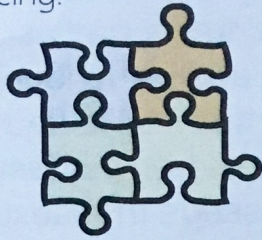


What is Sexuality?

Sexuality is how a person defines, experiences, and expresses themselves as a sexual being.

A Person's Sexuality includes:

- Body Image
- Body Function
- Biological sex
- Gender Identity and expression
- Romantic Orientation
- Sexual Orientation
- Relationships
- Life experiences
- Personal Values (including family, cultural, religion, and spiritual beliefs)
- Pleasure



Sexuality also includes sexual feelings, emotions, and experiences as well as how a person experiences love, compassion, intimacy, joy and sorrow.

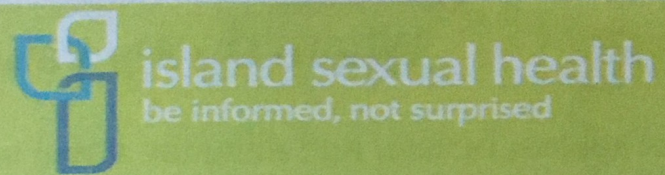
Sexuality includes far more than sexual practices such as intercourse—it plays a significant role in the way we lead our everyday lives. To understand ourselves and our children and why we behave the ways we do, we must understand the role of sexuality.

Why do Children Need to Know about Sexuality?

- Healthcare
- Safety
- Autonomy
- Confidence

It is our responsibility, as adults, to provide children with accurate and truthful information. We need to create opportunities for them to ask questions, and to raise the subject ourselves. They need to learn about our values, explore ideas and discuss ideas, and discuss their own attitudes about sexuality so they can develop a healthy set of values for themselves. We can help children develop interpersonal skills, strengthen their decision making skills and help young kids exercise responsibility about sexual relationships.

This includes discussing tough issues such as resisting peer pressure, communicating with parents and other trusted adults, postponing sexual intercourse, and using safer sex and birth control methods so that they are protected if/when they choose to become sexually active.



Helpful Websites to Support Sexual Health

www.islandsexualhealth.org
www.beyondthetalk.ca
www.sexualityandu.ca (For parents, teachers, youth, adults, professionals)
www.amaze.org (Puberty based website)
www.scarleteen.com (youth based website)
www.smartsexresource.com (BC Based)

What if I am Uncomfortable Talking about Sex?

Many parents feel that they have to have all the answers to their child's questions and are afraid they don't. Some adults find it hard to admit that children are sexual beings. Some adults even find it hard to admit that they are sexual.

- The best way to handle the topics of sex is to be open with children about your feelings.
- When they ask questions, answer them honestly. If you are uncomfortable, let your kids know. Being real with them allows them to be real with you.
- You can start off by saying something like, "This is hard for me to talk about because (my parents and I never discussed these things or...) But it is important to me that we do it differently." It is natural to be embarrassed and admitting the feelings of awkwardness is a way of offering a common ground where you can meet and talk openly.
- Be frank, open and honest but remember to respect the need for privacy. This includes your privacy as well as your child's privacy. If you think about your own need for privacy then you can appreciate the importance of your children's needs
- If you don't know the answer to your child's question, tell them you don't but that you will find out and get back to them
- If you need some time to think about your child's question, take it and let them know you will talk to them a bit later.
- Be prepared for an ongoing conversation about sexuality rather than "the talk" which is uncomfortable for all involved.

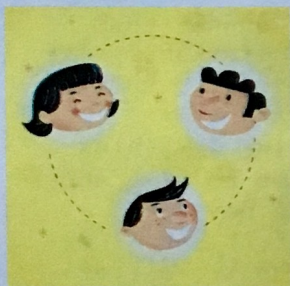
Where Do My Values Fit In?

Basic values, beliefs, and attitudes about sexuality are established within the family structure. As a parent, you are your children's earliest and most important teacher about sexuality and values. An adult who ignores or reacts negatively to a question about sex implies that sex is bad or shouldn't be discussed. Adults who answer their children's questions about sexuality openly and honestly send the message that sexuality is a normal part of life. Statements beginning with "I believe" or "We feel" will help your child understand the difference between your values and the factual information they need to make positive and healthy decisions.



Is There Such a Thing as TOO Much information?

NO! Research consistently affirms that accurate information and education does not encourage young people to be sexually active. Youth make better decisions about sex when they have all of the information they need and when there are no taboos on what they can talk about at home. It is not necessary to have a major conversation with your children each time they ask a question about sex. **LISTEN TO THEM CAREFULLY!** Be sure that you answer the question, and let your child know that they can ask follow up questions at any time. Young people dislike hearing lectures when all they want is a simple answer to a specific question.



WANT MORE INFO?

Contact
Island Sexual Health
 #101-3960 Quadra
 Victoria,
 (250) 592-3479
islandsexualhealth.org

(250) 812-9374
 Youth sexual health
 Q&A text line

Statements That Keep Sexuality in a Positive Light

• Sexuality is a natural and healthy part of living	• All people have the right to define their own sexuality.
• Individuals express their sexuality in different ways	• People should respect and accept the many different values and beliefs about sexuality that exist
• Sexual relationships should always be rooted in respect, comfort and consent	• It is every child's right to be accepted, loved and cared for.
• All sexual decisions have effects (positive and/or negative)	• All persons have the right to make responsible sexual choices
• Individuals and society benefit when children/youth are able to discuss sexuality with their parents and/or trusted adults	• Young people will explore their sexuality as a natural process of growing up.
• Sexuality means many different things to different people and will evolve and grow over time.	• A person always has the right to say no or yes to sexual activity.
• Young people who are involved in sexual relationships need access to information about health care services	• All questions are good questions

Island Sexual Health Reading List

As a sexual health organization, we get asked for recommended reading for families. The following books are a collection of the books we like. Many of these books are available to borrow through your local public library or you can purchase them through your local booksellers (Bolen's, Munro's, Tanners, Chapters). **Bold selections are our current favourites.**

For Adults/Parents/Caregivers

- ***Talk Sex Today* By Saleema Noon and Meg Hickling.**
- *Sex & Sensibility.* By Deborah Roffman.
- ***Talk to Me First.* By Deborah Roffman.**
- ***got teens?* By Logan Levkoff and Jennifer Wider**
- *Beyond the Bird and the Bees: Fostering Your Child's Healthy Sexual Development in Today's World.* By Beverly Engel.
- *My Teen has Had Sex.* By Maureen E. Lyon and Christina Brenda Antonaides
- ***For Goodness Sex: Changing the Way We Talk to Teens about Sexuality, Values and Health.* By Al Vernacchio**
- *The Transgender Child: A handbook for Families and Professionals.* By Stephanie Brill and Rachel Pepper
- *Trans Bodies, Trans Selves: A Resource for the Transgender Community.*

For Preschool and Primary Children

- *What Makes a Baby?* By Cory Silverberg
- ***Who has What?; What's in There?; and Who's in my Family?* 3 books for preschool children. By Robie Harris**
- *I loVe my Family* By Tammy Troute Wood (A story about IVF for young children)
- *Amazing You.* By Gail Saltz
- ***Boys, Girls and Body Science.* By Meg Hickling**
- ***It's Not the Stork.* By Robie Harris**
- *The Bare Naked Book.* By Kathy Stinson
- *Belly Buttons are Navels.* By Mark Schoen
- *Some Secrets Should Not Be Kept.* By Debra Byrne
- *Talk about Touch.* By Sandy Kleven
- *The Very Touching Book.* By Jan Hindman
- *Where Did I Come From?* By Peter Mayle
- *What's The Big Secret?* By Laurie Brown
- ***It's So Amazing.* By Robie Harris**
- *The Family Book.* By Todd Parr
- *We Belong Together: A Book about Adoption and Families Together.* By Todd Parr

Same-Sex Families

- *And Tango Makes Three.* By Just Richardsons
- *Asha's Mums.* By Rosamund Elwin and Michelle Paulse
- *A Tale of Two Daddies* By Vanita Oelschalger
- *Daddy, Papa, and Me.* By Leslea Newman
- *Molly's Family* By Nancy Garden
- *Uncle Bobby's Wedding* By Sarah Prarinen

Gender Exploration

- *10,000 Dresses*. By Marcus Ewert and Rex Ray (grade 1-3)
- *All I Want To Be Is Me*. By Phyllis Rothblatt (Pre K-3)
- *Be Who You Are*. By Jennifer Carr (grade 1-4)
- *Gracefully Grayson*. By Ami Polonsky (grades 5-7)
- *Parrotfish*. By Ellen Wittlinger (grade 9+)
- *Freakshow*. By James St. James (grade 9+)

For Children Near/In Puberty

- ***It's Perfectly Normal***. By Robie Harris
- *What's Happening to Me?* By Peter Mayle
- *Me, Myself and I*. By Louside Spilsbury
- ***Growing Up Inside and Out***. By Kira Vermond
- ***Hair, There and Everywhere***. By Jacqui Bailey
- ***Sex, Puberty and All That Stuff***. By Jacqui Bailey
- ***Will Puberty Last My Whole Life?*** By Julie Metzger and Robert Lehman
- *Usborne Facts of Life Growing Up*. By Susan Meredith
- *On Your Mark, Get Set Grow* By Lynda Madaras (for younger boys – early tween age)
- *Ready, Set, Grow* By Lynda Madaras (for younger girls –early tween age)
- *What's Happening to My Body* book for boys. By Lynda Madaras
- *What's Happening to My Body* book for girls. By Lynda Madaras
- *Puberty Boy*. By Geoff Price
- *Puberty Girl*. By Shushann Movsessian
- *Girl to Girl* By Sarah O'Leary Burningham
- *What's Happening to Me? Usborne Books (Boys Edition – Alex Firth Edition – Susan Meredith)*
- *The Boy's Body Book*. By Kelli Dunham
- *The Girl's Body Book*. By Kelli Dunham

ISHS encourages each family to review materials for appropriateness for their own family's values, beliefs, and situation.

Girls

For Older Youth

- ***S.E.X. 2nd Edition*** By Heather Corrina
- *100 QUESTIONS you'd never ask your parents*. By Elisabeth Henderson & Nancy Armstrong
- ***doing it right*** By Bronwen Pades
- *Virgin Sex for Girls. And Virgin Sex for Boys*. By Dr. Darcy Luadzers
- *The Little Black Book for Girlz*. St. Stephen's Community House
- *The Little Black Book for Boyz*. St. Stephen's Community House
- *Queer – The Ultimate LGBT Guide for Teens*. By Kathy Belge and Marke Bieschke
- ***What if? Answers to Questions about what it means to be Gay and Lesbian***. By Eric Marcus
- ***Not Your Mother's Meatloaf: A Sex Education Comic Book***: Saiya Miller & Liza Riley, editors.

For Families with Children with Learning Challenges

An excellent lending library is available through the Sunny Hill Health Centre in Vancouver. Visit this link to search resources by specific inquiries:

https://libraries.phsa.ca/fsrc/list?q=topic_facet%3A%22Sexual%20Health%22&p=1

Jennifer Gibson, MA

Coordinator of Community Education Services

250-592-3479 x204

educator@islandsexualhealth.org

www.islandsexualhealth.org

WEBSITES

For anyone talking to children & youth about Sexuality

Island Sexual Health

Information for parents & teens about sexual health. Includes tips for talking about sexuality, information on anatomy, birth control, STIs, local resources, links, and more.

www.islandsexualhealth.org

Beyond the Talk

A comprehensive Victoria based sexual health website for youth and their allies hosted by Island Sexual Health.

www.beyondthetalk.ca

Sexuality and U

Society of Obstetricians & Gynaecologists of Canada provides information for parents, teens, and professionals about sexuality education. Site features comprehensive information including Canadian statistics, child sexual development, sexual diversity, and links.

www.sexualityandu.ca

Amaze

AMAZE is a collaboration between experts in the field of sex education—Advocates for Youth, Answer and Youth Tech Health. Based in the US, Amaze is an online sex education resource for 10-to 14-year-olds.

www.amaze.org

Planetahead

On PlanetAhead, you can find information on Relationships, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI), HIV, Pregnancy, Contraceptives, and how to reduce physical, mental, and emotional risks

www.planetahead.ca

Smart Sex Resource

A comprehensive website that provides local, relevant sexual health information and services for all ages in BC. This website is a program of the BCCDC.

www.smartsexresource.com



Youth Native Sexual Health Network

YNSHN is an organization by and for Indigenous youth that works across issues of sexual and reproductive health, rights and justice through US and Canada.

www.nativeyouthsexualhealth.com

Sunny Hill Health Centre

Sunny Hill Education Resource Centre (SHERC) houses a unique collection of books, videos, journals, board games, curricula and various educational props and materials designed for children with disabilities and their families.

https://libraries.phsa.ca/fsrclist?q=topic_facet%3A%22Sexual%20Health%22&p=1

Outproud

Information for gay, lesbian, bisexual, questioning, and transgender youth

www.outproud.org

Options For Sexual Health

A comprehensive website that includes detailed sexual health information, clinical resources, and contacts throughout BC

www.optionsforsexualhealth.org

Sex, etc.

Information, advice, and resources by teens for teens (and parents too!)

www.sexetc.org

Scarleteen

Advice, articles, and information addressing sexuality and sexual health issues for adolescents and parents

www.scarleteen.com



250-592-3479
islandsexualhealth.org
beyondthetalk.ca
educator@islandsexualhealth.org
©Island Sexual Health, 2016