

How to support your child when they have displayed problematic and/or harmful sexualised behaviour (PHSB).

PHSB:

- is outside the expected range of sexual behaviour for a child/young person's level of development
- may cause harm to self or others

Communication with the school helps support your child

Communication between the parents and carers of children and the school is essential.

Consider what supports and services could be helpful to support your child and family. Work with school staff to help make plans for everyone to be safe.

How you may be feeling

These situations can be distressing. As a parent or carer, you may feel confused and overwhelmed when you learn that your child's behaviour is problematic and/or harmful. You may experience a range of reactions including shock, sadness, disbelief, anxiety, and anger. Remaining calm is important as you support your child.

Your child may have a variety of responses. They may

- Feel embarrassed, ashamed, confused, sad, guilty, or angry.
- Show distress or no emotion at all.
- Refuse to acknowledge the behaviour.
- Not understand that their behaviour was inappropriate and/or harmful.
- Downplay or blame others for what has happened.
- Recognise what they have done and ask for help.

Specific Support Services

Safe Wayz – A program supporting children under ten years of age who have displayed problematic and/or harmful sexualised behaviours, including their families and carers.

New Street – A program providing therapeutic services for children and young people aged 10 to 17 years who have displayed harmful sexualised behaviours. New Street Services work with the young person to assist them to understand, acknowledge, take responsibility for, and cease the harmful sexualised behaviour.

Both services are outlined on the [NSW Health website](https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/sexual-health/Pages/sexual-health-services.aspx).

How you can support your child/young person



I am here for you and support you.

- Reassure your child that you are there to support them.
- Let them tell their story in their own words and in their own time.
- Acknowledge their feelings and concerns.
- Spend time with your child and family doing positive things.
- Provide support to maintain usual activities and routines, such as school and sporting activities.
- Children with disability may need additional care, patience, and support to share their feelings.



I want to help you feel safe.

- Calmly talk with your child about the behaviour, explain why the behaviour is not okay and that it should stop.
- Provide facts and information about sexuality and healthy friendships in an age-appropriate way.
- Obtain accurate information about what might happen next so you can discuss with your child what supports they may need.



You are not alone.

- Work with the school to develop plans to support your child.
- Reach out for support from family and friends.
- Seek support and counselling from professionals who can support you with what has happened and help find the best path ahead for your child and family.



Take care of yourself.

- Be aware of your own reactions and how you are coping.
- Look after yourself, so you can look after your family.
- Do things that are enjoyable and help you manage stress.

General Support Services



Kids Helpline
1800 55 1800



1800RESPECT
1800 737 732



13YARN
13 92 76



Parent Line
1300 130 052



Lifeline
13 11 14



Q Life
1800 184 527

Please take care when reading this information, as it may contain content you may find to be sad, disturbing or distressing.