

#4 Early Education and Prevention is the Best Prevention

Two 5-year-old children, a boy and a girl, at daycare were engaging in inappropriate sexual behavior with one another by performing oral sex on each other. This behavior was hidden from adults by the children. When the behavior was discovered, the boy's mother, who was a county sheriff, got in touch with an attorney because many were gravely concerned about where the children learned the behavior. As we began to work with the two children and their families and other therapist, it became clear that their PSB did not start occurring because someone had done something inappropriate to them, both children were very bright, and we concluded they must have seen the behavior somewhere like TV, internet, or another place other than their caregivers. They saw it and started doing it. We kept them apart, set up rules, and taught consent and permission. They were not long-term patients; it was something that was discovered, addressed, and taken care of.

“
Set up rules, be consistent, watch your kids.”



Teaching

PSB doesn't always occur because a child is sexually abused. Often, it occurs because of what children see or observe in media and on the internet. Prevention starts early. Teaching children sexual behavior rules, consent, and appropriate boundaries can be done with any age child and done at any developmental level. Including caregivers, parents, preschools, day cares, and child development centers in these early prevention efforts is important.

Also taught in this story is that interventions do work. The behavior was discovered and addressed with the children and appropriate parties, then rules and boundaries were created and followed to allow the children to stay in their community and successfully continue to grow and develop.