Learning that your child may have been harmed can be a difficult experience for a parent. You may have concerns about your child's safety and well-being and could be grappling with how to understand and respond to what happened.

With a focus on active parent engagement, the Department of Defense has designated the Family Advocacy Program to help support you and your child in moving forward together.

The Family Advocacy Program can connect you to:

- Clinical assessments, counseling and support
- Military Treatment Facility pediatric, family medicine and behavioral health providers
- Child-focused advocacy for parents to walk you through the process and support your next steps
- Education for parents about what sexual behaviors are developmentally appropriate
- Child advocacy centers
- Counseling services and support
- TRICARE services

You can also request support from other Department of Defense programs:

- The Military and Family Life Counseling Program provides short-term, non-medical counseling support at military installations.
- Military OneSource can also refer you to community-based, short-term non-medical counseling.

MILITARY ONESOURCE

To learn about healthy sexual development and find resources for addressing unhealthy behaviors, visit **www.militaryonesource.mil/healthy-sexual-behaviors-in-children**

Responding to Concerning Sexual Behavior

Support for Children and Their Families

This brochure outlines how the Department of Defense provides support to a child who has been impacted by the sexual behavior of another child. It explains the range of services available to you and your child through the military, as well as help available in the civilian community.

If your child is impacted by an incident, here's what happens:

Concerning sexual behavior is referred to the Family Advocacy Program, and parents are notified.

A Family Advocacy Program, or FAP, representative will connect with you to offer you and your child guidance and support for next steps.

Whether the incident happened at a Department of Defense Education Activity school, Child and Youth Program, Child Development Center or elsewhere, FAP coordinates the response.

A multidisciplinary team may be assembled to coordinate services and support.

In addition to FAP, the multidisciplinary team may include the Child and Youth Program, Department of Defense Education Activity schools and the Military Criminal Investigative Organization, or MCIO.

The team reviews the referral and addresses the risk and safety needs of all children involved.

If you or the multidisciplinary team is concerned about the ongoing safety and well-being of your child:

Your FAP representative can work with you to create a plan that works for you and your child.

If you have concerns about your child's reaction to the behavior:

Your representative from FAP can offer you options for information, support and services to help you and your child access the care you need.

If additional action is needed:

If the report involves behavior exhibited by the other child that meets the threshold for an investigation according to local laws, the Military Criminal Investigative Organization or civilian law enforcement agency conducts an investigation, which could include:

- An interview with your child
- A medical assessment
- Interviews with others who may have been involved
- Evidence collection

Remember:

Most children and youth who are impacted by the sexual behavior of another child or youth respond well to informed parent support and evidence-based treatment programs, when warranted. Each child's experience is unique, and your Family Advocacy Program representative will work with you to access the support that is right for you and your child.

When other agencies might be involved

If the behavior occurred in the home, or involved siblings or other related children, the team may be required by law to notify Child Protective Services or the appropriate overseas child welfare agency.

If the behavior creates a risk for the community or co-occurs with child abuse and neglect or domestic abuse, the chain of command is notified.

Your FAP representative, as well as members of the multidisciplinary team, are committed to supporting you and your child throughout this process.