

Child Sexual Assault Action Suggestions for Parents



Brought to you by Happy Bear and Family Service & Guidance Center



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Improving children's lives since 1904

Sexual assault of children is much more common than most of us realize. It may be preventable if children have good preparation. To provide protection and preparation as parents, we can:

- Pay careful attention to who is around our children.
Unwanted touches may come from someone we like and trust
- Back up a child's right to say "No"
- Encourage communication by taking seriously what our children say
- Take a second look at signals of potential danger
- Refuse to leave our children in the company of those we do not trust
- Include information about sexual assault when teaching about safety
- Provide specific definitions and examples of sexual assault
- Remind children that even "nice" people sometimes do mean things
- Urge children to tell us about anyone who causes them to be uncomfortable.
- Prepare children to deal with bribes and threats, as well as possible physical force
- Virtually eliminate secrets between us and our children
- Teach children how to say "No", ask for help, and control who touches them and how they are touched.
- Model self-protective and limit-setting behavior for our children

Should it ever become necessary to help a child recover from a sexual assault, as parents, we can:

- Listen carefully and understand how children tell us what has happened to them
- Support the child for telling by praise, belief, sympathy, and lack of blame
- Know local resources, and choose help carefully
- Provide opportunities to talk about the assault
- Provide opportunities for the entire family to go through a recovery process
- Allow the child the privacy to tell. Do not hold the conversation in front of others
- Do not assume we know how the child feels about the abuse or the abuser. Most children have mixed feelings. It is not helpful for you to tell them how to feel.
- Do not overreact or minimize the incident. The effects are different for each child and it may take time to assess the trauma.
- Call for help! There are experts in the field of treating sexual assault. Find one.

Sexual assault affects each of us, whether or not our own children are assaulted. To help deal with this social problem, we each can:

- Provide sympathetic care and support to those who have been victimized.
- Recognize that offenders do not change without intervention.
- Organize neighborhood programs to support each other's efforts to protect children.
- Encourage schools to provide information about sexual assault as a problem of health and safety.
- Organize community groups to support educational, treatment and law enforcement programs.

Information taken from No More Secrets: Protecting Your Child From Sexual Assault. By Caren Adams and Jennifer Ray, 1981. Impact Publishers, Inc., San Luis Obispo, CA 93406; and brought to you by The Youth Development Center of Family Service and Guidance Center of Topeka, Inc.

To report child sexual assault, call:
357-4763 or 1-800-922-5330
Topeka Area SRS Office
915 SW Harrison Topeka, KS 66612

For information on or treatment of child sexual assault, call: 232-5005



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