



We owe it to our children to keep them safe so that they can live healthy and happy lives. No one has the right to take that away from them. Sexual abuse causes unhappiness and deep embedded issues in the lives of victims.

Sexual abusers don't look a certain way and can be our closest loved ones. People are ashamed to bring that out in the open. That is why the sexual abuse epidemic stays so hidden. The abuse sometimes becomes a family secret.

Keeping it a secret causes the cycle to continue, which also puts others at risk. Bringing sexual abuse out in the open helps to eliminate and decrease the number of potential abuse cases.

Getting victims to talk about their abuse helps break the cycle and allows healing to begin. Educating ourselves on prevention and awareness helps people live healthier lives.

Speaking up and out is our only weapon!

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*Advocate for Abuse Victims
Prevention & Awareness*

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***How do we keep our children safe
from becoming victims of sexual
abuse?***

**PREVENTION & AWARENESS
ARE THE KEYS**

Ways to keep our children safe

- When leaving your child in the care of others be sure you check to see who else will be inside of the home.
- If you notice abnormal sexual behavior in an adult, listen to your instincts.
- Pay attention to adults who want to be alone with children and who often volunteer to babysit.
- Keep an eye out for adults who want to sit children on their laps, tickle, and have too much physical contact with them.
- Pay attention to the behaviors of adults who frequently talk about how children's bodies are developing.
- Adults showing interest in child pornography may be showing a sign that something is wrong.
- If you have a young child that complains about having pain in their genital area, have them checked out by a doctor immediately.
- Make it a point to frequently check the www.familywatchdog.us website to see what sex offenders are living in your area.

Raising Awareness

- Talk to your children about inappropriate touching and educate them about their bodies.
- Don't hesitate to report someone to the authorities if you have proof that they are sexually abusing someone.
- Re-assure your children that it is okay to tell you anything.
- If you suspect that someone is being sexually abused, don't be afraid to ask them.
- If you notice irrational behavior with your children don't shrug it off as nothing. Sometime children who have been abused will act out.
- If you suspect that someone you know is sexually abusing children, confront them. Try to find out without accusing them.
- If your child acts uncomfortable or fearful of certain adults, talk to them and find out why.
- If your child tells you that someone has inappropriately touched them, believe them. Most children usually don't lie about these types of things.

Important Facts

- 1 in every 4 girls are sexually assaulted before the age of 18.
- 1 in every 7 boys are sexually assaulted before the age of 18.
- 90-95% of all sexual abuse cases go unreported.
- Approximately 1/3 of all juvenile victims of sexual abuse are children younger than 6 yrs. of age.
- Most sexual abuse of children is committed by someone the child already knows, trusts and often love.
- Surprisingly, as much as half of all sexual abuse is committed by another adolescent or child.
- Penetration is not the only form of sexual abuse.
- Incest is sexual activity between closely related persons often within the immediate family, which is illegal.
- Many victims never tell about being abused because they feel ashamed or feel they did something to cause it to happen.