

OK TF-CBT TIDBITS

Official Newsletter from Oklahoma TF-CBT



Quarterly Focus: Youth with Problematic Sexual Behavior (YPSB)

Pre-school and school-age child on child sexual behavior is an increasing area of concern for families and professionals. As such, a significant breadth and depth of research and knowledge continues to expand on this population and best-practice approaches. This topic can feel scary, overwhelming, and/or unapproachable for many reasons. There are also many misconceptions about this population! Below are two FACTS that many may not know.

FACT: Children who engage in PSB are VERY different from adults who offend against children. They are NOT 'mini pedophiles.'

Pathways that lead youth to engage in PSB, particularly school-age and pre-school age youth, are driven primarily by curiosity, impulsivity, exploratory, pleasure seeking, trauma responses, and/or defiance and rule breaking. This is distinctly different than fully developed adults who engage in sexual behavior with young children and the two populations should NOT be categorized together.

FACT: PSB of youth is serious, AND there is hope. Evidence-based treatment can reduce future engagement in PSB significantly.

Youth on youth PSB can be significantly harmful to the impacted child and family. AND it is a behavior that can be shaped and changed through appropriate therapeutic intervention, education, and parenting practices and should absolutely be addressed.

This issue:

Quarterly Focus: YPSB
PAGE 01

Youth Sexual Development
PAGE 02

Clinical Corner
PAGE 03

Therapist Spotlight
PAGE 04

Resources and Citations
PAGE 05

Sexual Development in Pre-School and School-Age Youth

“There is a huge disconnect between the way the legal system defined my child and the way the counseling program did. It is a child who made a poor decision.”

-Caregiver who completed PSB-CBT services

Typical development during pre-school and school-age years of life can vary across individual children, developmental differences, families, religions, ethnicities, and other types of cultural differences. These differences also play a role in norms related to privacy, nudity, physical affection, and other behaviors related to bodies and boundaries. As such, developmentally expected sexualized behaviors during this time frame is somewhat of a moving target. However, research indicates that typical sexualized behaviors during this time of development include some or all of the following features: mutual agreement with someone at a similar developmental level that is known to the child, spontaneous, exploratory, intermittent, and responsive to intervention. Though not always appropriate, these behaviors may be normative given the curiosity and impulsivity of pre-school/school-age youth and types of play typically seen during this stage of life. The table below shows factors that would indicate when a sexualized behavior is more clinically problematic (e.g., benefitting from therapeutic intervention).

Frequency	Developmental Considerations	Harm
High Frequency	Occurs between Youth of Significantly Divergent Ages/Developmental Abilities	Intrusive Behaviors
Excludes Normal Childhood Activities	Behaviors are Longer in Duration than Developmentally Expected	Includes Force, Intimidation, and/or Coercion
Unresponsive (i.e., does not decrease) to Typical Parenting Strategies	Behavior Interferes with Social Development	Elicits Fear & Anxiety in Other Children

Clinical Corner: Education, Supervision and Safety Planning

Even if you aren't trained in working with children with problematic sexual behavior, safety planning and supervision are certainly within your wheelhouse!

Whether a youth is engaging in PSB, has been exposed to inappropriate sexual material or behavior, or is at risk for engaging in boundary-crossing behavior, teaching rules around body safety is critical.

On this page you will see three resources that are located on OK TF-CBT's website. This is language that can be utilized for school-age youth and pre-school age youth to teach rules around engaging in behavior involving private body parts. *AJ's Story about Not OK Touches* is another great resource for youth and families to provide education and normalize feelings around PSB.







In therapy, these skills can be taught to both child and their caregiver. Additionally, plans can be developed with caregivers to explore options for developmentally appropriate supervision to monitor for these behaviors, as well as behavior management planning for any potential breaking of the sexual behavior rules at home. Just like any other problematic behavior, consistent enforcement of rules, rewards, and consequences is critical!

Private Part Rules

1. No touching other people's private parts. 
2. No other people touching your private parts. 
3. No showing private parts to other people. 
4. No looking at other people's private parts. 

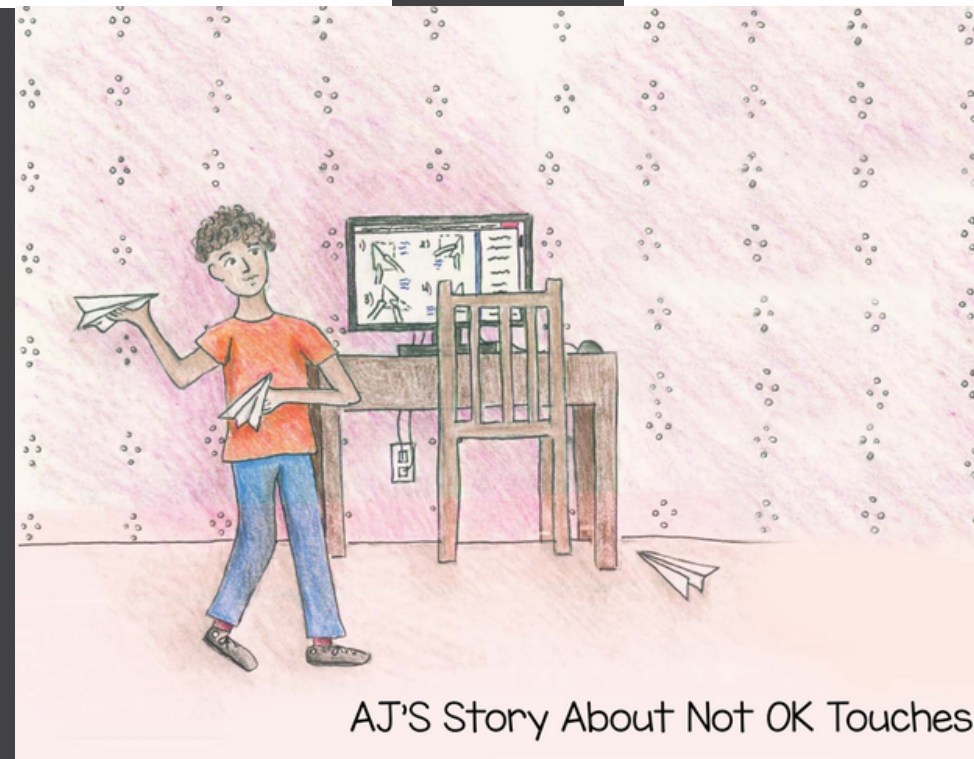
PRE-SCHOOL RESOURCE

Sexual Behavior Rules

- It is NOT OK to look at other people's private parts. 
- It is NOT OK to show other people your private parts. 
- It is NOT OK to touch other people's private parts. 
- It is OK to touch your own private parts as long as you are in private and do not take too much time. 
- It is NOT OK to use sexual language. 
- It is NOT OK to make other people uncomfortable with your sexual behavior. 

2017 Copyright The Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma

SCHOOL-AGE RESOURCE



AJ'S Story About Not OK Touches



Therapist Spotlight: Chloe Byrd, LPC

CHLOE BYRD, LPC IS A THERAPIST AT THE CARE CENTER, THE OKLAHOMA COUNTY CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER. SHE CURRENTLY WORKS WITH YOUTH WHO ENGAGE IN PSB AS WELL AS YOUTH IMPACTED BY TRAUMA. SHE HAS BEEN PROVIDING THERAPY SERVICES SINCE 2018.

What is the most rewarding part of PSB and TF-CBT work? Seeing the growth of children and their families from the start to the end of treatment. Whether it's seeing a child grow in self-esteem, feel proud of themselves for speaking up about the abuse they experienced, work on healing, or grow together as a family, it's a joy to be a part of the process.

How do you engage in wellness to manage the impact of this work? I find it really difficult when systems or situations do not work how I think they should. My narrative that I tell myself is that I am planting seeds that one day will grow even though I might not see the end result. This narrative allows me to hold on to hope and reminds me of the importance of this work.

What would you want therapists to know about working with kids with PSB? That they are just children with a behavior problem. They are children who you would see anywhere. They have hopes, dreams, and aspirations. With treatment, there is hope and healing that can happen.



"I want families to know they are brave for speaking out and seeking help. There is so much hope - whether it's TF-CBT or PSB-CBT. Positive change CAN happen." - Chloe

Taking Action



Support for Families of
Children with Sexual
Behavior Problems

JANE F. SILOVSKY, Ph.D.



Dr Jane Silovsky's book above is available for FREE PDF download at Safer Society Press. Click the image above to access this book.



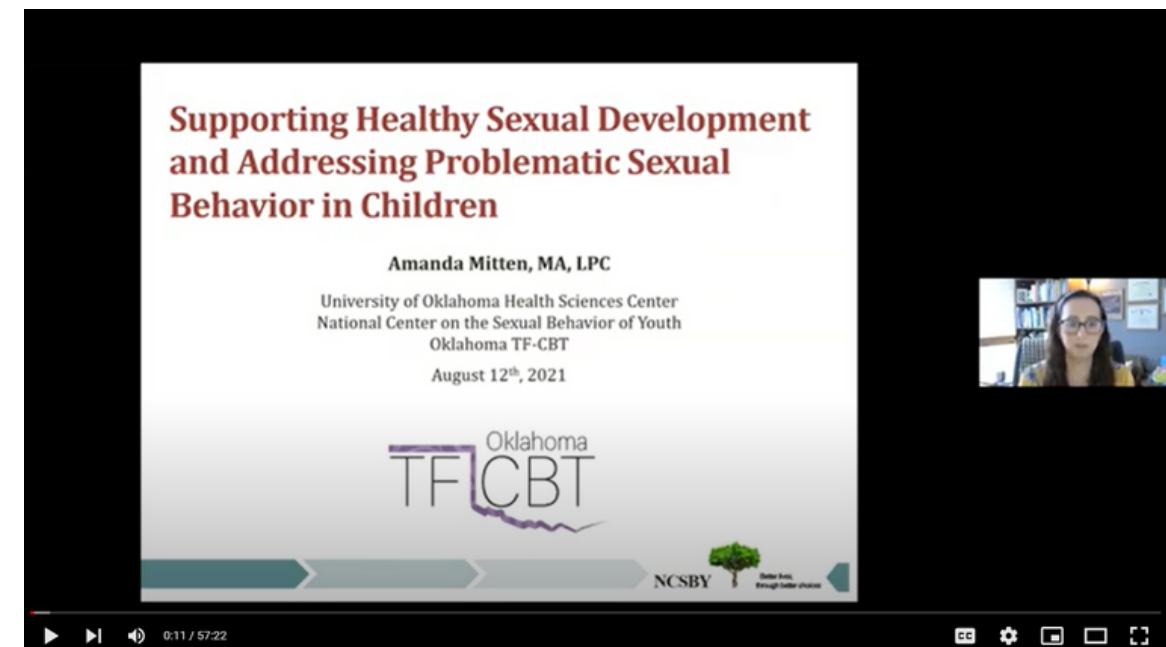
Additional Resources

[National Center on the Sexual Behavior of Youth](#)

[OKTFGBT- Sexual Behaviors Resources](#)

[National Child Traumatic Stress Network: YPSB](#)

[National Children's Alliance](#)



Click the video above for a webinar by Amanda Mitten, LPC on supporting school-age youth with problematic sexual behavior!

Upcoming OK TF-CBT Newsletter Focus: January 2024
Adolescents with Problematic Sexual Behavior

