

WHEN A CHILD DISCLOSES



HOW TO RESPOND, FIRST BELIEVE THEM!

ONE in THREE Children NEVER DISCLOSE abuse. Over 74% do not DISCLOSE IN FIRST YEAR. Over 50% have not DISCLOSED IN 5 YEARS. Children face huge barriers to stop them sharing. Intra-familial abuse is a massive barrier to, clouded with complicated emotions like loyalty, love, fear and a wish to protect other family members.

1 STAY CALM

REMAIN CALM. Try not to panic, be shocked, or show anger, etc.

REASSURE, "IT'S REALLY GOOD YOU'VE TOLD ME." Reassure the child that they are not in trouble

PROVIDE COMFORT BY SAYING, "IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT." Abusers often blame their victims, so comfort and reassure the child they are not responsible for what happened.

DON'T INSULT THE OFFENDER. Children are protective of people they care about, even their abusers. Your negative response may alter the child's statements

2 LISTEN

LISTEN TO THE CHILD. If the child is having trouble finding the words, be patient. Allow the child to tell you what happened in their own words.

DON'T INTERROGATE. The child's statements are the main evidence in a case, so it's important to not "taint" the evidence by asking leading questions or suggesting what may have happened.

SAY, "I BELIEVE YOU." False accusations by children are extremely rare.

BE AWARE OF YOUR OWN FEELINGS. Try to not project these feelings onto the child.

3 REPORT

ENSURE THE CHILD IS NOT IN IMMEDIATE DANGER, THEN REPORT THE INCIDENT. Use the child's vocabulary when reporting.

DON'T KEEP IT A SECRET. By reporting abuse, we demonstrate that children are valued and worthy of protection. Reporting abuse helps to stop the cycle of abuse.

HAVE THE CHILD EXAMINED. Make contact with a medical professional to complete a wellness exam of the child.

UTILISE THERAPY RESOURCES. Ensure that the child receives a professional follow-up visit with a victim's advocate or therapist.

TYPES OF DISCLOSURE

Disclosures can be direct or indirect. Most likely a disclosure will be indirect, which means the child does not share the details of the abuse without being prompted, or does so in a roundabout way. An example of this is, "Sometimes my step-dad keeps me up at night". A disclosure can also be disguised, for example: "I have a cousin who is being abused." In other cases the disclosure can be through hints or gestures, or even through another child "My friend told me..."

THE CHILD IS HOPING THAT A PARENT, TEACHER OR CAREGIVER WILL GET THE "HINT" THEY ARE OFFERING.

REMEMBER

ADULTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE.

RESEARCH SHOWS OVER 94% of Child Sexual Abuse Reports are True

YOUR RESPONSE TO ANY DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE CAN BE THE FIRST IMPORTANT STEP IN STOPPING THE ABUSE AND PROTECTING THE CHILD FROM FURTHER HARM.

CALL FOR INFORMATION, ADVICE OR IF YOU JUST WANT TO TALK

Prevent ed
ABUSE PREVENTION EDUCATION

IF YOU SUSPECT ABUSE CALL NSPCC HELPLINE

0800 800 5000

IF YOU'RE A CHILD & WANT HELP CALL CHILDLINE

0800 1111

NNECA
NATIONAL NETWORK TO END CHILD ABUSE

WWW.NNECA.ORG.UK

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