

# How to Address Concerning Sexual Behavior in Children

## Understanding typical childhood behavior

Children begin to develop sexually at an early age, and it can be hard to know which behaviors are typical. If your child exhibits sexual behavior you find concerning, remain calm and redirect them away from the behavior in a nonjudgmental way. Parents and caregivers are the primary agents of change for a child's behavior, and most kids respond well to informed support, guidance and supervision.

## Monitor your child's behavior

Signs that might signal a cause for concern:

- Increase in the frequency or intensity of the concerning behavior
- Reports from friends, neighbors and teachers that the behavior is continuing
- Displays of anger, frustration or hostility when they are redirected from the behavior
- No decrease in the behavior with redirection or if it starts again after stopping for a while
- Hiding the behavior
- Uneasy feelings surrounding behavior

To increase your knowledge base and support your child, access these resources:

- Webinars: <https://oneop.org/series/sexual-behavior-in-children-and-youth-sbcy-series/>

- National Center on the Sexual Behavior of Youth: <https://www.ncsby.org/parents-caregivers>
- Resources for military families: <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/parenting/children-youth-teens/sexual-behavior-in-children-and-youth-toolkit/>

For more support, contact your pediatrician. These resources may also help:

- New Parent Support Program: <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/benefits/new-parent-support-program/>
- Healthy Sexual Behaviors in Children: <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/parenting/children-youth-teens/healthy-sexual-behaviors-in-children/>

[www.MilitaryOneSource.mil](http://www.MilitaryOneSource.mil) | 800-342-9647



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