



# Protecting Your Child from Abuse

Adults have the duty to protect a child from abuse. By recognizing the signs of abuse, any adult can safeguard a child from the physical and emotional damage of abuse.

## ACTION PLAN TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM ABUSE

- **Teach** children not to talk to strangers, even when offering rides, gifts or favors.
- **Explain** that it is OK to say NO to an adult (including relatives) if the child does not feel right doing what is asked.
- **Build trust** with the child so he/she feels comfortable coming to you immediately if something does not seem right.
- **Carefully check** the background of any adult wanting to spend time alone with your child.
- **Tell children** that it is important to go directly home from school unless they are notified otherwise. Establish a policy of calling a parent if they change locations.
- **Be open** to talking to the children about sexual abuse and their right to stop it.
- **If abuse is suspected**, call your local police, DCF or the Parent Helpline immediately.

## WARNING SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Unexplained cuts, bruises, burns or fractures
- Sudden vision or hearing loss
- Human bite marks
- Problems in school
- Fear of adults
- Overly violent or timid behavior

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## WARNING SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

- Walking or sitting seems difficult to child
- Pain or itching in genital area
- Stomach aches
- Sudden interest in or knowledge of sex
- Change in hygiene
- Sleep problems/bedwetting
- Behavioral problems
- Sudden shyness or depression
- Fear of a particular adult or family member
- Sudden change in behavior

### TAKE SERIOUSLY ANY COMPLAINTS EXPRESSED BY CHILDREN

## WHO CAN YOU TURN TO FOR HELP?

- School officials such as counselors, nurses, psychologists or the principal.
- Social service organizations such as your local children's services or health department.
- Your child's pediatrician, nurse or family physician.

For more online tip cards, visit [www.KCSL.org](http://www.KCSL.org) under the "Resources" tab.



Parenting questions? Call the Parent Helpline: 1-800-CHILDREN or email/text 1800children@kcsl.org



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