

TAKE THIS LEAFLET WITH YOU & READ WHEN YOU HAVE TIME

ARE YOU A YOUNG PERSON?

THE DIVERSITY OF SEXUAL THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS DURING ADOLESCENCE IS COMMON.

SOMETIMES YOUR DEVELOPING SEXUALITY MAY CONFUSE OR CONCERN YOU AND THEN IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO TALK WITH AN TRUSTED ADULT.

REMEMBER – YOU ARE NOT ALONE!



Sexuality is a core dimension of being human throughout the lifespan

- Young people typically begin to develop sexual interests in others in and around the pubescent phases, and some might experience sexual urges or interests even earlier.
- Having a sexual interest in your peers when growing up is entirely normal. Adolescence involves the self-discovery and contemplation of various aspects of sexuality.
- Some young people may recognise an interest in younger people in themselves. Thinking about various aspects related to sexuality often does not imply that the thoughts are permanent or that the thoughts would ever translate into action.

A young person's sexual thoughts towards children can be related to a wide range of factors. Through appropriate support, you can explore your developing sexuality with an trusted adult and increase your understanding of yourself.

Social life

Some young people may face challenges in peer relationships for various reasons, which can sometimes make it more comfortable or easier for them to interact with younger children. It's perfectly normal for young individuals to have friends of different ages; there's nothing wrong with that. However, when it comes to dating or having sexual partners who are significantly younger, it's important to remember that due to the age difference, engaging in sexual activity could be illegal.

The changes of puberty

Hormonal changes during puberty can temporarily intensify your sexual drive. This is completely normal, and sometimes a young person may notice sexual attraction emerging in everyday situations where significantly younger children are present. In such cases, it is important to respect both one's own and other people's boundaries.

Mental health

Some mental health challenges and behavioral traits may, at times, involve sexual thoughts towards children. These could include i.e compulsive thoughts, and difficulties to understand causes of own sexual actions.

WHY SEXUAL EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT?



EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Knowing about healthy relationships and boundaries promotes your emotional well-being by helping you establish and maintain positive connections with others.

PREVENTION OF HARM

Education can help you understand the importance of respecting your own and other people's boundaries and consent, reducing the risk of engaging in harmful behaviour.

EMPOWERMENT

Sexual education empowers you to make informed decisions about your own body and relationships, giving you the tools to advocate for your own boundaries and well-being.

PREVENTION OF VICTIMISATION

By knowing about inappropriate behaviour towards children, we can reduce the likelihood that you would become victim yourself or would inadvertently participate in harmful actions.

LEGAL CONSEQUENCES

You should be aware that sexual actions involving children significantly younger than you might be illegal and can lead to severe legal consequences.

WHAT IF YOU HAVE SEXUAL THOUGHTS TOWARDS YOUNGER CHILDREN?

The evolving sexuality

It is important to understand that having occasional sexual thoughts and feelings about children as a young person can be a natural part of sexual development.

Sharing your worries

If thoughts and feelings are becoming more permanent or you are yourself worried about them, it is important to talk with trusted adult.

Trusted adult

A trusted adult can be a parent, guardian, teacher, school counsellor, youth worker or another trustworthy adult. It can be challenging to discuss these thoughts, but getting guidance and support may help you.

Thoughts and feelings are not illegal

Denying or ignoring thoughts and feelings will not make them go away. It is good to remember that acting upon your sexual thoughts and feelings might be illegal.

You can control your behavior

You can't control sexual feelings and thoughts towards children, but you can learn to control your behavior so that thoughts and feelings never translate into sexual actions. It's possible to live a good life with these thoughts and feelings.

Seek help

If you think that there is a possibility that you may act on your thoughts and feelings, it's important to seek help to support your life management skills.



SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE

European
Child Helplines
p. 116 111



Save the Children



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