



Have questions?
Need resources?
Get Help Now!

Call the Stop It Now! Helpline:
1.888.Prevent
or visit: <https://www.stopitnow.org/help>

Stop It Now![®] prevents the sexual abuse of children by mobilizing adults, families and communities to take actions that protect children before they are harmed.

Signs That a Child or Teen May Be At-Risk to Harm Another Child

More than a third of all sexual abuse of children is committed by someone under the age of 18. Children, particularly younger children, may take part in inappropriate interactions without understanding how it might be hurtful to others. For this reason, it may be more helpful to talk about a child's sexually "harmful" behavior rather than sexually "abusive" behavior.

Do you know a child or adolescent who is:

Confused about social rules and interactions

- May experience typical gestures of friendliness or affection as sexual?
- Explores his or her own natural sexual curiosity with younger children or those of differing size, status, ability, or power?
- Seeks out the company of younger children and spends an unusual amount of time with them rather than with peers?
- Takes younger children to "secret" places or hideaways or plays "special" games with them (e.g. playing doctor, undressing or touching games, etc.)?
- Insists on physical contact with a child when the child resists the attention?

Anxious, depressed or seeming to need help

- Tells you they do not want to be alone with a child, or group of children, or becomes anxious about being with a particular young person?
- Was physically, sexually or emotionally abused and has not been offered adequate resources and support for recovery?
- Seems to be crying for help, i.e. behaves as if they want to be caught; leaves "clues" or acts in ways that seem likely to provoke a discussion about sexual issues?

Impulsively sexual or aggressive

- Links sexuality and aggression in language or behavior (e.g. makes sexual threats or insults)?
- Unable to control inappropriate sexual behaviors involving another child after being told to stop?
- Engages in sexually harassing behavior?
- Shares alcohol, drugs, or sexual material with younger children or teens?
- Views sexual images of children on the Internet or elsewhere?
- Forces sexual interaction, including direct contact and non-contact (like exposing genitals) on another adolescent or child?

For more information and guidance about responding to a child with these behaviors, please visit our Online Help Center, www.StopItNow.org/gethelp.

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