

# Factsheet 4: Addressing relational issues between carers and children or young people displaying problematic or harmful sexual behaviour



When talking with a carer about PHSB, it is important to use clear language that acknowledges the behaviour without shaming, isolating or stigmatising the child or young person involved. In your initial conversations with carers, consider discussing what language you will all use when talking about the behaviour. This includes what age-appropriate language will be used when talking directly with the child or young person with problematic or harmful sexual behaviour.

Clarifying language can help carers feel more at ease in subsequent discussions. It can also provide them with the 'words' they can use as a family. Your own use of appropriate language is also important, as it models examples for carers.

| Conversation tip  | Examples in practice   |
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| Notice and name any changes in a carer's relationship with the child or young person. | <p><b>Ensure carers have access to appropriate support.</b></p> <p><i>Use "I wonder..." statements to explore how the carer is feeling:</i></p> <p><i>I've noticed you're finding it more difficult than usual to respond to Alex when she's challenging family rules. I wonder if you're feeling differently towards Alex since finding out about the harmful sexual behaviour?</i></p> |
| Ensure carers have access to appropriate support.                                     | <p><i>I know Bailey is working with a lot of practitioners at the moment, and it might feel like there's not time for you to access support for yourself. I want to encourage you to give [service] a call—I think it could be helpful to talk to someone about how you're feeling about the behaviour and about Bailey at the moment.</i></p>   |