

“I am an adult; how can I protect children from being abused?”

1

Establish open communication from an early age.

- ▶ Let the child know that he can ask for your help if he feels discomfort about any interaction with someone else. • You will never punish him for asking for help. • You will listen and help him deal with his feelings. • Find ways to inform your child that sexual abuse happens to boys, too.
- ▶ Be aware that perpetrators are typically known to family members and primary caregivers; they will do their best to win the trust of you and your child. • Be aware if an older person is taking unusually special interest in a child or giving him special gifts.
- ▶ If you are wondering if special attention being given to a child is okay, trust your gut and consider that it may be the first steps in “grooming” him for abuse.

3

Teach age-appropriate information about sex.

- ▶ Let the child know correct words for the sexual parts of a male’s physical body: penis, scrotum, buttocks, anus. • Correct words for the sexual parts of a female’s physical body are: vagina, breasts, buttocks, anus.
- ▶ Tell your child if he needs to tell someone that he was touched inappropriately, he needs to know the appropriate words so that he can be understood.
- ▶ Acquire basic information about age-appropriate sexual development for boys so you will notice unusual behaviors.

2

Talk about Safe Touch. Let him know:

- ▶ He has the right to say when and how he wants to be touched.
- ▶ He has the right to say who can touch him.
- ▶ He can tell you – and you will help to protect him - if: He ever feels badly about the way someone touches his body. • He feels badly about how someone talks with him about his body or about sex. • Someone tells him to keep any kind of physical interaction between them a secret between them.

4

Teach about personal safety and self-defense.

- ▶ He has the right to take charge of his own safety. • It is always okay to say “No” and “Stop That.” • It is best to use words first, but he can employ any self-defense skills if words are not sufficient to stop real danger.
- ▶ Teach effective ways to protect himself, by enrolling him in a class where he can learn the skills for self-defense
- ▶ Remember, even armed with such self-defense tools, boys and men can still struggle at times to protect themselves. • Perpetrators seek vulnerable boys and vulnerable men to abuse and sexually assault.



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Overcoming Sexual Victimization of Boys and Men

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