

Using the traffic light
framework to identify sexual
behaviours



As You Are
Therapies

What do they mean?

Red light behaviours

Behaviours that can cause harm because they are:

- Excessive or compulsive (e.g. unable to be redirected); coercive, forceful, degrading, or threatening
- Kept secret, manipulative, or involve bribery or tricks
- Not age-appropriate or suited to the person's development
- Between children with a large difference in age, ability, or power

Amber light behaviours

Behaviours that cause concern because of:

- How often, how strong, or how long they occur
- Actions or knowledge that don't match the child's age or stage
- Differences in age, size, power, or ability
- Risk to the health and safety of the child or others
- Sudden or unusual changes in the child's behaviour

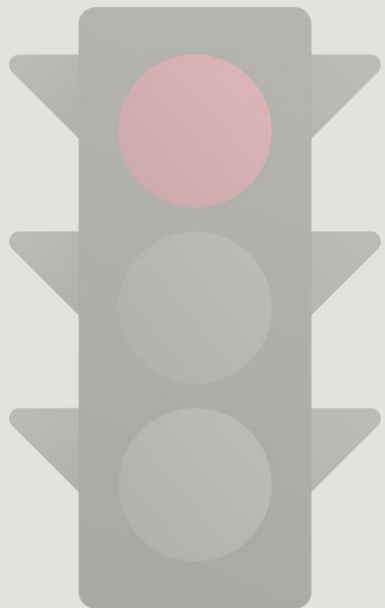
Green light behaviours

Behaviours that are part of normal and healthy development are:

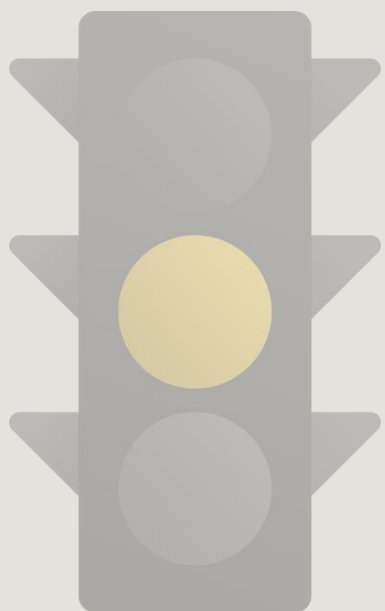
- Playful, curious, light and easy to redirect; enjoyable, mutual, and consensual
- Matched to the child's age and stage
- Happening between children with similar age, size, and abilities
- Focused on learning and discovery, alongside many other interests



Ages 0-4



- Ongoing masturbation that may hurt or be hard to control
- Persistent sexual storylines in talking, art, or play
- Imitating sexual touching or activity
- Repeatedly trying to touch others' private parts
- Forcing peers to take part in sexual acts
- Sexual behaviour between young children that includes objects used for penetration, masturbating another child, or oral sex

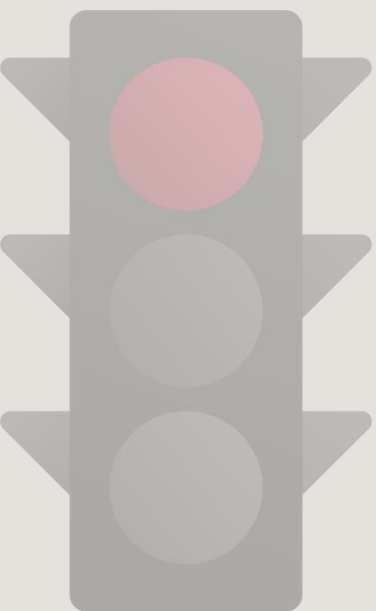


- Choosing masturbation over other activities
- Preoccupation with sexual behaviours
- Regularly attempting to watch others nude, toileting, or being sexual
- Using explicit sexual language, images, or play
- Following others into toilets or bathrooms to look or touch
- Pulling down other children's pants or lifts skirts
- Touching other children's genitals
- Trying to touch adults' breasts, bottoms, or genitals persistently and invasively
- Continuing to touch animals' genitals after being told not to

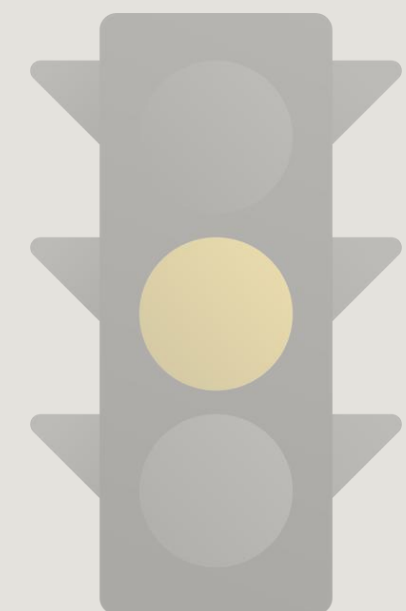


- Comfort being naked
- Private, curious self-touch
- Wanting to learn about body parts and what they do
- Trying to touch familiar children's genitals during play, toileting, or baths
- Pretend games about bodies with familiar children
- Asking about or tries to touch familiar adults' breasts, bottoms, or genitals

Ages 5-9



- Frequent masturbation that causes injury or distress, or seeks an audience
- Persistent sexual bullying (pulling/lifting/removing clothing; sexual threats; explicit notes, drawings, or texts)
- Sexual behaviour with children who are much younger or less able
- Entering sleeping children's rooms to touch or engage in sexual activity
- Simulating or engaging in sexual acts (oral sex or intercourse)
- Persistent sexual activity with animals
- Using phones or the internet to share identifying details or sexual images

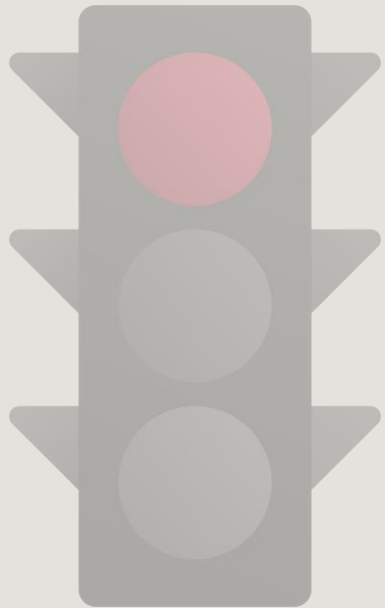


- Prioritising masturbation over other activities, including in public or with others, even causing self-harm
- Using explicit sexual language, images, or play
- Repeating sexual questions after clear answers
- Is often nude or exposes private parts in public
- Watching or following others to look at or touch them
- Pulling down peers' pants or lifts skirts
- Acting out flirting that is too mature for their age with peers or adults
- Touching another child or an animal's genitals after being told not to
- Using a phone or online chats with known or unknown people and giving identifying details

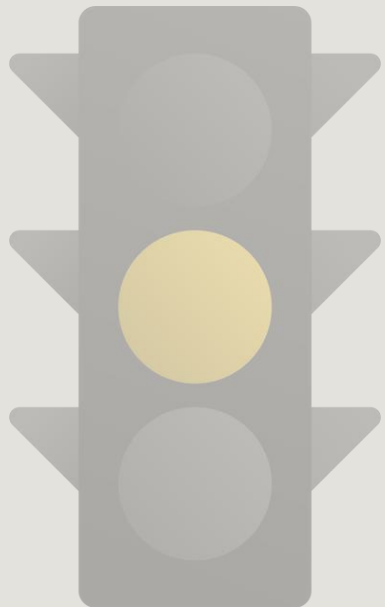


- Increased sense of privacy about bodies
- Private, curious self-touch
- Wanting to learn about body parts and what they do
- Wanting to learn about sexuality, babies, gender, relationships, sex
- Using slang or curse words for sexual body parts and acts
- Engaging with known peers using mobile phones

Ages 10-13



- Compulsive masturbation that includes self-harm or seeks an audience
- Grooming vulnerable people for sexual contact (gifts, lies, or flattery)
- Forcing or coercing someone into sexual activity
- Oral sex or intercourse with a person of a different age, development level, or peer group
- On purpose sharing sexual images of self or someone else
- Setting up a face-to-face meetings with someone met online
- Sexual contact with animals
- Trading sexual activity for money or goods
- Possessing, viewing, or sending child sexual abuse material



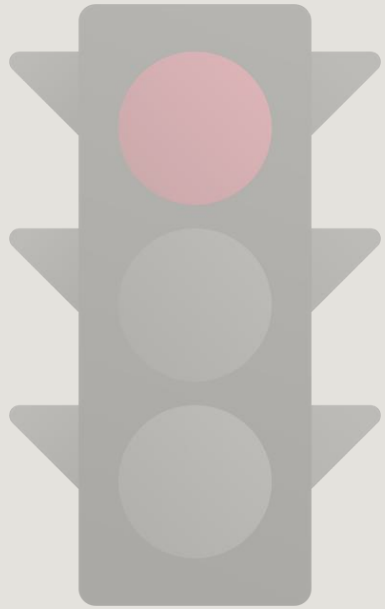
- Prioritising masturbation over other activities, including in public or with others, even causing self-harm
- Using explicit sexual language, images, or play
- Accessing movies, games, websites that are sexual in content and restricted by age
- Changes in interactions with others including flirting behaviour and engaging in relationships with older children or adults over peers
- Engaging in behaviours such as kissing or mutual masturbation with lesser known peers
- Engaging in oral sex or intercourse with a similarly aged, known peer
- Using a phone or online chats with unknown people and gives identifying details



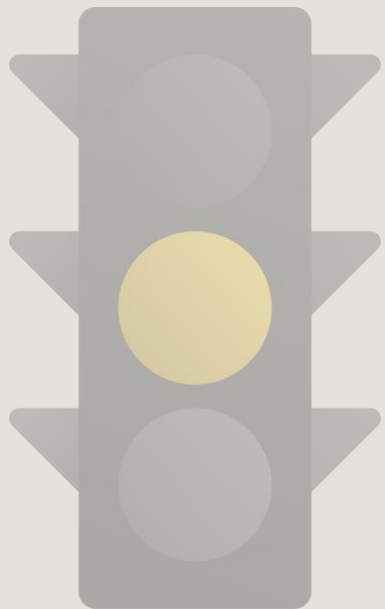
- Increased sense of privacy about bodies
- Private masturbation
- Wanting to learn about sexuality
- Using sexual language
- Interest in engaging in having a boyfriend/girlfriend
- Engaging in hugging, kissing and touching same age, known peers
- Occasional playful flashing/mooning behaviours with same age, known peers
- Engaging with known peers using mobile phones



Ages 14-17



- Compulsive masturbation that includes self-harm or seeks an audience
- Preoccupation with sexually aggressive and/or illegal pornography
- Using grooming techniques (gifts, lies, manipulation) to gain sexual contact
- Oral sex or intercourse with a person of a different age or development level
- Purposely sharing sexual images of someone else without their permission
- Setting up a face-to-face meeting with someone met online
- Sexual contact with animals
- Trading sexual activity for money or goods
- Forcing or coercing sexual contact
- Possessing, viewing, or sending child sexual abuse material



- Preoccupation with sex starts to disrupt daily life
- Intentionally watching others during sexual activity or nudity
- Sharing explicit messages, images, or actions that feel obscene or sexually threatening
- Repeatedly exposing genitals in public (for example, flashing)
- Risky sexual choices e.g. no contraception, intoxication, promiscuity
- Oral sex or intercourse with someone more than two years older or at a different stage of development
- Setting up meetings with an online contact, even if a peer or known adult is present
- Using a phone or the internet to send or receive sexual images with permission



- Need for privacy
- Private masturbation
- Wants to learn about sexuality
- Engaging with content for sexual arousal (e.g. music, movies, clips)
- Interest in engaging in a romantic relationship
- Engaging in sexual activity with same age, known peer
- Engaging with known peers using mobile phones

