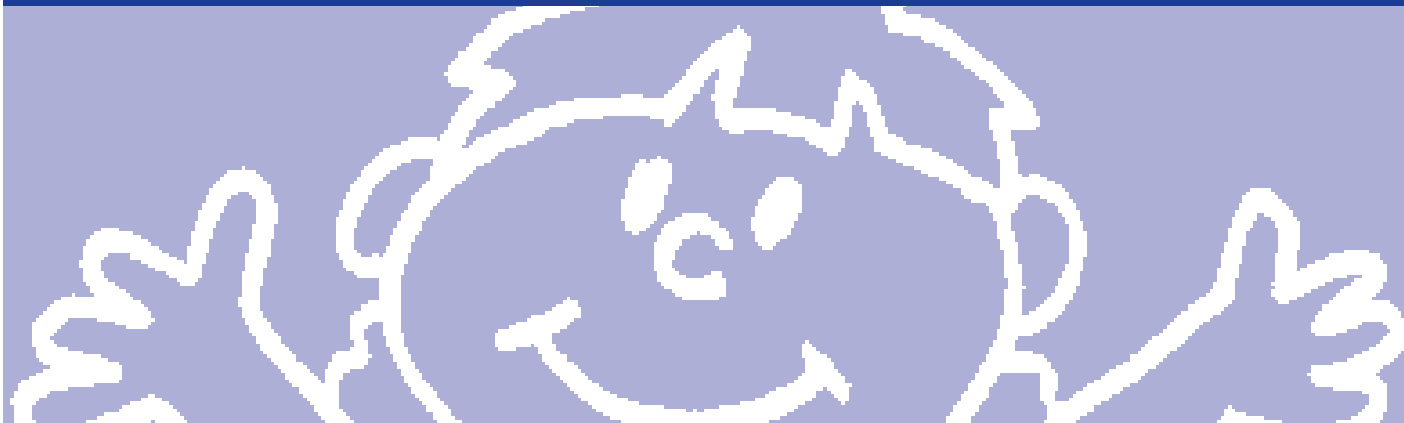


Children First: Safe and Secure



Section II—Kid's Corner

How To Tell About Abuse

What is Child Abuse?

Child abuse is when an adult hurts a child and it is not by accident. There are several kinds of child abuse:

- ◆ Physical abuse is when an adult hurts you by hitting or beating you.
- ◆ Emotional abuse is when an adult says things that make you feel like a bad person.
- ◆ Neglect is when an adult hurts you by keeping food, care, and shelter away from you.
- ◆ Sexual abuse is when an adult touches the private parts of your body, has you touch the private parts of his or her body, tries to get you to take off your clothes, or touches or kisses you in a way that scares you.

Who Abuses Kids?

Most adults care about kids and never abuse them, but some adults lose their tempers or can't control themselves. Sometimes strangers abuse kids, but sometimes kids are abused by someone they know, like a friend of the family, a neighbor, a teacher, a minister, or even a parent or stepparent.

Why would someone abuse a kid?

Adults who abuse children have a problem and needs to get help to stop hurting kids. Even nice people can do bad things.

Is it my fault if this happens to me?

NO!! Some kids blame themselves, but it is the adult who must be blamed. Adults might tell you that you are bad and the abuse is your fault. But no matter what, if you are abused, it is NEVER your fault.

Will anyone believe me?

YES!! There are adults who believe you and who will help you. Some adults may not want to believe that you have been abused. If any adult tells you to forget about it, tell someone else, and keep telling until someone listens.

How can I stop it?

1. Talk to an adult you trust. If one adult does not believe you, don't give up. Keep trying until you find an adult who believes you and can help you.
2. Practice saying NO loud and clear so adults know you really mean it.
3. Call the police immediately...Dial 911.
4. Call the Child Abuse Hotline...Dial 1-800-252-5400.

Things to remember

There are some important things for you to remember if you are abused:

- ◆ It's your body.
- ◆ No one has the right to touch you. You can say NO.
- ◆ Abuse is never your fault.
- ◆ Even if you don't say NO, it is never your fault.
- ◆ Abuse always hurts.
- ◆ It can hurt your feelings or your body.
- ◆ Keep telling until someone listens.

Even if the first person you tell doesn't help you, someone will. Telling the right person is how you stop abuse. What happens next is not your fault. When you tell someone about child abuse, things may be difficult for a while. But the abuse will end, and you and the abuser can both get help.