



Safeguarding
Young People in Care

Sexual Development From Child to Adult

by Bente Møller-Jensen

Development of Sexuality and the Pedagogical Challenge



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HENRI MATISSE
The Joy of Life, 1906

The Goal of Today





Sigmund Freud 1856-1939

The Cornerstone: The ability and the potential to become a sexual creature is innate

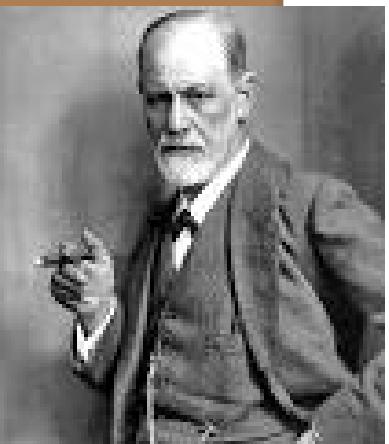
- Infantile sexuality differs from adult sexuality in many ways

The unfolding and expression of sexuality depend on a number of factors e.g.:

- The child's personality
- The experience that the child will have of love, trust and physical contact with its closest caregivers

The child's sexuality is polymorphic perverse – it may develop into any direction! The perversity is the starting point for a normal psychosexual development.

The sexual drive = libido, is at the beginning associated with sensitive and lustful areas on the body





Libido – a Definition

1. Group or individual, 20 min.
 2. Visit Encyclopædia Britannica (www.britannica.com) and look up the term 'libido'.
 3. Prepare a definition of the term that you can use in your pedagogical work with regard to children's, adolescents' and adults' development of a healthy sexuality.
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- <https://www.britannica.com/science/libido>

The Child's Psychosexual Development	Characteristics of the Four Stages
The Oral Stage 0-1½ Years stimulation of the oral mucosa, nutrient uptake	Erogenous zone: the mouth – the feeling of pleasure is satisfied when the child is sucking. Oral sadism: teething => weaning from the breast => state of stress => biting. Oral characteristics: greediness, insatiability, depression as well as a search for comfort and stimulation through candy, food, cigarettes etc.
The Anal Stage 1½-3 Years pleasure is associated with faeces	Erogenous zone: anus => solid faeces => the feeling of pleasure is satisfied when defecating and holding back faeces => proud of the performance on the pot. Anal characteristics: over-meticulousness, perfectionism or messy and chaotic. Social character: the virtues of the capitalist society are anal.
The Phallic Stage 3-5 Years pleasure is associated with genitals and urination	Erogenous zone: the genitals, the feeling of pleasure is satisfied when masturbating, curious and inquisitive about the function. The Oedipus Complex: the boy, castration anxiety. Identification with a parent of the same gender. The girl: penis envy / castration complex.
The Latency Period from 6-8 Years to Puberty	A latent libido, finds its final expression in the adult sexuality

Relation and Sexuality

- The relational patterns that are founded in the early childhood and shaped during puberty are essential to the way the adult person is coping with his or her close – and sexual – relationships.
- Sexuality is closely associated with our bodies and senses, and it reminds us about our earliest relations
 - Our experiences are registered and stored in the body
 - The child's sexual bond with caregivers influence its sexuality as an adolescent and adult.

The relational system and the sexual development are closely related:

- Experiences with a safe / unsafe relation is reflected in the way we develop our sexuality
- An unsafe type of relational pattern may predispose the person to a transgressive behaviour – the adolescent or the adult will try to compensate for the early lack of intimacy.



Sexual Development from Infant to Schoolchild

- **The Infant and the Nursery Child:**

Touching is fundamental for well-being and development. The child is sensual. The genitals may react: The boy may get erection, the girls vagina may become moist - a form of reaction from the central nervous system?

- **The Kindergarten Child and the Small Schoolchild:**

Has discovered that there is a difference between boys and girls and is interested in how it differentiates itself from its mother and father. They are interested in and open towards their bodies and the feelings in the genitals – the child experiences pleasure, e.g. through masturbation and may get confused about its the reaction of the body.
They are unspecific when it comes to bodily sensations.

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5 Typical Play Activities with a Sexual Aspect

- Through play activities, children express acts with associations to sexuality (this is not conscious sexuality until puberty)
 - 1) Doctor games which serve as a setting where the children can get undressed and examine their bodies.
 - 2) Exposure where the children pull down their pants and show themselves to each other, often accompanied by loud giggling.
 - 3) Kissing games where the children kiss each other, e.g. while hiding in a play house or a cave.
 - 4) Role playing where the children practice the roles of the adults, e.g. parents who must 'sleep' with each other before a baby is born.
 - 5) Naughty songs and obscene expressions.
- Source: "Børns seksuelle lege" by Dorthe Lippert in "Psyke & Logos"

Sexual Play Activities are Okay when



- ✓ The children who are participating have the same age, status and intellect and are typically friends who will normally play together.
- ✓ The play activity is voluntary for all children and contributes to the 'design' and course of the play activity.
- ✓ The play activity takes place in a happy, spontaneous and curious atmosphere.
- ✓ The children are discrete about the play activity in relation to adults without being overwhelmed by fear or anger if an adult interrupts.
- Source: "Må vi lege doktor?" by Anna Louise Stevnhøj

Sexual Development from Schoolchild to Puberty



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- Curious, but the sexual activities are not as important as before
- Are very much aware of hiding their activities from the adults.
- It may be trendy to talk about sex and use naughty words
- As they grow, they will become more aware of their sexual thoughts, feelings and sensations.
- The unconscious sexuality becomes conscious – but it is still very immature
- During pre-puberty, they are starting courting and to have crushes – and a nervousness that their sexual fantasies and dreams are not 'normal'

Group work



- **Pedagogical work with the development of a healthy sexuality**
- **Purpose:** To be able to identify an issue when working with an individual's development of a healthy sexuality as well as being able to describe and analyse this issue through the selection of a theory.

- I. Which issues with regard to the development of a healthy sexuality (0 years to puberty) can you identify in relation to the following four factors?:
 - a. individual
 - b. social
 - c. institutional and
 - d. cultural factors
- II. Choose an issue and an age group / a target group – describe pedagogical activities / environments (at least one) which you will plan and implement to promote a healthy sexual development?
- III. Selection of theory and empirical data. Choose at least two theoretical texts, and if you have empirical data from an activity in practice, you can include this as well. Describe for each choice what the theory consists of, as well as how and why it may be used to examine your issue
- IV. Analysis of the issue: Prepare a strategy for the analysis = divide the issue into smaller parts which may be analysed by using theory and empirical data to examine the issue.
- V. Send your text in a Word document to Bente: bmj@pha.dk
- VI. Presentations and common reflections in relation to the issue and the analysis of it.



Sources

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