

# Signs That an Adult May Be At-Risk to Sexually Harm a Child

*(From Stop It Now .org)*

Someone you care about may be acting in ways that worry or confuse you. The behaviors below may indicate a possible risk of sexual abuse to a child, but may also be a way for this adult to ask for help. Many people with sexual behavior problems believe that others already suspect and often wish someone would ask what's going on or advise them where to call to get help.

## **Relationships**

- Misses or ignores social cues about others' personal or sexual limits and boundaries.
- Often has a "special" child friend, maybe a different one from year to year.
- Spends most of his/her spare time with children and shows little interest in spending time with someone their own age.
- Excessive tickling, stroking, petting, caressing a child, licking or kissing a child, etc. These activities cross a child's boundaries, confuse a child and can over stimulate a child.
- Horseplay with a child that involves an adult laying on top of the child, playfully spanking the child, tickling child under their clothing.
- Encourages silence and secrets in children.

## **Sexual Interactions**

- Links sexuality and aggression in language or behavior, e.g. sexualized threats or insults, like "whore" or "slut".
- Makes fun of children's body parts, describes children with sexual words like "stud" or "sexy" or talks again and again about the sexual activities of children or teens.
- Masturbates so often that it gets in the way of important day-to-day activities.
- Has an interest in sexual fantasies involving children and seems unclear about what's appropriate with children.
- Looks at child pornography or downloads/views Internet pornography and is not willing to show whether children are involved.
- Asks adult partners to dress or act like a child or teen during sexual activity.

## **Personal safety/responsibility**

- Has been known to make poor decisions while misusing drugs or alcohol.
- Says he was drinking alcohol or drugs and doesn't remember doing anything.
- Justifies behavior, defends poor choices or harmful acts; blames others to refuse responsibility for behaviors.
- Minimizes hurtful or harmful behaviors when confronted; denies harmfulness of actions or words despite a clear negative impact.

