

## Socializing Agents of Sexuality: Group of Friends

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### Introduction

At all ages, people are affected by the social group with which they frequently associate and with which they wish to identify. This influence is greater during childhood and the first part of adolescence, which is the time of greatest psychological plasticity. Peer influences on behavior become more important as children get older and have more sustained and close relationships with other children their age. Friendships become more important than they were before and often influence people's behavior and way of thinking. The group can exert a social pressure that can be beneficial or harmful. Friends become advisors and sources of information, replacing parents and teachers in these roles. When interest in social activities begins to develop, peer pressures are strong to perform the traditional sexual role. Then, you have to decide if playing a role that is suitable for one's needs is more important than acceptance by the group of friends or vice versa.

Concerns and problems are shared with the group, and it provides models, lifestyles, including ways of dressing, language, entertainment, etc. Also, many times in order to be accepted into a certain group, you must go through a test or do things to prove that you are worthy of belonging to it. The influence of friends depends partly on the desire to be accepted by the group and partly because they spend more time with their peer group. Likewise, friends

stimulate, inhibit or motivate to make decisions related to sexuality. An example of this is that friends accept the love or lover. Many times, this is the only affective space they have if there is a lack of communication at home, although these groups do not always exert a positive influence. Friends are an important source of exchanging experiences and you almost always go to them to tell them what is happening to you.

In general, it could be said that friends support and amplify the efforts of parents to socialize their children to behave in the ways that society considers proper for each sex. Through the association with their peers, sexually typified responses and characteristics are strengthened, which are finally entrenched because peers reinforce sexually stereotyped behavior patterns and punish what they consider inappropriate responses of a certain sex. The child's repertoire of behaviors specific to his or her sex can be expanded thanks to the fact that peers serve as models for carrying out sexually typified activities, interests, and attitudes that perhaps could not have been acquired at home. In their social activities outside the home, boys commonly associate with boys and girls with girls. It has also been shown that the influence of friends could in some cases counteract the effects of training and identification at home.



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