

# Stories

**Trigger Warning:** The following stories include information about sexual abuse and may be triggering.

## #1 Cognitive Functioning and Family

I worked with a 14-year-old boy who grew up in an adoptive family. It was discovered that he engaged in problematic sexual behavior with his younger sister. The mom started putting the pieces together that this was happening when the girl entered puberty, and they were talking about menstrual cycles. When asked about his PSB behavior, the young man rationalized that his sister agreed with everything that went on. There was no big age gap, so he did not understand his behavior was wrong. During the course of the assessment, it was learned that this boy would engage in problematic sexual behavior at school. He would violate others' physical space and would access inappropriate images on the computer, which he would show to his peers. The boy and his mother were involved in treatment. I did a psycho-sexual evaluation with him, and his IQ score was 128 (very high range). The sister, a year younger, had an IQ of 80 (low range). So, the brother was very intelligent and could learn his behaviors were inappropriate. A safety plan was put in place that necessitated a high level of supervision at home. The boy was involved in group therapy, and the sister and a younger sibling were provided services and support. It was necessary to engage the school in safety planning to keep this youth and others safe in the school. After approximately a year of treatment, the youth was successfully discharged.



**Talk to your kids about rules and boundaries. Be aware of differences in physical development and cognitive development to prevent sexual abuse.**



### Teaching

It is important to empower caregivers on ways for the children to learn healthy ways to interact and developmentally appropriate sex education. This education includes information about boundaries, body changes, and preventing harm to others. It is important to teach and reinforce community guidance, protocol, and boundaries, share stories, and support coming-of-age rituals to reinforce the information being taught. It is also just as important to celebrate a child's understanding and decision-making as they grow to make positive decisions about their body and the bodies of others. If problematic sexual behaviors do occur, it is essential that everyone in the home gets the help and support that they need.