

INFOCUS



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Sexual Behavior Problems in Children and Adolescents

Research suggests that adolescents commit about one-third (35.6 percent) of sex offenses against juvenile victims. These behaviors can include aggressive or coerced sexual contact, sexual contact that causes harm to a child or others, and sexual contact between children and youth of different ages, sizes, and developmental levels.

OJJDP funds intervention programs for adolescent sex offenders and children with sexual behavior problems. **Research** indicates that evidence-based treatment for youth and their caregivers reduces their sexual behavior problems and enhances the youth and caregivers' well-being. The Office also provides grantees with training and technical assistance as they implement community-based intervention programs for youth and develop treatment services for victims and families.

Program

Supporting Effective Interventions for Adolescent Sex Offenders and Children With Sexual Behavior Problems

The program funds evidence-based intervention strategies and supervision services to address problematic sexual behaviors and prevent reoffending. The program also provides vital support to caregivers, family members, and victims. Not all youth who exhibit illegal or problematic sexual behaviors have a history of abuse or trauma. However, all children with illegal or problematic sexual behaviors need treatment. This program is designed to address the needs of all families impacted and improve the response to child victims.

Training and Technical Assistance

National Center on the Sexual Behavior of Youth

This organization provides training and technical assistance to improve the accuracy, accessibility, and strategic use of information about the nature, incidence, prevalence, prevention, treatment, and management of youth with problematic sexual behaviors. The site also offers [information for parents and caregivers](#).

Assistance for Problematic Sexual Behavior in Children and Youth in the Military

In coordination with the Department of Defense, OJJDP expanded its training and technical assistance to help all four branches of the military [address](#) problematic sexual behaviors among youth on military bases. The program offers clinical training on evidence-based treatment and is helping the Department of Defense develop guidelines for a multidisciplinary response to the issue.

For More Information

Access more information about how OJJDP is addressing children with sexual behavior problems and adolescent sex offenders at <https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/programs/youth-with-sexual-behavior-problems>.

Funding

Between fiscal years 2017 and 2019, OJJDP awarded \$4.5 million to enhance community capacity to address this issue.

- ▶ **Fiscal Year 2019—\$3.4 million**
- ▶ **Fiscal Year 2018—Not funded**
- ▶ **Fiscal Year 2017—\$1.1 million**

From the Field

OJJDP grantee **Youth Outreach Services** (YOS) provides research-informed treatments for children and adolescents who have demonstrated inappropriate or problematic sexual behavior in Chicago, IL. Services are free to families and all programs incorporate caregivers. The Problematic Sexual Behavior - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy program serves children and adolescents ages 12–18 and their caregivers through group or family therapy.

A family with a son nearing graduation from the program noted how essential therapy has been to their family after a devastating experience with problematic sexual behavior. "From the beginning, the group leaders have been committed to teaching us how to cope and rebuild our family dynamic while showing genuine love and concern throughout the process," the mother explained. "Trusting other people to understand a situation like ours is hard, but I am glad I found YOS."

OJJDP

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