

# Sexual behaviours of children aged 0 - 4 years: Infant, toddler and pre-school

## Very concerning sexual behaviours

- Touching or rubbing themselves to the exclusion of normal childhood activities; hurting their own genitals by rubbing or touching.
- Simulating sex with other children, with or without clothes on.
- Oral sex.
- Sexual play involving forceful anal or vaginal penetration with objects.

## Concerning sexual behaviours

- Persistent masturbation that does not cease when told to stop.
- Forcing another child to engage in sexual play.
- Sexualising play with dolls such as 'humping' a teddy bear.
- Touching the private parts of adults not known to the child.
- Chronic peeping behaviour.

## Age appropriate sexual behaviours

- Touching or rubbing their own genitals.
- Enjoying being nude.
- Showing others their genitals.
- Playing doctors and nurses.
- Playing mummies and daddies.
- Touching or looking at the private parts of other children or familiar adults
- Using slang words/dirty language for bathroom and sexual functions, talking about 'sex'.

\* Some age appropriate behaviours may still need addressing and discouraging.