



We provide free literature to educate our readers about sexual abuse. You can help us stop sexual abuse by donating to our cause. Thank you for your support!

If You Discover Your Child Was Sexually Abused...

ReClaim Global helps adults heal from their childhood sexual abuse. Although this is our primary focus, we also want to educate others on how they can protect their children and support them should they learn sexual abuse has occurred. While we do not offer videos or literature for children, a parent who discovers abuse still has an enormous responsibility to help that child through this tragic experience.

As parents, the consequence of failing to help your child heal can be damaging and devastating to your child and family. The 15 vital steps below will equip you to aid your child through his/her abuse.

1. **Get the facts.** Gather information about the abuse, but do not pressure the child into saying what may or may not have occurred. This can work against you in a court of law. Be gentle when you talk to your child and avoid becoming emotional in these discussions. You want to create a comfortable environment for your child to tell you as much as he/she is willing to share.
2. **Take it seriously.** Once you have this report you must take it very seriously. We do not recommend that you confront the perpetrator(s). Instead, let the legal authorities handle it. You may begin by calling your local Sheriff's Office or your local Department of Children and Family Services in your community.
3. **Believe the child.** Always believe your child and understand that revealing abuse may cause a variety of complex emotions in him/her that may include guilt, embarrassment, shame, loyalty, and love towards his/her perpetrator(s). Do not rival about these issues but concentrate on protecting your child and other children from the perpetrator(s).
4. **Gently inquire.** If you find one child was sexually abused in your family, you must "gently" inquire with the other children in the home. It is very likely that if the perpetrator(s) got to one child then other children were molested.
5. **Harness your emotions.** If the perpetrator(s) is a family member, it will be hard for you to handle this situation. You must put your feelings aside and focus on the complete safety of your child and protecting other possible victims.
6. **Get counseling.** Once the legal authorities are involved, you must allow them the time to handle the situation. They will recommend counselors to you. It is beneficial, important, and necessary that you and your child receive sufficient counseling from quality experts in sexual abuse.
7. **It is too early to involve other family members.** Do not discuss the abuse with your family unless you are prepared to open yourself up to doubt, family wanting to keep the "secret" quiet, or others taking offense towards you for "ruining" their lives.
8. **Get proper representation.** Going through the legal process can be difficult and time consuming. Make sure you get proper representation from Victim's Advocates groups who are interested in solely helping you and your child get through this process.

9. **Do not leave sexual abuse unreported.** Keep in mind unreported sexual abuse can put your innocence in jeopardy. Trust the process of your local authorities.
10. **The perpetrator(s) may deny it.** It is highly likely that the perpetrator(s) will deny these charges and make elaborate attempts to explain his/her way out of it. These attempts may include calling the child a “liar”, threatening you and your child, and causing you to doubt you and your family’s ability to endure this type of situation.
11. **DO NOT EVER GIVE UP!** A pedophile, a molester, a pervert should always be reported. The average perpetrator gets to over 200 children in his/her lifetime. They are very sick individuals. You cannot cure them. They need to be incarcerated and kept away from other children.
12. **Forgiveness and protection.** Victims need to forgive their offender(s). Forgiveness is good. It will allow the victim and the family to go on with their lives. However, forgiveness can never be higher than the need for protecting future victims.
13. **Processing what has happened.** Keep in mind that a child is not able to express every aspect of the sexual abuse that has happened to him/her. They do not have the language to do so. They are dealing with embarrassment, awkwardness, lack of verbiage or language skills, fear, emotional incompetence, and ignorance about just how far sexual abuse is a violation of their bodies.
14. **Perpetrators go to extremes.** Understand perpetrators and the extremes they will go through to keep their secret quiet. Your child may have been threatened, belittled, groomed, coerced, rewarded, or even flattered during sexual abuse. These actions can cause significant life altering scars on their little souls.
15. **Ongoing relationships do not work.** Do not expect your child to have an ongoing relationship with his/her perpetrator(s) just because he/she is a parent. Unfortunately, ReClaim Global has discovered this with the thousands of victims we have worked with over the years. These ongoing relationships never work.

“One of the sexual abuse victims I worked with continued a relationship with her father, in her adult years, after he molested her during her teens. She said the relationship was good yet admitted it was awkward at times. Her father admitted later to having Christmas dinner conversations around the family, with her children — and all the while he was blissfully reminiscing about the times he molested her. He would always jerk off after she went home.”

-Dr. Kaye Smith