

What should I do if a child tells me about abuse?

If a child tells you about abuse, the most reassuring things you can say are:

...I believe you. Always believe the young person.

...I'm sorry that happened to you. Listen and remain calm.

...It's not your fault. Abuse is NEVER the child's fault.

...I'm glad you told me. Praise the child for his or her courage. Let the child know that whatever happens, he or she did the right thing in telling.

...Together we're going to get some help. Tell the child that the problem is one for which you need to get additional help. Then report to the RCMP or Family Services immediately. It's not your job to gather proof or investigate, just to report.

Know where to get support for the child and report if necessary. Adults are responsible for the safety and protection of children.

Where To Go For Help

- Tell the RCMP
- Tell Family Services
- Visit or call your local health centre
- Call Kids' Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868
- Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Helpline
7 p.m.–12 a.m. (EST) 1-800-265-3333
- Ask for help: community health nurses, faith programs, and community services often provide advice and assistance if you contact them for help.

Funded by:



Developed with assistance from:



Child Abuse

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TYPES OF ABUSE

Abuse can take many forms. Here are a few of the more common types:

Emotional Abuse is a pattern of destructive behavior that attacks a child's sense of self-worth and confidence. It may include insults, humiliation, threatening to harm, put-downs, yelling, and extreme jealousy.

Physical Abuse occurs when a person deliberately injures or threatens to injure a child. This includes pushing, shoving, hitting, beating, physical abuse with a weapon, torture.

Physical Neglect is failing to provide or depriving a child of their basic needs and human rights, withholding food or care. Physical neglect can be deliberately or unintentionally committed.

Sexual Abuse is the use of a child or youth for sexual purposes by an adult or an older child or youth. It may include kissing, touching, intercourse or oral sex. It is a broad term that encompasses sexual abuse, sexual harassment, forced prostitution and sexual trafficking.

Raising children can sometimes be challenging. If you grew up in a house where violence was normal, it may be

difficult to recognize when your behavior is getting out of control.

It is never too late to change your behavior!

The WARNING SIGNS that you might be crossing the line into abusive behavior are:

1. You can't stop the anger—you feel like you don't have any control over your emotions
2. You feel emotionally disconnected from your child
3. Meeting the daily needs of your child is difficult
4. Other people have expressed concerns about your actions

Although it may be hard to recognize these problems, the key is to not become defensive but to do something about it.

HELP IS AVAILABLE

Contact your local health centre, Family Services or someone you trust to get help.



DUTY TO REPORT

If you know of a child in need of protection, it is your duty to report this to the police. Contact your local RCMP, Social Services office, or tell a teacher, nurse or social worker.

If you are a child being abused or neglected, do not keep it a secret. Tell a teacher, relative, nurse, social worker or any other adult you can trust.

There is a legislated responsibility—mandatory, not optional—for any person who is aware of, or SUSPECTS, that a child is being, or at risk of being, abused to report it to Family Services and/or RCMP.

The Child and Family Services Act **Duty to Report** states: "A person who has information or reasonable grounds to believe that a child needs protection, without delay, report the matter

(a) to a Child Protection Worker; or

(b) if a Child Protection Worker is not available, to a peace officer or an authorized person."