

## Help Yourself

- Tell someone you trust about what is happening to you.
- Try to avoid being alone with the abuser.



## Help Someone Else

If you know a child who is being sexually abused, you can help put a stop to it.

- If a friend tells you that they are being sexually abused, listen patiently, respectfully, and sympathetically. Avoid being judgmental and believe what your friend is telling you.
- Get a teacher, parent, or another adult to help. You won't be snitching; you'll be taking a stand against abuse.
- Talk to the child being abused and try to get them to talk to an adult. Offer to go with them.
- Report the abuser to an adult you trust.



[www.ncvc.org](http://www.ncvc.org)

1-800-FYI-CALL

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[www.victimservicecenter.org](http://www.victimservicecenter.org)

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## Child Sexual Abuse

### Information for Teens

*“Someone touched me  
in a way that made  
me feel bad...”*

## VICTIM SERVICE CENTER

*The Victim Service Center offers crisis counseling, information and referrals, and personal advocacy to victims of violent crime and their families, along with public education/awareness on violent crime victimization.*



**574-372-9539**

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## What is it?

Child sexual abuse includes many different acts. Some of these might include touching the vagina, penis, or anus of the victim; forcing someone to touch the abuser's vagina, penis, or anus; putting an object, penis, or finger into the vagina or anus of the victim; and showing the victim pictures or movies of other people undressed or having sex. Sexual abuse can happen to boys or girls of any race, ethnicity, or economic background.

According to the law, kids under a certain age cannot legally agree to sexual acts with anyone. In most states, you have to be at least 15-18 years old to be able to consent to sexual acts with someone, but the age differs from state to state. These laws are created to protect kids and teens.



The abuser can be an adult or an older child. Most of the time, the abuser knows or is related to the victim—like a neighbor, babysitter, friend of the family, or family member. The abuser can be someone the victim looks up to, likes, or trusts. When the victim and the abuser are in the same family, it is called incest. The only person responsible for this kind of behavior is the abuser.

Sometimes an abuser will threaten or hurt a victim in order to make them do what they want.



Most of the time, because the abuser is bigger, older, or more powerful than the victim, the abuser doesn't even have to

threaten them or hurt them to make victims do this. Victims are often afraid of what will happen if they don't cooperate, or if they tell.

## If you are a victim of child sexual abuse, you might ...

- Feel angry, sad, lonely or depressed
- Feel like you have no friends
- Feel guilty, even though the abuse is not your fault
- Want to hurt someone else or yourself
- Feel like taking steps to defend yourself
- Feel helpless to stop the abuser
- Feel hopeless that anything can be done
- Feel anxious all the time
- Feel bad about yourself or your body

## You're not alone

- Research suggests that child sexual abuse is very under-reported. It is estimated that one child is abused or neglected every 36 seconds.
- 1 in 3 girls are sexually abused before age 18 and 1 in 6 boys are sexually abused before age 16.
- In 2004, there were 872,000 reported cases of child abuse or neglect in the United States.
- Roughly 50 percent of all victims of forcible sodomy, sexual assault with an object, and forcible fondling cases reported to law enforcement involve children under 12 years.
- Studies indicate that 15 to 30 percent of females in the United States are victims of some kind of childhood sexual abuse.
- 90 percent of cases involve abuse by a male, and many abusers are under 17 years old.

## Get Help

Being sexually abused is not your fault. Nothing about what you say, the way you look, or how you behave gives anyone else the right to use or hurt you.

- Tell a trusted adult, they can help you. If you are being abused or are uncomfortable about how someone is treating you, it is not a secret you should keep.
- Tell a teacher, counselor, or principal at school if there is no one you can trust at home.
- Contact a local victim assistance agency, child protective services, or the police for help. If you need help finding someone to call, contact the National Center for Victims of Crime's Helpline at **1-800-FYI-CALL**.
- If you choose to tell, you should know that in Indiana all adults are mandated reporters. This means they are legally required to report neglect or abuse to someone else, like the police or child protective services. Therefore, all teachers, counselors, doctors, social workers, coaches and activity leaders must report incidents of abuse or neglect that they are aware of.

If you want help deciding who to talk to, call our Helpline at **1-800-FYI-CALL**, or an anonymous crisis line in your area. You might also want to talk to a trusted family member, a friend's parent, an adult neighbor or friend, an older sibling or cousin, or other experienced person you trust.