

# Understanding Sexual Behavior

## Ages 13 & Up

Adolescents are extremely focused on changes in their bodies and their lives, especially in regard to peer relationships. Sexual behavior becomes increasingly more adult-like.

### *Developmentally Appropriate Behaviors:*

### *Ways to Respond:*

Increasing modesty and a desire for privacy	Respect the growing need for privacy
Recognition of sexual orientation occurs	Be open to discussion of sexual orientation
Spontaneous erections, nocturnal emissions (wet dreams), and vaginal lubrication occur	Discuss these normal body functions with your child. Give your child access to educational information about sex, sexuality, and puberty
Teens are defining their comfort level with types of physical affection (i.e. hugs, wrestling, kissing, holding hands, tickling)	Respect teen's changing attitudes toward physical affection

### *Potentially Concerning Behaviors*

- Excessive aggressiveness or passiveness
- Indiscriminate sexual activity
- Excessive masturbation to the exclusion of other activities
- Manipulating or forcing others to participate in sexually-oriented activity
- Excessive use of and/or obsession with pornography (i.e. magazines or internet)

### *Ways to Respond:*

Although you may feel shocked, panicked, or frightened, your reaction is critical to helping your child.

- Remain Calm
- Stop the behavior
- Initiate a conversation about the behavior
- Seek professional help. The following types of agencies or professionals can assist you:
  - Child Protection Agency
  - Mental Health Professional
  - Law Enforcement
  - Physician or Nurse