

# WHAT TO DO IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE

Is your child acting differently or have they vocalized that they were being abused?



## KNOW THE SIGNS OF CHILD ABUSE

- Child is often withdrawn and anxious or shows extremes in behaviors.
- The child acts inappropriate for their age, acting older or younger.
- Be aware if the child has frequent unexplained injuries or bruises.
- Displays knowledge or acts in a sexual nature too advanced for the child's age.
- Trouble walking or sitting.
- Does not want to change clothing in front of others or doesn't want to participate in physical activities.
- Young girl becomes pregnant or child develops STDs
- Child runs away from home or is weary of returning home.

# HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD

**GATHER ALL THE DETAILS YOU CAN.**

**AND KEEP ALL THE EVIDENCE INCLUDING TEXTS AND CLOTHING.**

## CALL THE POLICE

### You can report child abuse ANONYMOUSLY.

When reporting, please keep these tips in mind:

Be specific as you can. The more details, the more they have to look into when they do their report.

Understand that you may not learn of the outcome. Due to laws in the United States, you will probably not be updated in the case and outcome.

If you see the abuse continuing, make sure to keep calling the police and reporting it. Each child abuse report is a snapshot of what is going on in the family.

### **Other Important numbers you may find helpful:**

**Child Sexual Abuse** - Darkness to Light  
1.866.FOR.LIGHT (1.866.367.5444) available 24/7

**Family Violence** - Domestic Violence Hotline  
1.900.799.SAFE (1.800.799.7233) available 24/7

**Help for Parents** - National Parent Helpline  
1.855.4APARENT (1.855.427.2736) 10-7 PST, weekdays

**Mental Illness** - National Alliance on Mental Illness  
1.800.950.NAMI (1.800.950.6264) 10-6 ET, weekdays

**Missing/Abducted Children** - National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
1.800.THE.LOST (1.800.843.5678) available 24/7

**Youth in trouble/runaways** - National Runaway Safeline  
1.800.RUNAWAY (1.800.786.2929) available 24/7

**Suicide Prevention** - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline  
1.800.273.TALK (1.800.273.8255) available 24/7

Being there for your child is the first step to getting them the help they need. Make sure that child knows they can trust you to do the right thing, so never interrogate, it can scare the child into thinking they did something wrong. So always **reassure the child that they did nothing wrong and remain calm while avoiding denial.**

If you suspect your child is being abused remember to follow these steps:

1. Stay calm. Do not let your emotions dictate your actions.
2. If this is an emergency situation, call 911 or local police ASAP.
3. Document everything from this point forward, including dates, times, and places. KEEP all documents including that from therapists, doctors, police and teachers. Get copies of everything.
4. Have your child evaluated - talk to medical and psychology professionals.
5. Begin investigation. Talk to your police to see what you can do to prevent further harm and get the justice deserved.
6. Talk to CPS, DHR or DCS. Initiate an investigation.
7. Get an attorney if needed.

## HELP BREAK THE CYCLE OF CHILD ABUSE!

National Child Abuse  
Hotline  
United States and Canada  
**1.800.422.4453**  
available 24/7



*If you have a history of child abuse, having your own children may trigger strong memories that you may have repressed. Remember, help and support are available. Abuse is never the correct answer.*

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