

# **My Kid Did What?!?! The Essential Information about Children and Teens with Problematic Sexual Behaviors**

**Jimmy Widdifield, Jr., LPC (he/him)**

Project Director, Training/Technical Assistance for Child Abuse Professionals  
National Children's Advocacy Center

This project was supported, in part, by  
**Award No. 2020-CI-FX-K001** and **15PJDP-23-GK-01575-JJVO**  
awarded to the National Children's Advocacy Center  
by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention,  
Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

The opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this presentation are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice or grant-making component.



- **Put you first.**
- **Be mindful of your own responses and well-being.**
- **Make decisions to keep yourself mentally, physically, spiritually (if applicable) healthy and your worldview harmonized.**

# PSB Professional Resources

## Children and Adolescents with Problematic Sexual Behavior Professional Resources

Comprehensive


**National Center on the Sexual Behavior of Youth**


The mission of NCSBY is to promote better lives, through better choices by youth, caregivers, and professionals for healthier responses to and prevention of problematic sexual behavior of youth. NCSBY provides national training and technical assistance to improve the accuracy, accessibility, and strategic use of accurate information about the nature, incidence, prevalence, prevention, treatment, and management of children and adolescents with problematic sexual behavior.

NCA developed a video training series, fact sheets, webinars, and best practices to support CACs addressing this issue and serving youth with problematic sexual behaviors, their victims, and families. The three fact sheets were developed for use by CACs to educate themselves, their partners, caregivers, and communities on addressing youth and families with PSBs.

Access the [training series](#), using code **15462** for the organizational ID.


Access the [Engagement Webinar](#), using code **15462** for the organizational ID.

 [NCSBY.org](http://NCSBY.org)

 [National Children's Alliance](http://www.nationalchildrensalliance.org)  
The Real World. Children Advocate.


---

Addressing PSB in CACs


 **National Children's Advocacy Center**

**CALiO™** <http://www.waiaonline.org>

The [Child Abuse Library Online™ \(CALiO™\)](#) is one of the largest professional child maltreatment resource collections available and which provides access to published knowledge, educational materials, and resources. Resources include several thousand full text peer reviewed publications, including close to 50 [publications concerning youth with problematic sexual behaviors](#). Other resources include statistical reports, audio and video presentations, and much more.



**SOUTHERN REGIONAL**  
Children's Advocacy Center  
[srccac.org](http://srccac.org)




**OKLAHOMA COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH**  
[ok.gov/ocoy/](http://ok.gov/ocoy/)

The white paper on [Children with Problematic Sexual Behavior: Recommendations for the Multidisciplinary Team and Children's Advocacy Center Response](#) developed by the Southern Regional Children's Advocacy Center and Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth will focus on how cases of children ages 12 and younger who initiate PSB, the child victim(s), and their families could be successfully served by CACs and MDTs.

Visit [The SRCAC Exchange: A Podcast Series for Child Abuse Professionals](#) for more information.


---

Fact Sheets

 **NCTSN** The National Child Traumatic Stress Network  
[nctsn.org](http://nctsn.org)

The mission of NCTSN is to raise the standard of care and improve access to services for children, their families, and communities throughout the United States.

Publications and other information for parents and caregivers, as well as professionals on trauma. [Fact sheets](#) on children with PSB collaboratively developed with NCSBY.

 **Stop It Now!** SINCE 1892

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 by providing support, information, and resources.

For resources on children and adolescents with problematic sexual behavior, visit ["Info & Guidance: Children's Behaviors"](#) and available webinars.

Questions? [OU-NCSBY@ouhsc.edu](mailto:OU-NCSBY@ouhsc.edu)

Fact Sheets/Reports

The Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers is an international, multi-disciplinary organization dedicated to making society safer by preventing sexual abuse. ATSA promotes sound research, evidence-based practice, informed public policy, and collaborative community strategies that lead to the effective assessment, treatment, and management of individuals who have sexually abused or are at risk to abuse. Engaged in Sexually Abusive Behavior

 **ATSA**  
MAKING SOCIETY SAFER®  
[atsa.com](http://atsa.com)

---

Webinars

MASOC's mission is to ensure that children and adolescents with problematic or abusive sexual behaviors live healthy, safe, and productive lives. We strive to prevent sexually abusive behaviors in these youth by training professionals and educate the community about developmentally appropriate interventions, evidence-based treatment, and effective public policies.

 **masoc**  
FOR A BRIGHT FUTURE OF SEXUAL HEALTH BY YOUTH  
[masoc.net](http://masoc.net)

[Clinical Assessment of Children with PSB: An Overview](#)

[Assessment of PSB in Children: What, When and How](#)

[Clinical Decision Making in Cases of Children with PSB](#)

[YPSB: Practical Resources and Activities for Therapists Working with Youth and Their Families](#)

[Girls with Problematic and Illegal Sexual Behaviors](#)

[Supporting Families of Children and Adolescents with PSB](#)

---

Addressed Workshops

 **OneOp**  
Readiness. Knowledge. Network.  
Formerly Military Families Learning Network

The [Sexual Behavior in Children and Youth \(SBCY\) Series](#) addresses normal sexual behavior in children and youth in addition to exploring concerning factors associated with children's sexual behavior that children may display. Various disclosure processes involved when problematic symptoms are present.

[oneop.org/childsexualbehavior/](http://oneop.org/childsexualbehavior/)

Foster Parent College's [Advanced Parenting Workshop: Problematic Sexual Behaviors](#) is a 6-credit-hour course designed for foster, adoptive, and kinship parents. This workshop begins by explaining sexual development in children and exploring the continuum of sexual behaviors, from typical to concerning to problematic. Then the course explores how resource parents can respond to children's sexual behaviors. **\$30 per person**

 **Virtual Lab School**  
<https://www.virtuallab.school/our-how/sexual-development-behavior-released>

In coordination with the U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), a new course, [Sexual Development and Behavior in K-12 Students](#), which is aimed at K-12 educators and youth program staff is now available.

A nine-course training for Daycare Personnel on sexual development and youth with PSB is also available.

---

Books

Parents and families play a significant role in the successful treatment of their children and adolescents. Written by two of the leading experts in the field, each [Taking Action](#) booklet provides concise and practical information families and caregivers need to prepare for the important challenges ahead.

 **Safer Society Press**  
[safer.societypress.org](http://safer.societypress.org)

Available in English and Spanish, as well as downloadable PDF:

Questions? [OU-NCSBY@ouhsc.edu](mailto:OU-NCSBY@ouhsc.edu)



**Think about a child or teen  
who you know and love.**

# Children's "Normative" Sex Play

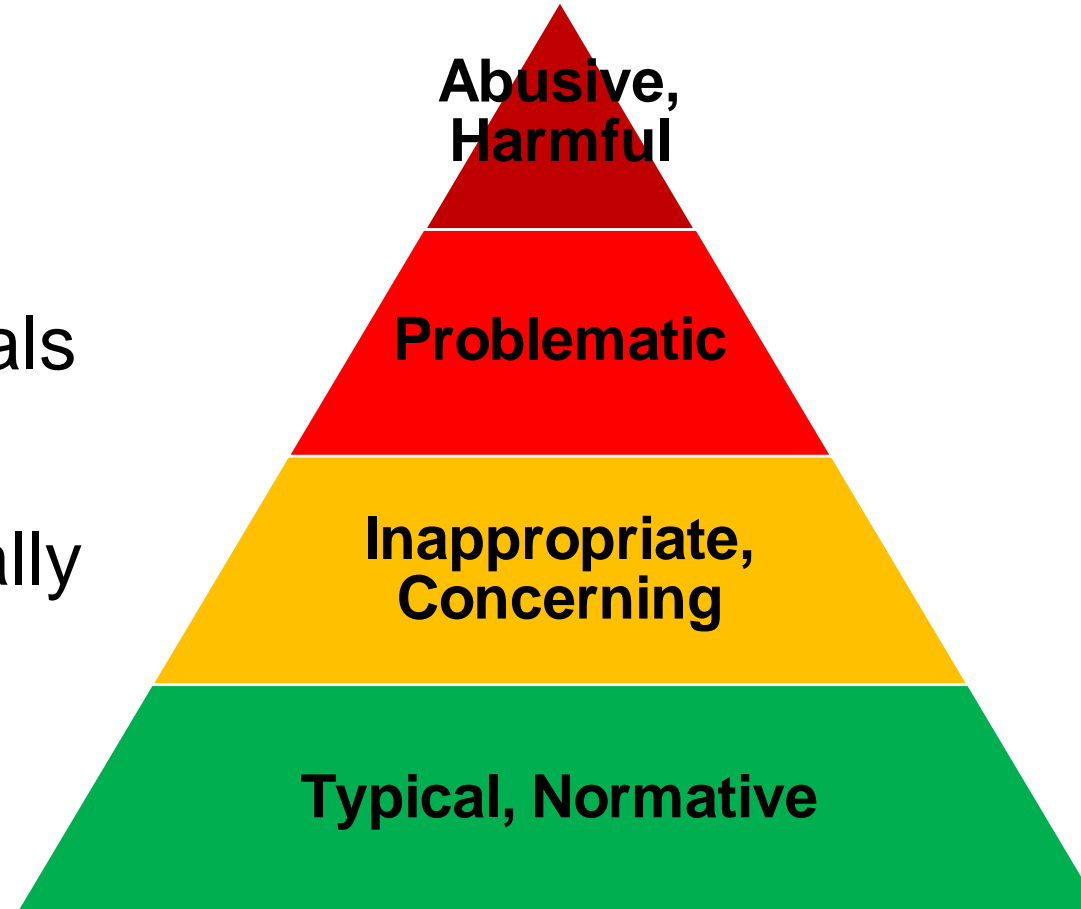
- Occurs in context of overall development
- Learning, exploring
- In the moment, spontaneous
- Doesn't happen often
- Mutual agreement



- Familiarity, "like-ness"
- Not harmful, emotionally or physically
- Changes as children get older
- Respond appropriately to intervention

# Problematic Sexual Behavior (PSB)

- Behavior
- Typically involves genitals
- Developmentally inappropriate



- Potential/actual harm, physically and/or emotionally
- Diverse range of motives, origins
- Legality

# Characteristics of Children and Teens with PSB

- No distinct profiles
- Do not share central characteristics of adult sex offenders
- Many do not meet DSM criteria for any mental health disorder
- Co-occurring concerns (i.e., learning, behavioral, etc.)
- Teens who engage in PSB with children vs. peer sexual assault are less delinquent, often immature
- Rarely a paraphilia (e.g., pedophilia)

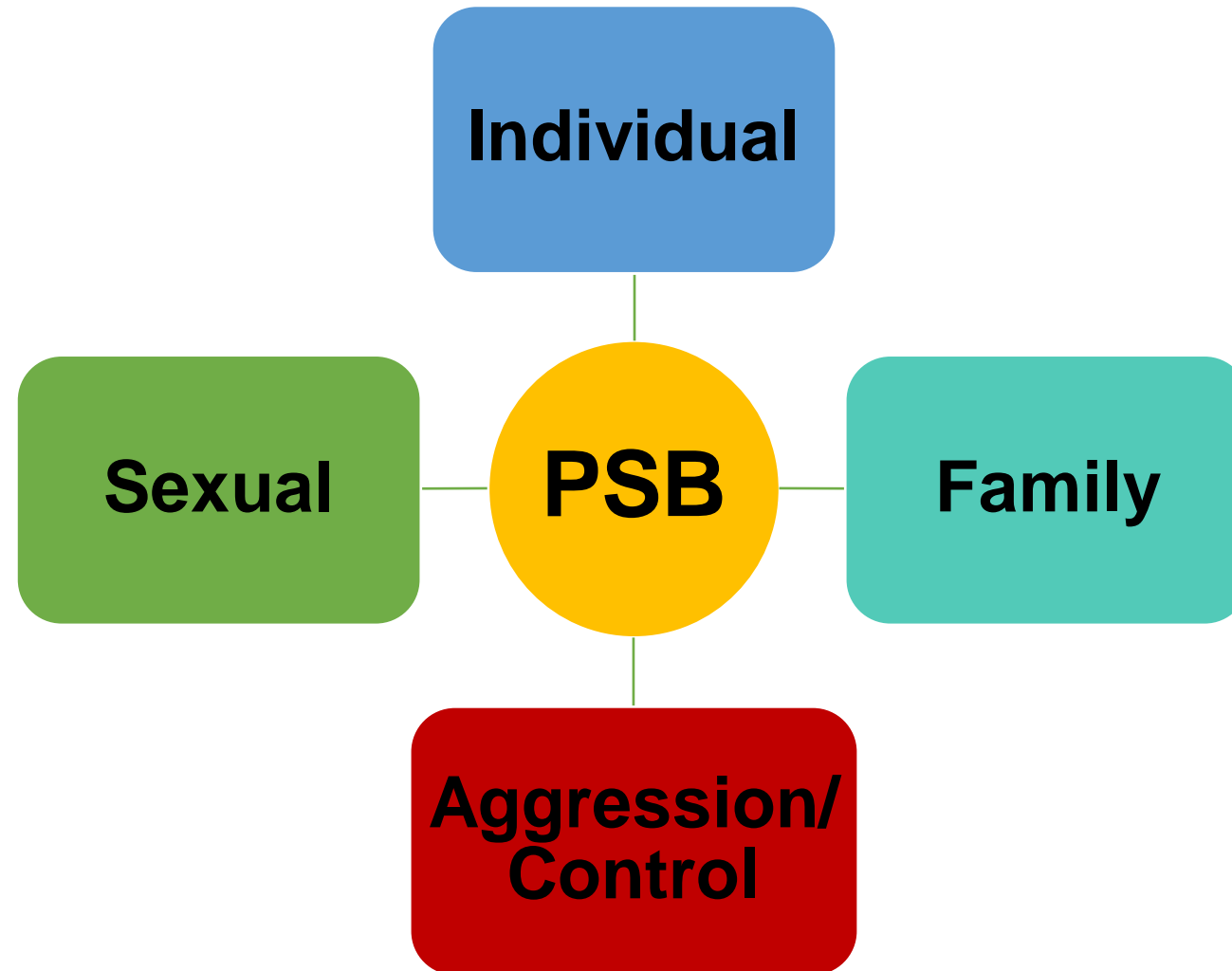


# True or False?

*“Children and teens with PSB have been sexually abused.”*

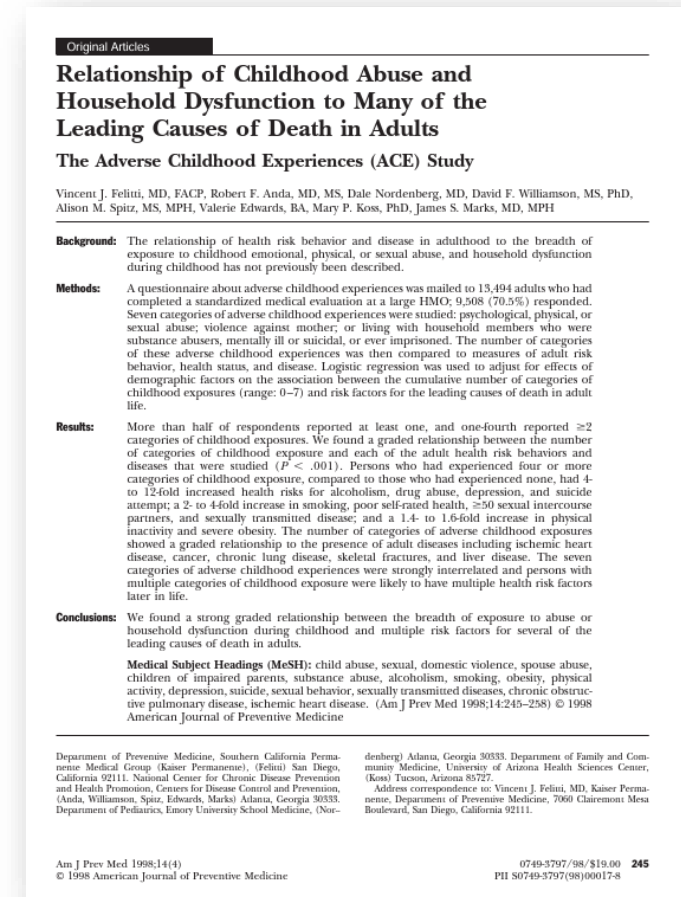


# Contributing Factors to PSB Manifestation



# Understanding Impact of ACES

- Association with “impairment in emotion processing, behavioral inhibition, and attention.”
- “Understand how child’s experiences may have affected their learning and problem-solving abilities, self-regulation, and social interactions.”
- Professionals should adjust and adapt approaches accordingly.

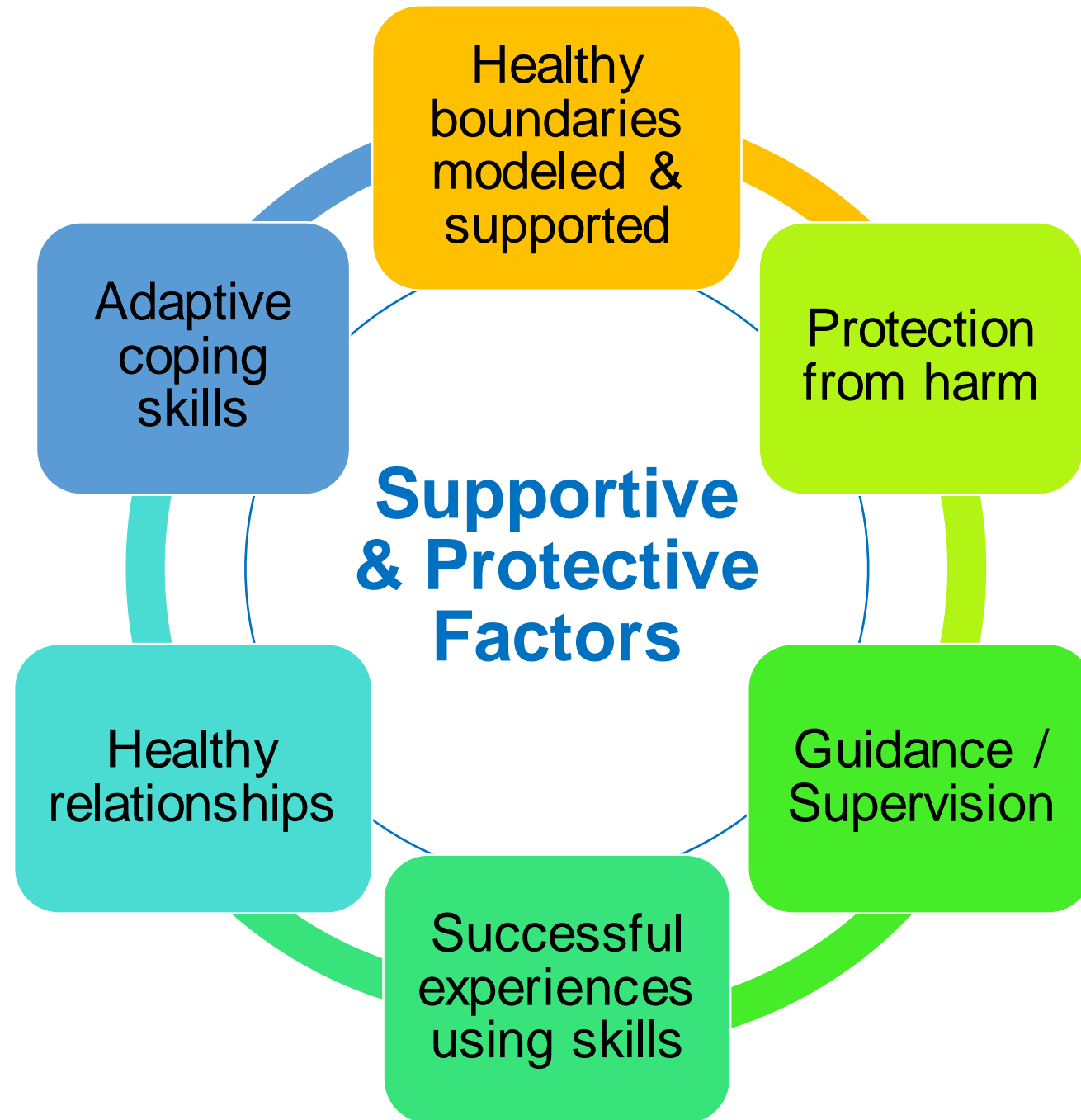


From / Based on ATSA CSBP (2023)

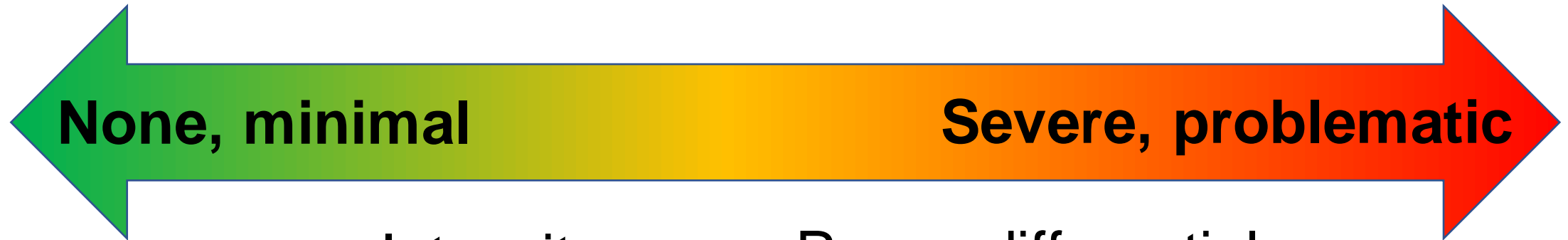
# FACT

~~*“Children and teens with PSB have been sexually abused.”*~~

**Many children with PSB have no history of sexual abuse.**



# Factors that Impact Response of Other Children and Families



- Intensity
- Behavior
- History
- Power differential
- Functioning
- Available support

# True or False?

*“Children and teens with PSB are life-long abusers.”*



## Treatment Success (w/Caregiver Involvement)

**Children**

**89% - 98%**

(outpatient, group)

**Teens**

**97%**



# FACT

~~*“Children and teens with PSB are life-long abusers.”*~~

**2-11% of children and 3% of teens with PSB who receive evidence-based treatment – *which is predominately out-patient and community-based* – that includes their caregiver(s) re-engage in another PSB.**

# True or False?

*“Children and teens with PSB should be placed in-patient or in similar intensive treatment facilities.”*



# FACT

~~*“Children and teens with PSB should be placed in-patient or in similar intensive treatment facilities.”*~~

**Most children with PSB can be treated while living at home or in the community with appropriate supports (e.g., supervision, intervention)**



**What would you want for  
your child and family?**

# Selected PSB Professional Resources

**National Center on the Sexual Behavior of Youth\***  
[www.ncsby.org](http://www.ncsby.org)

- National Children's Alliance\*: [learn.nationalchildrensalliance.org/psb](http://learn.nationalchildrensalliance.org/psb)
- National Child Traumatic Stress Network\*: [www.nctsn.org](http://www.nctsn.org)
- Child Abuse Library Online™ (CALiO™): [calio.org](http://calio.org)
- OneOp\*: <https://oneop.org/series/sexual-behavior-in-children-and-youth-sbcy-series/>

\*Includes resources for caregivers

# **Jimmy Widdifield, Jr., LPC**

## **[jwiddifield@nationalcac.org](mailto:jwiddifield@nationalcac.org)**

1. Are you able to define problematic sexual behaviors in children?
2. Can you apply research-based information to dispel four persistent and adverse myths about children with problematic sexual behaviors?
3. Did you learn at least two strategies to enhance professional response to cases of children with problematic sexual behavior?