

Abuse Disclosure for Parents



1. Stay calm.

Staying calm at a time like this will be very difficult for you, but your reaction will affect how your child responds. Try not to raise your voice or cry.

2. Listen.

Listen carefully to what your child tells you. Your child will be scared and may not give you many details. Ask questions like: “Can you tell me more about it?” “What did the person do?” “When did this happen?” or “How many times did this happen?”

3. Comfort your child.

Let your child know that you love him very much and that he has done nothing wrong. A big hug can work wonders. Don't ask your child why he didn't tell you sooner—that will just make him feel guilty.

4. Don't threaten or criticize the person who committed the abuse.

Although this is a natural response, avoid criticizing the person your child has identified as the abuser. Chances are, your child knows the person well and may even care very much for the person.

5. Contact the authorities.

Once you have learned all you can from your child, you should immediately contact the police or child protective services. Be sure to keep your child away from the person involved.