Sexuality Issues in Girls with ASD

Empowering Women and Girls with Autism

- Girls with ASD mature physically and sexually according to normal developmental stages.
- Parents’ concern about growing sexual behavior in children.
- Generally not accompanied by adequate social maturity.
- Inappropriate touching or talking about sex in public.
- Having their behaviors being misinterpreted.
- Being victimized by others or being potential target of sexual abuse.
- Menstrual hygiene.

Information about body changes in puberty is best given in a visual way.

- Picture card showing pubertal changes in female.
- Educating them about private parts.

Menstruation issues

- Pre Menstrual Syndrome
- Hygiene
- Stress
- Anxiety
- Mood Swings
- Lack of Awareness/Ignorance
- Social Stigma

Medical and surgical options are available for suppression of menstruation in severely autistic kids.

Educate her for periods

- Explain to her what is happening to her body, that it is normal and natural and that she is healthy and growing into a mature woman.

To catch the blood and prevent stains on her clothes, a girl can wear a pad, which sticks to her underwear, or a tampon, which is inserted into the vagina.
**Masturbation**

- 75% of people with ASD display some kind of sexual behaviour and most masturbate.
- Lack of alternative outlets for sexual urges and a tendency for self-stimulatory behaviour results in frequent masturbation.

**When becomes a concern**

- Masturbating for long periods or excessively.
- Masturbating inappropriately (such as in public areas) or using inappropriate objects or means.
- Becoming frustrated or aggressive during or after masturbating.
- Masturbates to the point of self-injury.

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**Inappropriate sexual behavior in children with ASD**

- Touching private body parts.
- Removing clothes in public.
- Masturbating in public areas.
- Touching others inappropriately.
- Discussing inappropriate sexual subjects.
- Looking up shorts, skirts, dresses or down shirts.
- Obscene gestures.
- Non-consensual hugging.
- Inappropriate remarks and suggestions that have sexual connotations.
- Echocholias repetition of sexual terms.
- Perserveration on sexual topics.

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**Tips for teaching girls about good touch and bad touch**

1. Give them ownership of their body.
2. Use appropriate language.
4. Explain what safe touch is.
5. Empower them to say no.
6. Use relevant books.
7. Help your child trust her feelings.
8. Don’t force affection.
9. Practice or role play.

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**For queries contact**

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