

Ages 0-5

The hallmark of this development stage is curiosity. Children between 0 and 5 years of age are busy exploring the world around them.

This includes an interest in the human body.

This interest is normal and healthy.

→ *These may be considered normal sexual behaviors:*

1. Touches/rubs own genitals at diapering
2. Touches the genital or breasts of familiar adults and children
3. Likes to be nude. May show others his/her genitals
4. Interested in watching people perform bathroom functions
5. Plays house, i.e. acts out roles of mommy and daddy
6. Uses “dirty” language

→ *If these sexual behaviors continue after telling the child to stop, they may be cause for concern:*

1. Continues to touch own genitals in public
2. Continues to touch genitals or breasts of adults or children
3. Desires to be nude in public
4. Interest persist in watching people do bathroom functions
5. Games include sexualized play
6. Uses more sexually explicit language

→ *You may wish to consult a professional if you observe these behaviors:*

1. Touches genitals to the exclusion of other activities
2. Gropes adults, children, self, or animals. Demands touching of self
3. Fixated on undressing self or others
4. Repeatedly plays with feces after scolding
5. Focuses on simulated or actual sexual acts, intercourse or oral sex
6. May use coercion on another child
7. Uses sexually explicit language in context and/or in conjunction with actions
8. Focuses on inserting something in genitals or rectum