



BSPED Statement on Paediatric Age Assessment

The BSPED wishes to highlight that it is not possible to accurately assess a child's age based on physical examination or bone age assessment. Children and young people mature at very different rates and an examination can only demonstrate the stage of physical development that child is at, on that day. For example, an 11 year old girl who had an early puberty and has started her periods will be physically indistinguishable from a 15 year old girl who is at the same stage of puberty. The converse is also true – it is not possible to physically differentiate a young person who has delayed puberty from a younger child who is at the same pubertal stage. Bone age X rays will only report the degree of maturity of the bones, which is highly dependent on the child or young person's pubertal stage and physical development. For the same reasons as given above, they cannot be used to accurately age a child or young person.

For these reasons, we do not support the use of physical examination or bone age X ray assessment as tools for age assessment in children and young people.

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