Sometimes children exhibit sexual behaviors that are outside of the range of typical sexual development. The following terms are used to describe these behaviors.

**Sexually Reactive Behavior**
- Commonly used to describe a child who has been sexually victimized and is engaging in sexualized behaviors that are outside of the typical developmental range. However, professionals sometimes use this term to describe all kinds of sexual behaviors. It is thought that children engaging in sexually reactive behavior are trying to understand what has happened to them, or attempting to cope with sexualized thoughts and sensations as a result of the victimization.
- Children engaging in this behavior may attempt to engage others in repeating the acts that were done to them, or play with dolls or toys to repeat what was done to them.

**Uncommon or Atypical Sexual Knowledge & Behavior, Children 2-12**
- Puts mouth on sex parts, puts objects in rectum or vagina, masturbates with objects, touches others’ sex parts after being told not to, asks to engage in sex acts, imitates intercourse/oral-genital contact with people/toys, undresses other people, asks to watch/view sexually explicit videos/pictures, makes sexually explicit sounds, engages in sexually explicit conversations on the computer or other electronic devices.
- This behavior needs to be assessed by a professional who is knowledgeable about sexual behaviors in children to determine if it represents a sexual behavior problem.

**Sexual Behavior Problems (SBPs)**
- Children 2-12 who engage in developmental inappropriate or aggressive sexual behavior.
- It is frequent, repeated behavior.
- It is done to one’s self (such as excessive masturbation) or done with others.
- Child does this behavior to the exclusion of other activities.
- Between children who do not know each other well, or between children who know each other well (when the behavior is outside of the normal developmental range).
- Occurs between children of different ages/sizes/developmental levels.
- It is aggressive, forced, or coerced.
- Does not decrease after the child(ren) is/are told to stop.
- Causes harm (emotional or physical) to the child(ren).

**Sexualized Behavior**
- Professionals may use this term to describe typical sexual development, sex play, sexually reactive behavior, or problematic sexual behavior.

**Sexual Offending**
- Commonly used to describe children ages 12-17 that engage in aggressive sexual behaviors with others. Professionals sometimes use this term to describe children younger than 12 who are engaging in developmentally inappropriate or aggressive sexual behavior with other children.