



# SEXUAL ABUSE PREVENTION

## WARNING SIGNS OF ABUSE



- Nightmares and/or trouble sleeping
- Bed wetting
- Change in appetite
- Fear of certain people, places, activities
- Mood swings: Rage, Anger, Fear, anxiety, insecure or withdrawn
- Depression
- Aggression
- Feeling shameful or guilty
- Isolating oneself or withdrawing from specific individual(s)
- Resisting removing clothes during appropriate times (bedtime, bath time)
- Change in academic performance
- Running away from home
- Suicidal thoughts
- Acting out sexually and/or exhibiting adult sexual behaviors, knowledge, and language

## WARNING SIGNS MORE COMMON IN ADOLESCENTS

- Eating Disorders
- Self Injury
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse
- Promiscuous activity
- Running away
- Suicidal thoughts
- Depression and Anxiety
- Fear
- New academic and/or behavioral problems



## SIGNS OF AN ADULT SEXUALLY ABUSING YOUR CHILD



- Giving a child special attention
- Trying to spend a lot of time alone with the child
- Buying child expensive gifts or giving them money
- Treating a child as a "favorite"
- Physical affection towards child: kissing, hugging, holding hands, or wanting to be very close to a child

## IF A CHILD DISCLOSES ABUSE

- Listen to the child
- Let them know that telling you was the right thing to do
- Tell them this is not their fault
- Say you believe them
- Let the child know they are safe now
- Report abuse immediately to police

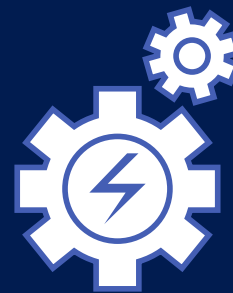


## PREVENTION TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS

- Talk to your child about trusting their intuition
- Use non-blaming and empowering language (i.e. "you can ask for help" vs. "you should ask for help")
- Teach them the difference between safe and unsafe secrets
- Tell your child they will not be in trouble and it is never their fault
- Talk to your kids about safe and unsafe touches
- Never force your children to give people hugs and kisses
- Keep in mind that over 90% of the time children are being abused by someone they know and trust
- Make this an ongoing discussion with your child

## RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

- <http://www.erinslaw.org/for-parents/>
- <https://www.nctsn.org/resources/caring-kids-what-parents-need-know-about-sexual-abuse>
- <https://www.stopitnow.org/ohc-content/resources-for-parents-of-children-who-have-been-sexually-abused>
- <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/departments/socialservices/abuse/cac.html>
- <http://www.turnaroundinc.org/>
- <https://hruth.org/>
- <http://www.mcasa.org/>



## SOURCES

- [Erin's Law](#)
- [National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)
- [Connecticut K-12 Sexual Assault & Abuse Prevention & Awareness Program Guidelines](#)