

Things to Consider When Working With Children (under 12)

When working with children under twelve there are several things to consider:

- ✓ Do children engaged in sexual play have an ongoing mutual relationship?
- ✓ Are the children of different ages or developmental levels?
- ✓ Are sexualized behaviors out of balance with other aspects of child's life?
- ✓ Do children appear to have more sexual knowledge than typical for their age?
- ✓ Are sexual behaviors significantly different than those of other same-age children?
- ✓ Do sexual behaviors continue even after they've received consistent and clear requests to stop?
- ✓ Do children appear to be unable to stop sexualized behaviors?
- ✓ Do other children complain about the child's sexual behaviors or do the sexual behaviors negatively affect other children?
- ✓ Are child's sexual behaviors directed at adults who are uncomfortable with them?
- ✓ Do children (ages 4 and over) appear to understand their rights and the rights of others?
- ✓ Do sexual behaviors progress in frequency, intensity, or intrusiveness?

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- ✓ Do children demonstrate fear, anxiety, shame or guilt related to the sexual behaviors?
- ✓ Are adult sexual behaviors extensive and persistent?
- ✓ Do children manually stimulate, have oral, or have genital contact with animals?
- ✓ Do children sexualize nonsexual things, interactions with others, or relationships?
- ✓ Do sexual behaviors cause physical or emotional pain or discomfort to others?
- ✓ Do children use sex to hurt others?
- ✓ Do children use verbal and/or physical aggression (coercion, force, bribery, manipulations, or threats) in conjunction with sexual behavior?
- ✓ Do children use distorted logic to justify their sexual behaviors?

(Johnson, 2007)