CHILDREN WITH PROBLEMATIC SEXUAL BEHAVIORS: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE MDT AND CAC RESPONSE

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CHILD PROTECTION CONCEPTS

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Accessible through:  
• Calio.org  
• srcac.org  
• NCA Engage

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Our focus today...

Cases involving children (ages 12 and younger)

THINK ABOUT

What challenges have you experienced when handling cases of children with problematic sexual behavior?

OUR OBJECTIVES TODAY

1. Identify four areas in which MDTs and CACs can enhance professional response to children with PSB and their families.
2. Learn how MDTs and CACs can use assessment and treatment to support an integrated response to cases of children with PSB.
3. Learn available resources that support MDTs and CACs to provide a comprehensive response to children with PSB, recipient children, and their families.
ENHANCING MDT/CAC RESPONSE

1. Support research-based information and knowledge

2. Become knowledgeable about child development and sexual behaviors

3. Adapt the MDT response and CAC model for cases of children with PSB

4. Engage families

HISTORICAL ASSUMPTION

"Children with PSB have been sexually abused."

Fact:
Many children with PSB have no history of sexual abuse.
“Children with PSB should be placed inpatient or in similar intensive treatment facilities.”

Fact:
Most children with PSB can be treated while living at home or in the community with appropriate supports (e.g., supervision, intervention).

“Children with PSB are life-long abusers.”

Fact:
2-13% of children with PSB who receive evidence-based treatment re-engage in PSB.

ENHANCING MDT/CAC RESPONSE

2. Become knowledgeable about child development and sexual behaviors
FIRST THINGS FIRST…

**Person First Language**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helpful Words</th>
<th>Unhelpful Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiator</td>
<td>Juvenile Offender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child with PSB</td>
<td>Perpetrator/perp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defined as a child who exhibits problem behaviors</td>
<td>Predator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE CONTINUUM OF SEXUAL BEHAVIORS

**Ranges from:**

**Typical**
- Exploratory
- Mutual agreement
- Close in age, size, and/or development
- Intermittent
- Responds positively to parental intervention

**Problematic**
- Disparity in age, size, and/or development
- Preoccupying
- Planned
- Coerced, forced
- Does not respond to parental intervention

ENHANCING MDT/CAC RESPONSE

3. Adapt the MDT response and CAC model for cases of children with PSB
Historically CACs have been known for forensic interviewing services.

Today, other standards of services have been enhanced and are offered regardless of whether a forensic interview is warranted:
- Evidence-based mental health
- Medical treatment
- Victim advocacy
- MDT approach

Ideally, CACs and MDTs should consider expanding their team to address the needs of children with PSB to include:
- Family Courts
- Probation/Juvenile Justice
- Schools

Children with PSB must be seen as children first:
- They have the right to receive child-focused services
- They have the right to feel and be safe
- The CAC environment is most conducive to MDT collaboration
“Many CACs serve a vital role in their community by providing services to children with problematic sexual behaviors. CACs offering services to this population should have policies and procedures in place to maintain physical and psychological safety for child victims and their families.”

(Child-Focused Setting, pg. 53)

Protocols and procedures should be developed or adapted to address:
- How the MDT will respond and how children with PSB will be referred to the CAC
- What services are available
- Communication guidelines between agencies regarding:
  - Services
  - Treatment
  - Monitoring treatment and progress

Forensic Interviews – Keep in mind, there currently is no recommended protocol for interviewing children with PSB regarding the PSB
- The interviewer must be trained in and utilize a nationally recognized forensic interview protocol
- The FI is not about self-incrimination
- If a child discloses PSB, the MDT must immediately collaborate to determine the best course of action
Protocols and procedures should be developed or adapted to address:

- Case Review
- Case Tracking
- Child-Friendly Environment
- Cultural Competency

4. Engage families

ENHANCING MDT/CAC RESPONSE

- Child and family-focused approach
- Enhance levels of trust
- Enhance participation in treatment services
TRAIN MDT ON HOW TO ENGAGE FAMILIES AND EXPLAIN RESPONSE TO CHILDREN WITH PSB

- Refer to MDT/CAC within 48 hours
- Use people-first language (verbal and written communication)
- Ensure a safe environment for intervention
- Convey seriousness of behavior and a sense of hope
- Continue ongoing communication and collaboration

ASSESSING CHILDREN WITH PSB

Initial stage of investigation
- ALWAYS include Mental Health (MH) provider
- Gather info from collateral witnesses
- Approach caregivers in supportive manner
- Explore adversities in both children’s lives beyond reported sexual behaviors

Forensic Interviews
- It’s the MDT’s decision
- Consider FI referral criteria for PSB
- Trained interviewers should conduct FI early on in investigation
- If interviewing child who initiated behavior, redirect if they begin disclosing exculpatory details of their behavior
Clinical Assessments
- Trained MH provider
- Determine treatment needs
- Inform safety planning
- Meet with MDT to collaborate on decision-making (i.e. family safety planning, placement of child with PSB)
- Clinical assessment vs. psychosexual evaluation

Continue to monitor progress of children and families

MH PROVIDER QUALIFICATIONS

IF NOT TRAINED IN PSB TREATMENT MODALITIES…

- Typical PSB treatment duration is 3–6 months
- Parents/caregivers must be actively involved
  - Primary agents of change
  - Enhance parenting skills
  - Psychoeducation
- Inpatient and residential treatment are rarely necessary
THINK ABOUT

What challenges have you experienced in identifying trained MH providers for children with problematic sexual behavior?

ONLINE RESOURCES

• National Center on Sexual Behavior of Youth www.ncsby.org
• National Child Traumatic Stress Network www.nctsn.org
ONLINE RESOURCES

• National Children’s Alliance
  https://learn.nationalchildrensalliance.org/psb

• National Institute of Justice – Results in Program Records (Enter PSB · CBT in search engine)
  https://www.crimesolutions.gov/advsearch.aspx

• Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Model Programs Guide
  https://www.ojjdp.gov/MPG/Program (Enter Children with Problematic Sexual Behavior in search engine)

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ONLINE RESOURCES

• The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center Problematic Sexual Behavior Cognitive-Behavior Therapy Training and Technical Assistance Program

• Map of Providers - https://psbcbt.ouhsc.edu/Find-a-Provider/List-of-Providers

• Training Resources - https://psbcbt.ouhsc.edu/PSB-CBT-Training/Resources

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REMINDER: UTILIZE THE MESSAGE BOARD & FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US DIRECTLY

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