



CHILD ON CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE*

The Florida Department of Children and Families Report that there were 8,570 reports of Child-on-Child sexual abuse from across the State of Florida to the Florida Abuse hotline in 1999-2000.

In these reports, there were 900 alleged victims.
723 of these children were younger than 13 years old.

In these reports, there were 616 alleged aggressors.
417 of these children were younger than 13 years old.

CHARACTERISTICS OF NATURAL SEXUAL BEHAVIOR IN CHILDREN

Natural, healthy sexual exploration during childhood is to be expected.

Children involved in this activity are of similar age, size and developmental status.

Each child participates on a voluntary basis.

The child's interest in sex and sexuality is balanced by curiosity about other aspects of his or her life.

Natural expected sexual exploration may result in embarrassment but does not usually leave children with deep feelings of anger, shame, fear or anxiety.

When instructed to stop, the behavior generally diminishes, at least in the view of adults.

Generally, the feelings of the children regarding the sexual behavior are lighthearted and spontaneous.



CHARACTERISTICS OF PROBLEMATIC SEXUAL BEHAVIORS IN CHILDREN

Coercion, force, bribery, manipulation or threats are associated with the sexual behaviors.

The children engaged in the sexual behavior are of different ages or developmental levels.

Sexual behaviors are out of balance with other aspects of the child's life and interests.

Children seem to have too much knowledge about sexuality and behave in ways more consistent with adult sexual expression.

Sexual behaviors continue despite consistent and clear requests to stop.

Fear, anxiety, deep shame or intense guilt is associated with the sexual behaviors.

Sexual behaviors which cause physical discomfort to self or others.

Children who manually stimulate or have oral or genital contact with animals.

Children who use sex to hurt others.

Children who use distorted logic to justify their sexual actions. ("She/he didn't say 'no'")

These behaviors can occur anywhere, anytime and with anyone.

Problematic sexual behaviors can result in Child-on-child sexual abuse or sexual abuse by one child on another child.

Problematic sexual behaviors and the effects of child-on-child sexual abuse on the victim do not usually go away with time. In fact, ignoring this behavior can enable it to continue and worsen.



EFFECTS OF SEXUAL ABUSE ON CHILDREN

Anxiety	Depression
Fear	Withdrawal
Promiscuous Behaviors	Poor Self-Esteem
Suicidal Thoughts or Attempts	Nightmares
Aggression	Regression
Running Away	School and/or Learning Problems
Hyperactivity	Illegal Acts

Symptoms or effects cannot be relied upon to prove or disprove that a child was sexually abused.

While many children who have been sexually abused experience these and other effects, many children do not show outward effects of the abuse.

AS A CARETAKER WHAT DO I DO?

If you suspect child abuse, contact the Florida Abuse Hotline at 1-800-96-ABUSE. The Florida Department of Children and Families and local law enforcement will investigate your concerns

Seek professional mental health services.

Talk to the child! Let him or her know that it is OK to talk to you about this. Spend time with the child.

Carefully monitor and supervise the child's activities and set limits as needed for their safety and the safety of others.

NEVER LEAVE A CHILD ALONE WITH ANOTHER CHILD WHO YOU SUSPECT OF BEING SEXUALLY INAPPROPRIATE OR AGGRESSIVE



VILLAGE
COUNSELING
CENTER

**If you have a concern about a child's sexual behavior,
please call the Village Counseling Center at**

(352) 373-8189

**or by email at
information@villagecounselingcenter.net**

*This handout was developed from information provided by the Hillsborough County Sexual Abuse Intervention Network (SAIN) - www.hillsboroughsain.org