Children at this age may:
- Explore body parts.
- Experience genital pleasure.
- Learn expected behaviors for boys and girls.

Questions that 3-4 year-olds may ask include:
- Where do babies come from?
- Will I have breasts or a penis when I grow up?
- How come you have a penis or breasts and I don’t?
- Why do boys stand up to go to the bathroom?
- What is a tampon for?
- How does a baby get into or out of its mother?

This handout was developed with information from Teach & Talk: The Subject is Sex by Wilson, Quackenbush & Kane; along with information from Advocates for Youth website: www.advocatesforyouth.org/storage/adfy/documents/growth-and-development-ages-18-and-over.pdf
Children at this age may:
- Begin puberty (including menstruation and wet dreams).
- Become more modest and desire privacy.
- Begin experiencing mood swings.
- Feel awkward and wonder “Am I normal?”
- Develop romantic crushes on friends, older teens, celebrities, or sometimes teachers or counselors. Some may even have romantic and sexual fantasies.
- May question whether they are gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgender.
- Continue to socialize mainly with same-gender friends.
- Masturbate to orgasm.
- Be strongly influenced by peers, but parents remain the main source of values.

Questions that 9–12 year-olds may ask include:
- Will I develop breasts or grow tall like my friends?
- How does someone “have sex?”
- Why do girls have a period?
- What is a wet dream?
- What are testicles for?
- How can a baby live inside its mother?

Teens at this age may:
- Express their desire to be more independent.
- Look for ways to express their identity (i.e., clothing, behavior, etc.).
- Participate in risk taking and experimentation.
- Face decisions about sex and drugs.
- Initiate sexual activity.
- Become involved in a “serious” relationship.
- May “come out” if they are gay, lesbian, or bisexual, regardless of sexual behavior or experience.

Questions that 13–18 year-olds may ask include:
- How old were you when you started having sex?
- Did you have a lot of friends at my age?
- What is oral/anal sex?
- How do gay people have sex?
- Did you fall in love at my age?
- How did you know when you were in love?
- How will I know if I’m gay, lesbian, bisexual and/or transgender?

Young adults may:
- Take on adult roles and responsibilities.
- Move into adult relationships with their parents.
- Complete the process of physical maturation.
- Understand abstract concepts and be aware of consequences.
- Enter into intimate sexual and emotional relationships.

Questions that 19–24 year-olds may ask include:
- I want to make sure I am taking all the right steps to protect my health. Where do I start?
- Am I ready for a committed relationship?
- How do I talk to my partner about STIs?
- How often should I go to the doctor?
- What should I do if I’ve had unprotected sex?
- How do I balance my relationship with all my other responsibilities?