

SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

BEHAVIORAL SIGNS

These are some behaviors that could mean your child has experienced sexual abuse or another trauma:

- Acting younger or going back to doing younger tasks and activities
- Sudden changes in behavior
- Fear of being alone with a certain person
- Sudden, unexplained fears of certain places or kinds of people (such as all people with a particular feature or characteristic)
- Fear of being touched
- Changes in quality of schoolwork or grades
- Substance abuse
- Delinquency
- Self-mutilation or careless behaviors resulting in self-harm
- Excessive play with their own private body parts
- Persistent sex play with friends, toys, or pets
- Frequent drawings that have sexual content
- Unusual, persistent, or developmentally inappropriate questioning about human sexuality

These changes might not be dramatic, but could include several subtle changes. It's important to know what's natural and healthy in [kids' sexual development](#) (for example, many young children are curious about sexuality and frequently play with their private body parts). Knowing these stages of development will help you notice if something doesn't seem right, which might indicate a problem.

PHYSICAL SIGNS

These are some physical signs that could indicate a problem, including the possibility of sexual abuse:

- Eating more or less than usual
- Having trouble sleeping
- Soiling or wetting clothes, or bedwetting (or an increase, if it happens already)
- Stomachaches
- Physical pain or itching in the genital area
- Underwear stained with blood or other discharge
- Rectal bleeding
- Problems walking or sitting

Take a child who shows any of the physical signs listed above to a doctor right away.



HOT CHOCOLATE TALK
CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION