

How do you prevent sexual abuse? By being there for your child. At home, at play, at games. By providing your children with love, affection and honesty every day. By being interested in what they are doing, where they are and who they're with. By encouraging them to talk to you. By explaining to them in an age-appropriate manner what areas of their bodies may not be touched by anyone else and why.

Who can your child tell if something happens? You? Who else? Who can they talk to at school?

No secrets Sex abusers who target children thrive on secrecy. They manipulate children into keeping what they do as 'their secret.' Don't allow secrets of any kind in your family. Tell your child that they should tell you if anyone wants them to keep a secret and what it is.

No opportunity. No abuse Being seen to be involved in our children's lives practically eliminates the opportunity for sexual abuse to happen. Be aware that abuse can happen in your own home, sometimes in plain sight right in front of you or in the other room. Be suspicious if your child is receiving attention from other adults or adolescents; including gifts, money, treats, shopping trips, candy.

Why do people sexually abuse children? Because they want to and they can by looking, and waiting, for the opportunity.

How many types of sexual abuse are there? Three. Rape (vaginal or anal intercourse), molestation (inappropriate touching, oral sex, exposing private parts to a child, exposing child to pornographic materials, talking to a child about sexual acts or in a sexual manner) and exploitation (taking sexual or naked photographs of a child, child prostitution).

Signs of abuse Child or child's friend tells you about abuse, abrupt mood changes, fear of certain people, anxiety, depression, changes in behavior, anger, nightmares, fears, rage, behavioral and emotional issues, inappropriate level of sexual knowledge for the child's age, unexplained bruises, blood or fluid stains in underwear, sexually transmitted diseases in the mouth, vagina or anus, pregnancy.

Report abuse to the police The police will advise you what they will do and what you should do. They may involve Child Protective Services to ensure that the child and other children in the home are safe. They may arrange for the child to be examined by caring health professionals. They may arrange a forensic interview so the child's story can be recorded. This may cause upset in your family. Reporting is the right thing to do to ensure your child is safe and the perpetrator is brought to justice. It is never the child's fault that this has happened, it is the fault of the perpetrator.

ONLY YOU CAN
PROTECT YOUR CHILD
FROM SEXUAL ABUSE



United States/Canada
www.abusewatch.net

Ireland/UK/Europe
www.abusewatch.eu

Africa, Australia and New Zealand
www.abusewatch.info

**'If your child has something
to tell you, listen. It may come
in the form of whisper'**

One Child International
www.1child.net

SPEAKING OUT FOR THOSE
WHO CAN'T - CHILDREN



ONE CHILD
INTERNATIONAL

HOW TO PROTECT
YOUR CHILD FROM
SEXUAL ABUSE

(& WHAT TO DO IF IT HAPPENS)

'I didn't know **who** to tell. Worse, I didn't know **how** to tell.' - Child victim now an adult

How to protect your child from sexual abuse

Be aware Sexual abuse of children occurs every day. Child sex abuse occurs in urban, suburban and rural areas and among all ethnic, racial and socioeconomic groups, including yours. One in 4 girls, one in six boys are sexually abused, most by someone they know.

Who sexually abuses children? Family members - mom, dad, brothers, sisters, grand-fathers, grand-mothers, step-fathers, step-mothers, step-siblings, cousins, uncles, aunts. Family friends - friends of brothers and sisters, friends of parents, neighbors, babysitters, clergy, music instructors, sports coaches, bus drivers, scout leaders, doctors, therapists - the list is long. Be aware that organized pedophiles volunteer or work for organizations serving children. Organizations serving children should have a paired chaperone policy to prevent opportunities for pedophiles. Family and friends represent 90% of abuse cases, strangers 10%. That means that the main source of abuse is from within or around the child's own home.

Intuition We have an inherent instinct for danger to ourselves and to our children. Use it. If your instinct tells you something is wrong, it is. If someone wants time alone with your child, refuse. Beware of anyone who wants to be with your child more than you do.

Give them words There are areas of a child's body - boys and girls - that should not be touched by anyone other than the child even if it makes the child feel good. Tell your child that nobody is allowed to touch their chests, genitals or bottom, even if it's just tickling or playing. Nor should the child touch anyone else's parts, even if they're asked to. If this happens, no matter who does it, they should tell you.

Teach children their body parts Children should know what their private body parts are called - by the real names not childish names. A penis is a penis. A vagina is a vagina. **The diagrams on the right clearly show what parts should not be touched by anyone except the child.**

Listen to them. Believe them If a child discloses that they have been sexually abused, believe them. They may tell you that they have been tickled or fondled. Listen to what they're telling you. It is important that you tell them that what happened is not their fault and that you believe them no matter who it was that abused them.

Don't be an abuse target Sex offenders target single mothers for romance or marriage as a means of accessing their children. They'll say or do whatever it takes to get access to their children or grandchildren including marrying them.

Children's body parts

