-3 <i>Toddler</i>	Early Autonomy Exploration Self-Control Power struggles	Children at this age are learning about their bodies. They learn about their world through play. They can learn simple self-care tasks such as brushing teeth and bathing. Self-touching and soothing behaviors might be noticed. Teach about privacy for these actions and respect for our bodies. Do not overreact.
Ages 4-5 <i>Preschool</i>	Initiative Testing limits Gaining competence Reality vs. fantasy	Children begin asking questions about where babies come from and can understand simple answers. Create a home where children feel free to talk about bodies, health, and sexuality. Children may include sexual behaviors in play such as kissing and laying down together. Use these opportunities to point to love in relationships and how to say no to unwanted touch.
Ages 6-8 <i>School Age</i>	Meeting the world Comfort away Absorbing learning Socialization	Children are beginning to be able to understand complex issues about health, disease, and sexuality. The world is providing grownup information. Kids need concrete understandable answers. Discuss how children choose who to play with and how to say no to being with people they do not feel comfortable with.
Ages 9-10 <i>Preadolescent</i>	Peer influence Role models Do I measure up? Gender differences	Children begin the changes of puberty and are concerned about their appearances. Social pressure (kids talking at school, comparing themselves to others) necessitates that parents talk about sexuality directly. Highlight the diversity of boys' and girls' bodies and self-acceptance. Positive messages about our bodies will support self-esteem throughout this period of change.
Ages 11-13 <i>Early Adolescence</i>	Family vs. friends Body image Boredom Attitude	Kids are focused on their bodies. Accurate information is vital regarding intercourse, pregnancy, STDs and HIV. The message is that sexuality has consequences. Talk about the continuum of intimate behaviors from holding hands, hugs, and kissing to intercourse. Share family values about age appropriate sexual behavior.
Ages 14-16 <i>Middle Adolescence</i>	Rebellion Sexuality Parent conflict Morals	Parents should continue to share the family's values about sexuality and be sure to ask your child about their developing values. Teens should know that the best way to prevent STDs, HIV or pregnancy is abstinence. Discuss safe sex alternatives. Keep the lines of communication open. Avoid being judgmental.
Ages 17-19 <i>Late Adolescence</i>	Identity Autonomy Values Leaving home	Social pressure and emancipation status require clear positions that: 1) Choices have consequences 2) Safety and health concerns outweigh pleasure and experimentation 3) Connect self-respect to empowerment

\*Sexuality includes human development, relationships, interpersonal skills, sexual expression and identity, sexual health, and society and culture