

What is harmful sexualised behaviour?

Harmful sexual behaviour by children and young people ranges from experimentation through to serious sexual assault or rape.

It can be difficult for people to tell the difference between healthy sexual exploration and the warning signs of harmful behaviour.

The NSPCC have used a definition to clarify that *“Harmful sexual behaviour involves one or more children engaging in sexual discussions or acts that are inappropriate for their age or stage of development. These can range from using sexually explicit words and phrases to full penetrative sex with other children or adults”*

Who provides help and support?

- Bath and North East Somerset Children’s Services
- Youth Offending Team
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- School Nurses
- Schools
- Police

Why?

Children and Young people who present with these behaviours are often overwhelmed with feelings of anxiety, confusion, guilt and shame so therefore need a sensitive response from those working with them.

We know that children and young people, who behave in a harmful sexualised way, and their families, need organised services to support them to change their behaviours to enable them to keep themselves and others safe.

There may be a Police investigation if the behaviour is of a criminal nature. The Police may decide that the child/young person is better supported through the assessment process rather than receiving a criminal conviction or may suggest that this work is needed by the child/young person after a prosecution has been made. Children’s and Young People’s Services may have received a referral regarding concerns about a child/young person and will carry out an assessment before planning what work can be completed with the child/young person or family.

What we offer

B&NES Children’s Services, alongside other agencies can provide a range of support depending on the need of the child/young person. This can include:

- Offering consultation to parents/professionals to consider whether the child’s/young person sexualised behaviour is a concern.
- Provide a co-ordinated multi-agency response via a strategy discussion to plan the support the child/young person requires.
- Start the **AIM2** process by making an **Assessment** of the child’s/young person’s/family’s strengths/risks and needs.
- Provide the child/young person with sensitive **Intervention** (usually working 1:1 with a professional who has specific training) and lastly, and most importantly enables the child/young Person to **Move on**.

What is the aim for the work?

- Assess the impact on the child/young person and assess levels of supervision that may be required.
- Support the child/young person's family after an allegation has been made.
- Support parents/carers to implement a safety plan with the child/young person.
- Reduce potential for further incidents and maintain children and young people safely in their community.
- Our overall aim is to support the child/young person to promote healthy relationships now and in the future in order for them to move on in their lives.

Who will know?

- We know this is a very sensitive area, we may need to seek information but we will talk to the child, young person and/or their family first before we share information (unless there is a significant risk of harm a child).

How do I get the support for the child/Young person?

Discuss any concerns regarding a child/young person displaying harmful sexualised behaviours with Children and Young People's Services in BANES

on

01225 396313

For a consultation for HSB please contact Clare Luxton

(Children's Social Care)

01225 395678

**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**

HARMFUL SEXUALISED BEHAVIOURS

Have you got concerns about a child or a young person's sexual behaviour around other children?

Does a child or a young person you know do or say things that make you feel uncomfortable?

Has a child or a young person you know taken sexual exploration too far?



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