



Have questions?

Need resources?

Get Help Now!

Online Help Center
<http://GetHelp.StopItNow.org>

Stop It Now![®] prevents the sexual abuse of children by mobilizing adults, families and communities to take actions that protect children before they are harmed.



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What is Considered Child Sexual Abuse?

If you are not exactly sure what sexual abuse is, you're not alone. All sexual touching between an adult and a child is sexual abuse. Sexual touching between children can also be sexual abuse.

Sexual abuse between children is often defined as when there is a significant age difference (usually 3 or more years) between the children, or if the children are very different developmentally or size-wise. Sexual abuse does not have to involve penetration, force, pain, or even touching. If an adult engages in any sexual behavior (looking, showing, or touching) with a child to meet the adult's interest or sexual needs, it is sexual abuse.

Child Sexual Abuse includes harmful contact and non-contact behaviors

Abusive physical contact or touching includes:

- Touching a child's genitals or private parts for sexual purposes
- Making a child touch someone else's genitals or play sexual games
- Putting objects or body parts (like fingers, tongue or penis) inside the vagina, in the mouth or in the anus of a child for sexual purposes

Non-contact sexual abuse includes:

- Showing pornography¹ to a child
- Deliberately exposing an adult's genitals to a child
- Photographing a child in sexual poses
- Encouraging a child to watch or hear sexual acts
- Inappropriately watching a child undress or use the bathroom

Sexually abusive images of children and the Internet

As well as the activities described above, there is also the serious and growing problem of people making and downloading sexual images of children on the Internet. To view sexually abusive images of children is to participate in the abuse of a child, and may cause someone to consider sexual interactions with children as acceptable. People who look at this material need help to prevent their behavior from becoming even more serious.

For more information and guidance, please visit our Online Help Center, www.stopitnow.org/gethelp.