

SAFE IS STRONG

TAKING CARE OF ARMY FAMILIES



A COLLABORATION BETWEEN ARMY FAMILY ADVOCACY PROGRAM & GSTS • YEAR 2022, TOPIC 1 • WWW.GSTSONLINE.ORG/SAFE

LINK: WHAT IS PSB-CY AND WHAT IS NOT

While difficult to define in an absolute sense, there are guidelines for the Army to consider when a potential PSB incident has been reported. The behavior may be classified as (1) *normative* (i.e., not out of the ordinary given children's age and development), (2) *cautionary* (unsuitable for the child or youth's age or situation, or (3) *problematic* (out of bounds in terms of harm or emotional effects upon others).

The National Center on the Sexual Behavior of Youth has developed these guidelines to help distinguish between three possible descriptions of child and youth sexual behavior: *normative*, *cautionary*, and *problematic*.

Normative Voluntary, infrequent, spontaneous
Easily diverted when adults tell children to stop and explain privacy rules
Interaction that involves sexual body parts between children of the same general age and physical size
Occurs among children who know each other
Not accompanied by strong uncomfortable or upset feelings

Cautionary Not suitable for the location (e.g., school, faith community)
Normative behavior, but more frequent than typical for the child's age
Not currently harmful or distressing to self or others
Occurs despite adult intervention
Typical sexual behavior, but technology is involved, such as taking pictures of private parts

Problematic Causes harm or potential harm or distress to any child
Involves strong, upset feelings, such as anger or anxiety
Occurs among children of different ages or functioning
Continues to occur despite intervention by caregivers or other guiding adults
Preoccupied with sexual content and topics

These guidelines are not inclusive of all possible behaviors in the three categories. Other behaviors can be considered and added to lists of possible

behaviors, circumstances, mitigating factors such as developmental, situational, geographic, and other considerations affecting the child and family.

