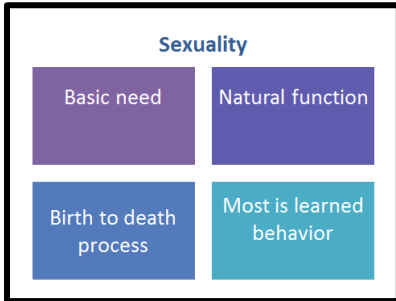


Basic Concepts Regarding Sexuality

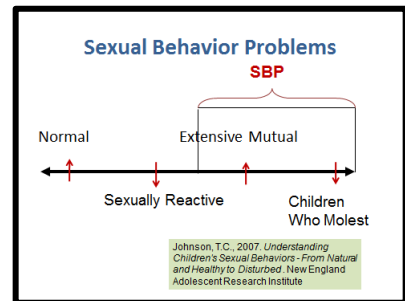


Sexuality is:

- A basic need
- A natural function
- A birth to death process
- A learned behavior

Continuum of Sexual Behavior

- Sexual behaviors of children fall on a continuum of normative or usual and expected behavior to behavior that causes concern.
- More recently, the term *sexual behavior problems* are used to capture points on the continuum that cause concern.





Three to Five Years:



Six to Nine Years:



Ten to Twelve Years:



Adolescents:

Reflection Questions

1. What was most surprising to you regarding child sexual development?

2. You learned that sexual behavior is influenced by many things including family upbringing and culture. How might these influences impact the sexual behavior of the children in your home?

3. In what way(s) might your parenting change, as a result of knowing that all children will display a range of usual and expected sexual behavior?

4. We strongly encourage you to attend the course entitled, *Caregivers' Role in Healthy Sexual Development* that will help you discuss and manage sexual behaviors with children and adolescents in a way that is consistent with their developmental level. What would you most like to learn in that class?

Resources and Recommended Websites

Sexual Development and Behavior in Children: Information for Parents and Caregivers is a resource developed by the National Child Traumatic Stress Network. This document outlines basic information about child sexual development, identifies common sexual behaviors for children, and provides tips for responding to sexual behaviors and talking to children regarding sexuality. http://nctsn.org/nctsn_assets/pdfs/caring/sexualdevelopmentandbehavior.pdf

Child Sexual Development is a website by National Center on the Sexual Behavior of Youth (NCSBY) that provides a good overview of normal sexual development in children and youth. The site also provides information on sexual behaviors that cause concern, along with recommendations for responding to sexual behavior. <http://www.ncsby.org/content/childhood-sexual-development>