**The Media and Sexuality**

**Children and Sexuality**

As a parent, it is important to control what children consume from the media. The media continues to expose young people to content that may be harmful to their development. An important concern is the overwhelming sexual content in the media today. Children have different cognitive ability at different ages (Agarwal & Dhanasekaran, 2012).

**Age 5**

At age 5, children are in a stage of curiosity and have difficulty distinguishing reality from fantasy (Agarwal & Dhanasekaran, 2012). At this age it is best to limit the access to television media to less than 2 hours a day which should be under supervision. At the stage, basic manners about covering their private parts and not touching them in public will be a good conversation. Also, answering any questions they have regarding content they see on the television or from friends.

**Age 10**

At this stage children are going into puberty. It is still best to limit television time and should be under supervision. Most children will have some knowledge about sex from media and friends (Agarwal & Dhanasekaran, 2012). More important the conversation should revolve around the body changes and reassure it is normal. Also, make sure they understand the emotional and physical risk of engaging in sex. It is appropriate to talk about pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections.

**Age 15**

Teenage years are challenging to most children due to the emotional and physical changes (Agarwal & Dhanasekaran, 2012). At this age, talk to children about the dangers of consuming a lot of television. One may not have time to restrict the media time they have. Ensure they understand that the world on the media is not the same as the real world and they should not feel pressured to engage in sex. Ensure they view sex more in the sense of feeling and relationship. Also, make sure they have knowledge on contraceptives and how to access them.

**References**

(Agarwal & Dhanasekaran, 2012)

Agarwal, V., & Dhanasekaran, S. (2012). Harmful Effects of Media on Children and Adolescents. *Journal Of Indian Association For Child And Adolescent Mental Health*, *8*(2), 38-45.