

What Are Kids Thinking These Days?

Between Ages 9-12

Kids are mainly influenced by their parents and other adults. Their friends are mostly the same age and the same sex they are. They may begin to talk about members of the opposite sex; they may hold hands, but rarely even kiss. At this age many admit that they've experienced peer pressure to become sexually active but almost all say that they do not want to have sexual intercourse.

About Age 12

Kids experience tremendous changes in their personal lives. What influenced them and whom they listen to about sensitive issues may begin to change.

Between Ages 12-15

During this period of development, kids are less influenced by their parents and other adults. They are much more heavily influenced by their peers and the media. At this age they also become much more interested in members of the opposite sex. Alarming numbers are already engaging in sexual activity, and many more are being tempted or pressured to do so.

What this means for parents:

Even though you think your child may be too young to be even interested in sex, it's important to talk to them early on, particularly before the age of 12. And remember all kids are different. There are basic patterns for kids' development but the only way to be completely sure what your child is thinking is to talk to him or her directly. That's the best place to start to improve communications with your child.