

Stay Alert, Know The Symptoms/Signs Of Child Sexual Abuse.

- **Listen, believe and trust what your child tells you.**
 - Children rarely lie about child sexual abuse.
- **Be alert for signs of sexual abuse (however, know that physical signs are often not present)**
 - Physical signs include stained or torn underwear.
 - Trouble walking or sitting.
 - Bruising, swelling or bleeding in the genital area.
 - Frequent headaches or stomach aches.
 - Difficulty eating or swallowing.
 - STDs
- **Emotional signs include:**
 - Depression, anxiety, anger or mood swings.
 - Fear of certain places, people or activities.
 - Nightmares or sudden fear of the dark.
- **Behavioral signs include:**
 - Acting out sexually or knowledge of sex that is not age appropriate.
 - Self-destructive behavior such as hair pulling or cutting.
 - Decline in school performance.
 - Acting younger than their age (bed wetting, thumb sucking)
 - Alcohol or drug abuse.

Get Involved In Your Community.

- **Donate time and resources to the Children's Advocacy Center and prevention programs.**
- **Speak out on issues of child sexual abuse.**

Teaching children how to protect themselves is not nearly enough. Protecting children from sexual abuse is very much the responsibility of adults.

There's no excuse for child abuse.

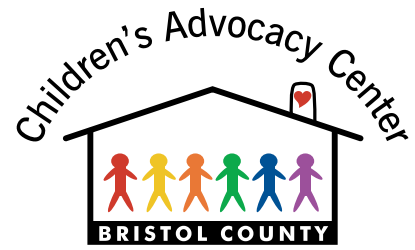
To report child sexual abuse call the Department of Children and Families at 800-792-5200 or your local police.

For more information call the Children's Advocacy Center, or visit:

stopitnow.org

d2i.org

onewithcourage.org



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for child abuse*



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The Children's Advocacy Center of Bristol County (CAC) is a private, 501c(3) non-profit agency serving children and intellectually disabled adults who have been victims of sexual abuse, severe physical abuse or witness to violence. The CAC provides a child-focused environment for the investigation, and ongoing treatment for victims and their families.

BE INFORMED!

- **Did you know:**
 - 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be abused before the age 18.
 - In 90% of child sexual abuse cases, the abuser is someone the family knows and trusts.
 - Between 30-40% of child sexual abuse is perpetrated by a family member.
- **The typical child sexual abuse perpetrator:**
 - Is probably well known and liked by you and your child.
 - Can be a respected member of the community.
 - Can be a man or a woman, married or single.
 - Can be of any race, religion, or sexual preference.
 - Can be an adolescent or adult.
 - Can be a family member, relative, family friend, teacher, clergy or baby-sitter. Anyone who comes in contact with children.

Talk To Your Children

We don't think twice about teaching our children how to cross the street safely. Teaching our children how to keep their bodies safe from sexual abuse should be just as natural.

- **Talk openly with your child.**
 - Educate your child about their private body parts so they feel comfortable speaking to you about this topic.
- **Teach your children about appropriate and inappropriate touching.**
 - Give your child specific instructions about where on their body they should not be touched by others.
- **Give your child a clear message that they don't have to submit to unwanted touching by anyone.**
 - Let your child decide on a family member's hug/kiss, uncle's tickle, or sitting on your friend's lap. Respect no.
- **Help your child identify other safe grownups.**
- **Understand why children don't tell.**
 - Shame.
 - Confusion.
 - Fear of disappointing parents.
 - Fear of threat from the abuser.
- **Understand how children tell.**
 - Children may disclose to a trusted friend or trusted adult other than the parent.
 - Disclosures are often partial and may be accidental.
 - Children will often shut down or retract disclosures if you react negatively or emotionally.

Minimize Opportunities

- **You can dramatically reduce the risk by eliminating one-adult/one-child situations.**
 - More than 80% of child sexual abuse occurs when the abuser and victim are isolated.
- **Stay involved in your child's activities.**
 - Attend practices, recitals and other activities.
- **Know those who watch your children. (Even family members)**
 - Ask lots of questions before hiring a baby sitter.
 - Do they have concerning behaviors or a related criminal history?
- **Let others know that you and your child are educated about child sexual abuse.**
- **Know how perpetrators of child sexual abuse gain access to your child.**
 - They appear to be someone you can trust and rely on.
 - They pay attention to your child and make your child feel special.
 - They may know as much about what your kids like as you do: (music, clothing, video games, language, etc.)
 - They buy gifts or treats your child will like.
 - They isolate your child, choosing activities so they can be together—alone.
 - If you are a single mother, they may prey on your fears about your child lacking a father figure.
 - They choose careers that involve working with children and spend their free time helping children.
 - They take advantage of your child's natural curiosity about sex by telling "dirty" jokes, showing pornography and by playing sexual games.
 - They may touch your child in your presence so that your child thinks you are comfortable with the way they are being touched.

Preventing Child Abuse Is An Adult Issue.

The first step in preventing child sexual abuse is to take responsibility for protecting your children. While you should teach your children about personal safety and appropriate boundaries, children cannot be responsible for protecting themselves from sexual predators. You are the first line of defense.

**For more information
call 508-674-6111 or visit cacofbc.org**