



Looking out for kids

Preventing sexual abuse

We all have a role to play in keeping kids safe.

As a community, we have the power and strength to protect children from sexual abuse.

How will you make a difference?

- **Be aware of signs that someone may be exploiting children:** the person finds opportunities to be alone with a child, ignores child's cues that he or she doesn't want to be touched, gives gifts for no particular occasion, prefers to spend time with children rather than peers.

- **Begin talking to your child about personal space and privacy by age 3 and about sex before age 10:** Use proper names for body parts – penis, vagina, breasts – so the child can clearly communicate about any unsafe situations.
- **Educate your child about the key body safety messages they need to know:** private parts are private, they have a right to say “no” to any kind of touch, and secrets are not okay.
- **Whenever possible, choose group rather than one child/one adult situations.** If you enroll your child in private instruction, e.g. music lessons, tutoring, etc., approach the instructors confidently and tell them that you want to reduce risks of sexual abuse just as you know they do.

- **Ask the director of your child's youth program what policies they have in place to prevent sexual abuse.**

- Do they routinely train their staff about sexual abuse prevention?
- Do they use the latest interview and screening tools when selecting prospective employees and volunteers?
- Do they have a Code of Conduct that details inappropriate behaviors and boundary violations?
- **Listen for cues** that might indicate your child needs to talk about confusing or inappropriate touching or unsafe situations e.g., “Why does she have to babysit me again?”

We are all bystanders who must react responsibly!

Key Facts

- Children rarely lie about being sexually abused.
- Abuse happens in all cultural, racial, and economic settings.
- 90% of cases involve a person the child trusts with 1/3 being family members.
- Females, children and teens can also abuse.
- An estimated 87% of sexual abuse cases are never reported to law enforcement.
- More information at www.EnoughAbuse.org and www.d2l.org

If a child discloses sexual abuse, remain calm and say:

**“I believe you.
It's not your fault.
You're brave to tell me.”**

Step up to report the abuse.

In Pennsylvania, call ChildLine at
1-800-932-0313
toll-free, 24 hours/day.

Sexual abuse survivor information:
www.RAINN.org
www.MaleSurvivor.org