

Know the facts.

Realities should dictate your decisions regarding your child.

- One in every four girls and one in every six boys will be a victim of sexual abuse before age 18.
- In 93% of reported cases, the abuser is someone the child knows, often a relative or family friend.
- As many as 40 million Americans experienced sexual victimization as children.
- Only one in ten child victims ever report the abuse.
- Sexually abused children who keep it a secret or who tell and are not believed are at far greater risk than the general population for psychological, emotional, social and physical problems.
- Sexual abuse does not always require force; children are often bribed or coerced into sexual acts.
- Sexual abuse often develops over a period of time. It may start with a lesser incident but gets more extreme as time goes on.

Reduce the risk.

Most offenders cultivate relationships with their victims over time. By choosing multiple adult or multiple child situations, you'll lower the risk.

- Understand that abusers often become well acquainted with potential victims and place themselves in family activities or interests of the victims to earn their trust.
- Be sure your child understands that it is your job to protect them.
- Teach your child that it is not just strangers who might try to hurt them. Explain that even if somebody is a friend, or a family member, inappropriate touching is still wrong.

Talk to your child.

Make sure he or she knows that abuse is something you can, and want to talk about.

- Talk early and often to children about their bodies. Let them know what unsafe touching is, and that it is never okay.
- Explain that nobody has the right to touch them in ways that make them feel uncomfortable.
- Listen quietly and attentively because it is difficult for children to talk about these issues.
- Creating a comfortable relationship with them will help initiate conversation.
- Know how children communicate. Because they are often made to feel ashamed they do not always give the entire story.

Be aware.

Although there are no obvious signs of sexual abuse, certain behaviors may signal a child is being sexually abused. Emotional signs can be more obvious than physical signs and in some children there are no signs at all. Children may show:

- Fear or dislike of certain people
- Adult sexual behavior
- Persistent sexual behavior with other children, themselves, toys or pets
- Hints or indirect comments about the abuse

Be prepared/Take action.

Remember that your reaction has a powerful influence on vulnerable children.

- Know that children are afraid of disappointing their parents or disrupting their family situations.

- Let them know you can and want to talk about these issues.
- Believe the child and make sure they know you believe them. Let them know they never have to keep a secret and if they are confused by something an adult did or said, they can talk about it. Make sure the child knows that it is your job to protect them.
- If you suspect there is a case of child sexual abuse you should immediately contact the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) at 1-800-RI-CHILD. They have trained professionals who will assist you. If you need additional resources, please contact the Victims of Crime Helpline at 1-800-494-8100, 24 - hours -a -day.

Believe victims and support survivors.

Respect and understand the issues that victims face. Never blame the victim.

- Enlighten your family and community about the prevalence of child sexual abuse and how to end sexual violence.
- Community outreach and prevention are key to dealing with the issue of sexual abuse—get involved. Volunteer or financially support organizations that fight the tragedy of child sexual abuse.

The Sexual Assault & Trauma Resource Center of RI needs your support and help to prevent sexual abuse. Through the following services, we work to reduce the trauma and prevalence of sexual abuse and violence.

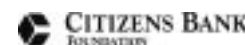
- Individual and group counseling
- Prevention education
- Advocacy
- RI Children's Advocacy Center

For information, to volunteer, or to make a donation, call SATRC at 401-421-4100 or visit us at www.satrc.org.

Sponsored by:



CVS/pharmacy



To learn more or to sign up for one of our Family Workshops please contact the Sexual Assault & Trauma Resource Center of RI: 401-421-4100 ext. 212 or visit www.satrc.org



what is child sexual abuse?

Any sexual contact between a child and an adult or older child. Sexual abuse or assault of a child includes a wide range of behaviors:

- Actual or attempted penetration of the anus or vagina
- Oral sexual contact
- Fondling or touching the child's private parts or forcing the child to touch another's private parts
- Exposing children to adult sexual activity or pornographic materials
- Having children perform in pornographic movies or pose for pornographic materials

Sexual Assault
& Trauma
RECOVERY CENTER OF PROVIDENCE, RI

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Befriend her.
Gain her trust.
Talk openly with her.

The average sex offender
knows exactly how to communicate
with your child.

Do you?