



Podcast transcript

Episode 8 :Masturbation

- Anne: [00:01](#) This podcast contains discussion about adult topics. Use your judgment if there are little ears around. Welcome to Doing It. This is a podcast made by the Family Planning Victoria Schools Education Team. Doing It, because it's a question young people often ask us in class, about how to do it. And, parents and carers often ask us this as well, because they want to know how to do it, as in having these conversations with their young people.
- Anne: [00:28](#) My name is Anne, and I'm part of the Family Planning Victoria Schools Education Team. We go to schools and run classes for all year levels on bodies, growing up, puberty, sex, reproduction and relationships.
- Anne: [00:39](#) This podcast is for parents and carers of school age children, so we can share what goes on in our Relationships and Sexuality education class, and help support these sorts of conversations at home.
- Anne: [00:52](#) Today's episode is about masturbation.
- Anne: [00:56](#) Masturbation is a person touching their own body, usually around the genitals, for their own sexual pleasure. This is something that young people often have some questions around. Adults have really differing views on what's acceptable for themselves, and for their children.
- Anne: [01:12](#) When we talk about bodies in this podcast, we're going to talk about male and female bodies. It's important to say at the start that not everybody falls neatly into these categories. So the details of this information might not be relevant for all.
- Anne: [01:28](#) Seeing as masturbation is something that is usually done alone, I thought I would do today's podcast on my own. I'm gonna

interview myself. So, if you can imagine me in a small private room in my workplace with a do not disturb sign on the door, talking quietly into a microphone about masturbation, you get an idea of how weird my job can get sometimes.

- Anne: [01:51](#) So, my first question to myself is, "What is masturbation?"
- Anne: [01:57](#) I would usually say in class, that masturbation is a person touching their own body for their own sexual pleasure. Even young people explore touching their own genitals because it feels nice for them, or they're curious about their body. Younger children might need to be reminded that masturbation is a private activity, so any touching of genitals or private body parts should be done in a private place.
- Anne: [02:21](#) My next question to myself. "At what age do we start talking about masturbation in class?"
- Anne: [02:26](#) We often raise this as something that is a common part of growing up. So it goes along with classes about puberty. We might start talking about puberty from around grade three or four. When masturbation is talked about in class it's always discussed as a person's choice, like anything to do with their body. It's normal if someone does this, and it's normal if someone doesn't. If someone wants to masturbate, or touch their own private body parts or genitals, it has to happen in a private place.
- Anne: [02:56](#) "What are some myths about masturbation?"
- Anne: [02:59](#) The biggest myth I've come across, that I think is the opinion of a lot of people, is that masturbation is only for boys. This isn't true. Girls are often interested to know that masturbation for them might mean touching their area around the vulva or the clitoris, for boys it means touching the area around the penis and the scrotum.
- Anne: [03:23](#) Another myth that I've been asked about in, by boys in a high school, is that if a man masturbates too much, he will use up all his sperm. This isn't true. Once someone starts making sperm, he makes millions of sperm every day. So, he doesn't run out, he makes it all the time. We used to hear myths around boys getting hairy hands or going blind if they masturbated too much. I don't hear these too much from students anymore, so I'm not sure if they're that prevalent in schools.

- Anne: [03:56](#) One question we get which is quite common is, "Is masturbation good for you?"
- Anne: [04:03](#) To say yes to that question implies that it's bad not to masturbate which isn't true either. It's fine if someone does, it's fine if someone doesn't. There are some noted benefits to masturbation. The main one being is that if someone is familiar with what makes them feel good in their own body, they are perhaps more likely to be able to communicate with a sexual partner.
- Anne: [04:24](#) Next question. "What sort of opinions or values exist about masturbation?"
- Anne: [04:31](#) I've heard a lot of opinions about children and masturbation from adults. I've had a parent tell me that in order to discourage her son from touching his own body, they told him that he would turn into a girl if he kept touching his penis. I've heard people that are really big advocates of children understanding their own body and what makes their body feel good. And I think maybe masturbation classes might be taught in high schools. I'm sure lots of people don't think too much about it.
- Anne: [05:04](#) Next question. "Do pornography and masturbation always go together?"
- Anne: [05:10](#) No. If a child is touching their own body because it feels nice to them then it's not going to be linked to viewing pornography. It's really an adult idea or concept of joining those two things together. A person doesn't require pornography to be able to masturbate. And the ideas that make someone feel sexy can be really different from person to person. If a young adult is learning about sex and watching pornography while masturbating there are a few things to be aware of. A developing brain might be making connections between pornography and the sexy feelings in their body. Then in real life a sexual experience might be really difficult to find that connection to feeling sexy. So a young person might think they're becoming more educated in sex and sexy feelings and the truth is they might be doing the opposite.
- Anne: [05:58](#) Next question. "What sorts of things might adults say to their children about masturbation?"
- Anne: [06:03](#) Even when grown ups say nothing about private body parts young people get really strong messages that those body parts are not meant to be talked about ever. It's a good idea to share

your values about privacy and bodies remembering that as your child turns into a grown up they might have different values to you. It's a really good idea to make sure your young person knows adult words for private body parts like penis, scrotum, vulva, breasts. This is gonna help them be able to ask questions if they need to.

Anne: [06:34](#) Hopefully that's given you a bit of insight into the sort of things we would say in class. It's been a little bit awkward for me to sit here and answer my own questions. But here's a quick summary.

Anne: [06:45](#) Whatever you think about masturbation is your value and it's a good idea to share that with the young person in your life in and amongst discussions about puberty. Try not to attach shame to a discussion about a person touching their own body. Masturbation has to do with private body parts so it should happen in a private place. Young people living with a disability might need extra direction about which places are private. For resources, Better Health Channel has some information about masturbation. www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au. Amaze.org have a cute video about masturbation as well as a bunch of other resources on YouTube. Books about young people and sexuality or puberty often contain information about masturbation. If they don't it might be a good idea to discuss these also.

Anne: [07:43](#) For more information about Family Planning Victoria you can go to fpv.org.au. Follow us on Instagram, Facebook or Twitter. Please subscribe to the podcast so you don't miss out. And thank you so much for listening. Bye.