



Healthy Relationships, Sexuality & Autism

Developed by: Autism Nova Scotia

Public and Private Spaces

Sometimes it can be hard to know the difference between a public and private space. Some behaviours and actions that may be appropriate in a private space are inappropriate and even illegal in a public space.

What are Public Space/Places:

A public space/place is anywhere people are around others, or there is a chance other people could be there. A person can be alone in public space, but it is still a public space.



Examples of public spaces:

- on the bus
- in your car
- at school
- in a public bathroom
- in a public changing room
- at the park
- at a friend's house
- at the movie theatre
- at the beach
- and many more!

What are Private Space/Places:

A private space is a place that you are alone in, that is secure and that there are **no chance** of other people seeing you or entering into that space. Private spaces are typically spaces that are yours, like your room or your bathroom.



Examples of private spaces:

- alone in your bedroom with the door closed, locked and the curtains closed
- alone in your bathroom at your home with the door closed, locked and the curtains closed
- alone in your hotel room with the door closed, locked and the curtains closed

**If you are not sure if a space is public or private,
act as if you are in a public place.**

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References

Autism Nova Scotia. (2019). *Healthy Relationships, Sexuality and Autism Program Curriculum*. Halifax, Canada: Autism Nova Scotia.

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