

## CHECKLIST FOR CATHOLIC PARENTS

# What Older Children Should Know About Human Sexuality

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Use this checklist to determine if your son or daughter knows what a Catholic child should know about human sexuality. The checklist is based on guidelines for children ages 7-11 suggested by the Committee on Education of the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops and published in *Human Sexuality--A Catholic Perspective for Education and Lifelong Learning* [USCC, 1990].

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*Because older children can experience the life-enriching qualities of belonging to a loving Christian community of family and church, parents and guardians need to support and create environments in which children can grow. At this stage in a child's development, it is important to:*

- |   | Yes..... | No |
|---|----------|----|
| 1.1. provide opportunities for families to learn, pray and socialize.   | — — —    |    |
| 1.2. help children recognize how love creates life and helps it grow.   | — — —    |    |
| 1.3. affirm human relationships that are faithful and trusting, especially those of parents and family members. | — — —    |    |
| 1.4. invite adults who are good role models to share their time and gifts with children.                        | — — —    |    |

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*Because older children are still greatly influenced by their parents and families, parents and guardians need to understand and accept their responsibility as primary educators of their children. At this stage in a child's development, it is important to:*

- |   | Yes..... | No |
|---|----------|----|
| 2.1. be involved in planning and evaluating programs in human sexuality.  | — — —    |    |
| 2.2. learn how to communicate effectively with their children, especially about issues involving human sexuality. | — — —    |    |
| 2.3. take advantage of opportunities for intergenerational experience and learning.                               | — — —    |    |

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*Because older children are trying to understand their own growth in sexuality, parents and guardians need to provide opportunities for children to learn about and respond to this growth. At this stage in a child's development, it is important to:*

- |  | Yes..... | No |
|--|----------|----|
| 3.1. teach children about their developing bodies and help them understand basic physiological and biological processes. | — — —    |    |
| 3.2. help children develop habits of caring for the body.  | — — —    |    |
| 3.3. help children understand the importance of modesty, self-discipline, and the need for privacy.                      | — — —    |    |

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*Because older children are conscious of growing friendships in their lives at this age, parents and guardians need to affirm children as they experience new feelings and encourage them to appreciate and deal with these feelings. At this stage in a child's development, it is important to:*

- |   | Yes..... | No |
|---|----------|----|
| 4.1. help children relate to persons of the same and opposite sex                                     | — — —    |    |
| 4.2. teach skills of honest communication, listening, sharing, forgiving and trusting.                | — — —    |    |
| 4.3. affirm the equality of men and women in word, attitude, and action.                              | — — —    |    |
| 4.4. help children become more conscious of barriers in relationships, such as cultural stereotyping. | — — —    |    |

(Continue on the back side)

## What Older Children Should Know About Human Sexuality

*Because older children have an increasing understanding of what is right and wrong, parents and guardians need to help children recognize that some behavior is harmful and unacceptable to growth in relationships, and to realize their own goodness as God intends them to be. At this stage in a child's development, it is important to:*

- |  | Yes..... | No |
|--|----------|----|
| 5.1. assist children to recognize that they are loved and are able to love others.                     | —        | —  |
| 5.2. enable children to reflect on their experiences of being loved by family and friends.             | —        | —  |
| 5.3. help children identify genuine and appropriate expressions of love.                               | —        | —  |
| 5.4. instruct children on how to express love for others in a genuine and appropriate way.             | —        | —  |
| 5.5. teach children how to accept and love others who are different from themselves.                   | —        | —  |
| 5.6. enable children to celebrate forgiveness in the sacrament of Reconciliation and in everyday life. | —        | —  |



*Because older children have a growing sense of God and Church. Parents and guardians need to help children integrate their beliefs and values into their ongoing education in human sexuality. At this stage in a child's development, it is important to:*

- |   | Yes..... | No |
|---|----------|----|
| 6.1. connect family faith life with more formal instruction in faith.       | —        | —  |
| 6.2. teach children to pray based on their life experience.                 | —        | —  |
| 6.3. help children understand their growing relationship with God.          | —        | —  |
| 6.4. prepare children for the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation.   | —        | —  |
| 6.5. familiarize children with Scripture and how it applies to their lives. | —        | —  |



*Because older children are influenced by television, videos and other media, parents and guardians must learn how to talk with their children about the values and attitudes that the media portrays. At this stage in a child's development, it is important to address such issues as:*

- |   | Yes..... | No |
|---|----------|----|
| 7.1. sexist attitudes.                                      | —        | —  |
| 7.2. portrayal of sex as a commodity.                       | —        | —  |
| 7.3. sexually transmitted diseases (STDs).                  | —        | —  |
| 7.4. sexual abuse of children and adults.                   | —        | —  |
| 7.5. sexual orientation.                                    | —        | —  |
| 7.6. sexual role models.                                    | —        | —  |
| 7.7. family role models                                     | —        | —  |
| 7.8. experiences of brokenness, separation, death and loss. | —        | —  |