



MESSAGES FOR PARENTS

Birth to 2 Years

Normal Sexual Development

- Explores own body, including genitals.
- Enjoys touch as well as skin-to-skin contact.
- Likes to be naked.

Healthy Sexual Development

- Your child will develop the capacity to trust caregivers.
- Your child will experience pleasure through touch.
- Teach your child the correct names of body parts including genitals (e.g., vagina, penis, clitoris, scrotum, vulva, breasts, and buttocks).

Promotion of Sexual Health and Prevention of Sexual Abuse

- Throughout your child's development, be aware of possible signs of sexual abuse (e.g., trauma to the genitals, resistant or fearful of touch from others, and sexualized behaviour/inappropriate sexual behaviour).

Resources

The best time to start communicating healthy sexual information with your child is in the early stages of development. It is important that you become comfortable talking about sex with him or her. Your child may come to you with questions about sex, sexuality, and sex-related matters. Remember, you do not need to know all the answers, but you do want to be a reliable educator for your child.

To become more comfortable with discussions on sexual development, we encourage you to visit your local library or bookstores for books and DVDs. Remember to choose materials carefully; some may be more explicit than you thought. Think about the level of detail that would be good for your child's stage of development and his or her personal preference.

Below is a list of recommended websites:

1. Teaching Sexual Health for Parents
<http://teachingsexualhealth.ca/parents>
2. Sexual Development and Behavior in Children:
Information for Parents and Caregivers
https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/sexual_development_and_behavior_in_children.pdf
3. It's Easier Than You Think:
Tips for Talking With Your Kids About Sexual Health
<https://skprevention.ca/sexual-health/parents-as-educators/>