

Clarifying degree of concern

When considering how concerned to be about children or young people's sexual behaviour use the following questions to clarify your concerns.

More positive responses entail greater concern, since the harm for both the child carrying out the behaviour and any potential victims is likely to be more significant.

If there are immediate / ongoing significant risks for the child experiencing the behaviour, the child displaying the behaviour and / or any other child in the network refer to MASH immediately.

1. Is the behaviour occurring more often than would normally be expected for the developmental stage?
2. Is the behaviour getting in the way of the child's development? In what ways, and to what degree (be specific)?
3. Did or does the child use coercion, intimidation or force in the process of carrying out the sexual behaviour?
4. Were or are any of the children involved emotionally distressed by what has happened?
5. Did or does the behaviour occur between children of divergent ages or developmental abilities?
6. Has the behaviour persisted even after intervention from staff or caregivers?

(Questions adapted from Chaffin et al., 2002)