

Children sexual abuse is something we can prevent if we really want to. There is not a valid circumstance for adult to let things like this happen. We need to understand this before we start any program about children sexual abuse.

Some of the people that have been abused in the past, when they were young or in their childhood, let us know how complicated it was dealing with an uncertain feeling mixed with physical pain and a tremendous sense of confusion. They could not understand the reason why these events happened to them, if they were victims, if they are guilty or something in between.

At any case, what we must keep in mind is: CHILDREN ALWAYS TELL THE TRUTH. WE MUST PAY ATTENTION TO THEIR WORDS, THEIR FEARS AND ANXIETIES.

Kids are terrific—happy, innocent, and free. They can remind us of what is best about ourselves. When they are sexually abused, that happiness is dimmed, sometimes for life. With your help, more kids will get to grow up full of light and life.

Kids shouldn't have to try to prevent sexual abuse all by themselves. We adults have to learn to recognize when people are acting inappropriately around our children...and to speak up before a child is harmed.

#### WHY DO WE NEED TO LEARN ABOUT SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN?

Every day, adults miss real opportunities to prevent child sexual abuse because of misinformation and confusing stereotypes about sexual abuse. It is estimated that more than 300,000 children are sexually abused every year.

Chances are, you already know a boy or girl who has been sexually abused—and in all likelihood know someone who has abused a child. By educating yourself, you can become a powerful force in making the world a safer place for kids.

It's only in the last few decades that we, as a society, have started to acknowledge how widespread child sexual abuse has been and how much it hurts children.

One in five adults report that they were sexually abused as children, an experience that increases vulnerability to depression, substance abuse, aggression, and other difficulties. More than 85% of adults who were abused say they never reported the abuse to authorities.

In response to this new awareness, lawmakers have focused on managing convicted sex offenders and publicizing their whereabouts. While these measures have increased community awareness, they address only a tiny portion of those who are at risk to sexually harm children—those who already have been caught and convicted.

Children are routinely taught to speak up if someone approaches them in a sexual way. But to make our communities safe, we need to do more.

Kids shouldn't have the burden of preventing sexual abuse by themselves.

Adults must act on their commitment to keeping kids safe by learning to recognize and respond to inappropriate behaviors around kids, before a child is harmed.

And adults have to learn what to do when it seems like someone may be sexually interested in children or is harming a child in a sexual way. As when you see someone who is drinking and planning to drive: you step forward and offer help so they don't hurt someone.

This guidebook contains a lot of the information about how adults can step forward and help protect children. It describes what to look for and how to talk with other adults and with children about preventing sexual abuse. It offers guidance about what to do when you have a concern, even if you think, "Maybe I'm just over-reacting." And most importantly, it offers information about who to call for advice, for help, or to report a case of abuse.

## WE NEED TO RECOGNISE WHAT EXACTLY IS CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

When any adult engages in sexual activity with a child, that is child sexual abuse. And it is a crime. When the sexual activity is between children or adolescents, it is not always so clear. Some kinds of sexual behavior between children might be innocent explorations rather than abuse. Check the section called “What About Children Who Sexually Interact with Other Children?” later in this guidebook for help in figuring out whether what you’re seeing between children may be abuse.

## WHO SEXUALLY ABUSES CHILDREN?

People who sexually abuse children are likely to be people we know, and could even be people we care about. It would be easy to figure out who sexually abuses children if they were like the ones we see on TV—those strangers hanging around the edges of playgrounds, or the “monsters,” who kidnap and kill children. But truthfully, they’re hardly ever like that.

Most often people who sexually abuse children—both those who’ve been reported and those who haven’t— are fathers, mothers, step-parents, grandparents, and other family members (uncles, aunts, cousins). Or they’re neighbors, babysitters, clergy, teachers, coaches, or anyone else who has close contact with our children.

We can’t tell who they are by the way they look. What they have in common is that they think about sexual interactions with children and then they act on those thoughts by sexually abusing a child. We know that child sexual abuse happens every day with little regard for social classes, racial or ethnic groups, religious affiliations, or sexual orientation. That means that adults and youth who have sexually abused a child live in the same neighborhoods, shop in the same stores, and use the same parks that we do. We may know them personally as part of our family or extended family, or in our circle of friends and neighbors.

But we may not know about their sexual interests in kids.

It's hard to face the fact that someone we know and like might sexually abuse children. But because it's true, we all need to know what to look for and how to make sure that everyone we know lives up to an expectation of safety in our homes and communities.

## CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE INCLUDES TOUCHING AND NON-TOUCHING BEHAVIORS

### TOUCHING BEHAVIORS INCLUDE:

- Touching a child's genitals (penis, testicles, vulva, breasts, or anus) for sexual pleasure or other unnecessary purpose.
- Making a child touch someone else's genitals, or playing sexual ("pants-down") games.
- Putting objects or body parts (like fingers, tongue or a penis) inside the vulva or vagina, in the mouth, or in the anus of a child for sexual pleasure or other unnecessary purpose.

### NON-TOUCHING BEHAVIORS INCLUDE:

- Showing pornography to a child.
- Exposing a person's genitals to a child.
- Asking children to interact sexually with one another.
- Online enticement of a child for sexual purposes.
- Photographing a child in sexual poses.
- Exposing a child to adult sexual activity in person or through the use of technology.
- Watching a child undress or use the bathroom, often without the child's knowledge (known as voyeurism or being a "Peeping Tom").

## BEHAVIORAL SYMPTOMS OF POSSIBLE SEXUAL ABUSE

Some of these behavioral signs can show up at other stressful times in a child's life such as divorce, the death of a family member, friend or pet, or when there are problems in school, as well as when abuse is involved. Any single sign doesn't mean the child was abused, but several of them mean that you should begin to explore the situation more fully.

### DO YOU NOTICE SOME OF THE FOLLOWING BEHAVIORS IN A CHILD YOU KNOW WELL?

- Nightmares, sleep problems, extreme fears without an obvious explanation
- Sudden or unexplained personality changes; seems withdrawn, angry, moody, clingy, "checked-out" or shows significant changes in eating habits
- An older child behaving like a younger child (for example, bedwetting or thumb-sucking)
- Develops fear of certain places or resists being alone with an adult or young person for unknown reasons
- Shows resistance to routine bathing, toileting or removing clothes even in appropriate situations
- Play, writing, drawings or dreams of sexual or frightening images
- Refuses to talk about a secret he or she has with an adult or older child
- Stomach aches or illness, often with no identifiable reason
- Leaves clues that seem likely to provoke a discussion about sexual issues
- Uses new or adult words for body parts
- Engages in adult-like sexual activities with toys, objects or other children

- Develops special relationship with older friends that may include unexplained money, gifts or privileges
- Intentionally harms himself or herself, for example, drug/alcohol use, cutting, burning, running away, sexual promiscuity
- Becomes increasingly secretive around use of the Internet or cell phone
- Develops physical symptoms such as unexplained soreness, pain or bruises around genital or mouth, sexually-transmitted disease, or pregnancy

#### WHY DO PEOPLE SEXUALLY ABUSE?

There is no “usual” pathway to a sexual offense. Each person who sexually abuses a child is motivated by issues that are unique to that individual.

Media images of “child molesters” and portrayals of their personalities may actually make it more difficult to recognize inappropriate behaviors in those we know.

Sometimes, people who are attracted to adults and have intimate sexual relationships with other adults may sexually approach children when they are under unusual stress, like losing a job or getting a divorce.

Some people’s primary sexual attraction is children. (Some never act on those feelings.)

Some people who sexually abuse children were victims of abuse or neglect as children; it’s not an excuse, just a fact. Although having been abused as a child heightens the risk for becoming someone who sexually abuses children, the vast majority of sexual abuse victims live their lives without ever sexually abusing others.

Some people act impulsively, when presented with an unexpected opportunity to sexually abuse a child. Others, particularly youth with high social status or with social or emotional delays, may not even fully understand the harmful impact of their abusive actions.

Easy access to child pornography online and sexually-oriented online chat groups have eliminated many of the hurdles that previously discouraged some people from acting on their sexual interests in minors. Viewing sexual images of children and participating in forums that support sexual interactions involving children may make sexually abusive behavior seem “normal” or “acceptable” and thereby may increase the risk for hands-on offenses.

Some adults sexually abuse a child to feel the power and control they don't feel in their relationships with other adults.

These are just a few of the many reasons why someone may choose to sexually abuse a child. No reasons excuse or justify sexualized behaviors involving a child. No matter what the reason for the abuse, the effects on children may be severe and may last a lifetime.

**CAN PEOPLE WHO SEXUALLY ABUSE CHILDREN STOP IT?**

**YES!**

In order to stop, people who sexually abuse children must want to change and must be able to get specialized treatment. Adults, adolescents, and children with sexual behavior problems can change their abusing behavior. They can learn to live healthy, productive lives in which they no longer harm innocent children.

You've probably heard or read the misinformation that all people who have sexually abused will abuse again. With all those stories on TV and in the papers, it's not easy to remember that the people who abuse hundreds of victims are only a few, really extreme cases. Most people who sexually abuse children are not like those you see on TV.

Treatment works. Many people who abuse will learn to control themselves around children if they are offered specialized treatment and appropriate community oversight. When people with sexual behavior problems have support and are accountable to their friends and families, they are more likely to complete their treatment programs and live

productive, abuse-free lives. Again, when we confront these behaviors at the earliest stages, especially in children and teens, they are most likely to change and not abuse again.

#### WHAT ABOUT CHILDREN WHO SEXUALLY INTERACT WITH OTHER CHILDREN?

When children or adolescents interact in a sexual way, it is sometimes difficult to tell the difference between natural sexual curiosity and potentially abusive behaviors.

Some sexual activities are normal for children at certain ages. Children, particularly younger children, may engage in inappropriate interactions without understanding the hurtful impact it has on others. For this reason, it may be more helpful to think in terms of a child's sexually "harmful" behavior rather than sexually "abusive" behavior.

But there are some features of interactions that should raise concerns if you see children involved in sexual play.

#### CONSIDER:

- **Size:** Is one of the children/teens involved much larger or stronger than the other?
- **Status:** Does one of the children/teens have more power in the relationship — for example, a babysitter, a club or team leader, a socially popular child who bullies others?
- **Ability:** Does one of the children/ teens have greater mental, emotional, or physical ability than the other? Is the possible victim disabled or developmentally delayed?
- **Power:** Is one of the children/teens using tricks, threats, bribes, or physical force?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, the sexual activity may be abusive

## WHAT IS AGE-APPROPRIATE SEXUAL BEHAVIOR?

While learning about their bodies and sexuality, children may behave in ways that seem out of sync with their age or developmental stage. The chart below describes kinds of behavior that are common and less common in a given developmental stage. Many factors—for example, having an older sibling or unsupervised exposure to certain television, films, games or song lyrics—may increase a child’s awareness of knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of an older age group. Usually, unexpected behavior can be redirected with a simple instruction. Of particular concern are uncommon behaviors that a child seems unable to control after being asked to stop.

### PRESCHOOL (0 TO 5 YEARS OF AGE)

Common:

Sexual language relating to differences in body parts, bathroom talk, pregnancy and birth. Genital stimulation at home and in public. Showing and looking at private body parts.

Uncommon:

Discussion of specific sexual acts or explicit sexual language. Adult-like sexual contact with other children.

### SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN (6 TO 12 YEARS OF AGE)

May include both pre-pubescent children and children who have already entered puberty, when hormonal changes are likely to trigger an increase in sexual awareness and interest.

## BEFORE PUBERTY

### Common:

Questions about relationships and sexual behavior, menstruation and pregnancy. Experimentation with same-age children, often during games, kissing, touching, exhibitionism and role-playing. Private genital stimulation.

### Uncommon:

Adult-like sexual interactions, discussing specific sexual acts or public genital stimulation.

## AFTER PUBERTY BEGINS

### Common:

Increased curiosity about sexual materials and information, questions about relationships and sexual behavior, using sexual words and discussing sexual acts, particularly with peers. Increased experimenting including open-mouthed kissing, body-rubbing, fondling. Masturbating in private.

### Uncommon:

Consistent adult-like sexual behavior, including oral/ genital contact or intercourse. Masturbating in public.

## ADOLESCENCE (13 TO 16 YEARS OF AGE)

### Common:

Questions about decision making, social relationships, and sexual customs. Masturbation in private.

Experimenting between adolescents of the same age, including open-mouthed kissing, fondling and body rubbing, oral/genital contact. Also, voyeuristic behaviors are common. Intercourse occurs in approximately one-third of this age group.

Uncommon:

Masturbating in public and sexual interest directed toward much younger children (for example, non-peers).

WHAT YOU CAN DO?

EVERYONE NEEDS TO SPEAK UP.

When we don't take the keys from a drunk friend who's about to drive, we're risking that friend's and other people's lives on the road. When we don't question a friend's sexualized comments or behaviors toward a child, we're risking the well-being of our children and the future of the friend.

People who sexually abuse children rely on our confusion and on our reluctance to acknowledge discomfort. Adults – all of us—need to talk together about sexual abuse and to learn what to do to keep children safe. The first steps are setting clear boundaries and limits with everyone involved in our family and social circle and speaking up when any of those rules are broken.

Often, families whose kids were sexually abused wish that they had talked more openly beforehand with their children in ways that would have made them less vulnerable when someone tried to approach them sexually. By getting comfortable using words like “penis”, “vagina”, or “penetration,” we adults can teach our sons and daughters how to talk about it when they are made uncomfortable. When adults and kids have the right words, it's easier for kids to tell us when they are sexually approached or harmed. Shyness or embarrassment about sexual behaviors can also make it more difficult to talk with someone who may be acting inappropriately toward a child.

## WHAT TO WATCH FOR WHEN ADULTS ARE WITH CHILDREN

Have you ever seen someone playing with a child and felt uncomfortable with it? Maybe you thought, "I'm just over-reacting," or, "She/he doesn't really mean that."

If you are uncomfortable, but don't see specific signs, trust your instincts and ask more questions. Below is a list of behaviors that might be cause for concern.

### DO YOU KNOW AN ADULT, ADOLESCENT OR OLDER CHILD WHO:

- Makes others uncomfortable by ignoring social, emotional or physical boundaries or limits?
- Refuses to let a child set any of his or her own limits? Uses teasing or belittling language to keep a child from setting a limit?
- Insists on hugging, touching, kissing, tickling, wrestling with or holding a child even when the child does not want this physical contact or attention?
- Frequently makes sexual references or tells sexual or suggestive jokes with children present?
- Exposes a child to adult sexual interactions without apparent concern?
- Has secret interactions with teens or children (such as games, sharing drugs, alcohol, or sexual material) or spends excessive time emailing, text messaging or calling children or youth?
- Seems "too good to be true," for example, baby sits different children for free; takes children on special outings alone; buys children gifts or gives them money for no apparent reason?
- Allows children or teens to consistently get away with inappropriate behaviors?

If you answered "yes" to some of these questions, talk to that person. **SOMETHING IS HAPPENING THERE.**

## DEVELOP A SAFETY ACTION PLAN FOR YOUR FAMILY

It is important to teach children about safety. It is more important to teach ourselves what we need to know in order to keep our children and communities safe. Here are some things that you and your family can do to prevent the sexual abuse of children. Adults need to:

### TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

- **ADULTS MUST WATCH FOR ANY INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS** in other adults or older youth because children, especially young ones, are not as able to recognize these behaviors or to protect themselves.
- **STAY ATTUNED TO YOUR CHILDREN'S USE OF TECHNOLOGY** – Internet, email, instant messaging, webcam use, peer-to-peer and social networking sites, and cell use, including photo exchanges. Model safe choices and behavior. The illusion of anonymity on these electronic mediums often leads to a breakdown of social rules and expectations that would be assumed if the interactions were face-to-face. Whenever possible, keep the interactions visible and public. Kids and even adults can easily stumble into inappropriate or possibly dangerous situations and exchanges. Educate yourself. Establish clear, firm guidelines and stick to them.
- **SHOW IN YOUR OWN LIFE HOW TO SAY "NO."** Teach your children that their "no" will be respected, whether it's in playing or tickling or hugging and kissing. For instance, if your child does not want to give Grandma a kiss, let the child shake hands instead. And, make sure Grandma understands why this is important for the safety of the child.
- **SET AND RESPECT FAMILY BOUNDARIES.** All members of the family have rights to privacy in dressing, bathing, sleeping, and other personal activities. If anyone does not respect these rights, an adult should clearly tell them the family rules.

- **SPEAK UP WHEN YOU SEE ANY INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS.** Interrupt and talk with whoever is making you uncomfortable in a situation or with someone in a position to intervene. They may need help to stop these behaviors.
- **REPORT ANYTHING YOU KNOW OR SUSPECT MIGHT BE SEXUAL ABUSE.** If nobody speaks up, the abuse will not stop.

### LEARN, TEACH, AND PRACTICE

- **PRACTICE TALKING WITH OTHER ADULTS ABOUT DIFFICULT TOPICS.** Say the words out loud so that you become more comfortable using the words, asking questions, and confronting behaviors.
- **BE RECEPTIVE WITH BOTH THE ADULTS AND THE CHILDREN IN YOUR LIFE ABOUT THEIR DIFFICULT ISSUES.** Help them get comfortable talking with you. Show them that you will listen to anything they have to say, even if they talk about something embarrassing or something they've done wrong.
- **USE THE PROPER NAMES OF BODY PARTS.** Just as you teach your children that a nose is a nose, they need to know what to call their genitals. This knowledge gives children correct language for understanding their bodies, for asking questions that need to be asked, and for telling about any behavior that could lead to sexual abuse.
- **BE CLEAR WITH ADULTS AND CHILDREN ABOUT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OKAY TOUCH AND TOUCH THAT IS NOT OKAY.** For younger children, teach more concrete rules such as “talk with me if anyone—family, friend, or anyone else—touches your private parts.” Also teach kids that it is not okay to use manipulation or control to touch someone else’s body.
- **EXPLAIN TO THE ADULTS AND CHILDREN YOU KNOW ABOUT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A SECRET AND A SURPRISE** and show them how secrets may make kids unsafe. Surprises are joyful and generate excitement in anticipation of being revealed after a short period of time. Secrets exclude others, often because the

information will create upset or anger. When keeping secrets with just one person becomes routine, children are more vulnerable to being abused.

- MAKE IT CLEAR THAT CHILDREN WILL BE SUPPORTED WHEN THEY REQUEST PRIVACY OR SAY “NO” to an activity or a kind of touch that makes them uncomfortable.
- GIVE KIDS PERMISSION TO TELL ANYONE THEY TRUST if they feel scared, uncomfortable or confused by someone’s behavior toward them.

#### MAKE A PLAN

- CREATE A FAMILY SAFETY PLAN THAT IS CLEAR TO EVERYONE AND EASY TO FOLLOW

Make sure that as adults, you know how to challenge each other when you see any inappropriate behaviors. List who to talk with when you see something you are unsure about and who to call if you believe there is a need to report sexual abuse. Teach children about what to do and who to talk with if they are sexually threatened or touched by someone.

- MAKE A LIST OF PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS YOU CAN CALL FOR ADVICE, INFORMATION, AND HELP.

Even if you do not have children of your own, you can be a resource about how to report and how to get help for everyone involved. If you know that a child has been sexually abused, be sure to get help for the child quickly, so the harm can be healed.

## PHYSICAL WARNING SIGNS THAT A CHILD MAY HAVE BEEN ABUSED

### DOES A CHILD CLOSE TO YOU HAVE?

- Unexplained bruises, redness, or bleeding of the child's genitals, anus, or mouth?
- Pain at the genitals, anus, or mouth?
- Genital sores or milky fluids or repeated infections in the genital area?

If you said "yes" to any of these examples, bring your child to a doctor or emergency room. A doctor can help you understand what may be happening and test for sexually transmitted diseases.

## SIGNS THAT AN ADULT MAY BE AT-RISK TO SEXUALLY ABUSE A CHILD

Someone you care about may be acting in ways that worry you. These behaviors may indicate a risk to sexually abuse a child or may be a way for this person to ask for help. Many people with sexual behavior problems wish someone had asked them what was going on or had told them where to call. Inappropriate behaviors may become abusive if the individual does not get the help he or she needs.

### DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO:

- Misses or ignores social cues about others' personal or sexual limits or boundaries?
- Spends most of spare time with children and shows little interest in spending time with another adult?
- Links sexuality and aggression in language or behavior, for example, sexualized threats or insults, like "whore" or "slut"?
- Makes fun of children's body parts, describes children with sexual words like "stud" or "sexy" or talks again and again about the sexual activities of children or teens?

- Has an interest in sexual fantasies with children or is unclear about what's appropriate with children?
- Minimizes hurtful or harmful behaviors when confronted; blames others or denies harmfulness of actions or words despite impact?
- Often has a "special" child friend, maybe a different one each year?
- Encourages silence and secrets in children?
- Masturbates so often that it gets in the way of important day-to-day activities?
- Was physically, sexually or emotionally mistreated or abused as a child and has not adequately addressed the possible effects?
- Downloads/views Internet pornography and is not willing to show if children are involved?
- Becomes so pre-occupied with the Internet sexual activity that it starts to impact family and/or work life.
- Asks adult partners to dress or act like a child or teen during sexual activity?

While single behaviors, in themselves, do not indicate that an individual is likely to engage in sexually-harmful behaviors, these behaviors, especially in combination, may strongly suggest that an adult or adolescent needs help.

*Metamorphosis*

## COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION AND YOU

### WHAT IS COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION?

If you have learned that someone convicted of sexual abuse of a child is living in your community, you might feel angry, scared, and unsafe. Sometimes, just having more information can diminish those feelings and help you recognize that the situation is manageable. Remember, supporting this person to become a safe member of your community is in everyone's best interest. It may help you to find out more about the person and share what is helpful with your family.

### SOME THINGS YOU CAN DO IF SOMEONE WITH A SEXUAL ABUSE CONVICTION IS LIVING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- **DON'T PANIC.** Respond calmly. Act with thought. Many people with a history of sexually offending are motivated to succeed when they re-enter society. Contrary to conventional wisdom, specialized counseling can be effective. Re-arrest rates for sexual offenses are actually very low. When given steady support, counseling and supervision they often pose little threat to anyone in the neighborhood.
- **CREATE A FAMILY SAFETY PLAN.** Your children and your family need to know what to do if anyone—family, friend, acquaintance, neighbor, or stranger—is approaching a child sexually. Remember, abuse is most likely to happen with someone you already know.
- **IF CIRCUMSTANCES SEEM RIGHT, CONSIDER JOINING ANOTHER NEIGHBOR IN APPROACHING THE PERSON WITH AN OFFER OF SUPPORT, PERHAPS THROUGH THE PROBATION OR PAROLE OFFICE.** Remember, you may already know this person or his or her family and friends. Even if this person is new in your community, he or she is a part of it now. If the person who sexually abused is open and honest about the past, he or she may really be trying to change and live a different life.

Show your support for this person's willingness to live a different life that keeps children safe. Your support and watchfulness can help in his or her recovery. It is also a chance to alert this person that you know about his or her past and are aware of his or her actions today.

- **NOTIFY THE POLICE IF YOU SEE THIS PERSON IN A SUSPICIOUS SITUATION.** Avoid a hostile confrontation. Making threats or taking revenge may put you at legal risk. It's also important to avoid any action that may just push the person who has sexually abused into hiding, where normal life is almost impossible and it's easier to go back to old abusive ways. No matter how you feel about this person, if you see him or her in a suspicious or dangerous situation, call the police or probation/parole officer. Many people who have sexually abused go on to live productive, abuse-free lives. But not all will make the needed changes in their lives. Your supportive watchfulness may help the person who has abused keep him or herself under control.

#### **DON'T WAIT TO BE NOTIFIED**

What we do know is that there are people who have abused in our communities, some already identified, some not. Don't just wait to be notified about someone who has been convicted of a sexual offense. Talk to your family and friends now. Make the sexual safety of children a priority all the time with everyone in your community.

Your safety action plans for your family and community are the same whether or not you've been notified about someone with an offense in your community. Think about those who may abuse in the same way that you stay aware of possible speeding cars, children in the streets, or drug dealers near your child's school.

If you know what to look for and how to take action, people who sexually abuse children will not have access to them.

Their abusive behavior can be stopped when we are all aware. They can get help to prevent any further abuse.

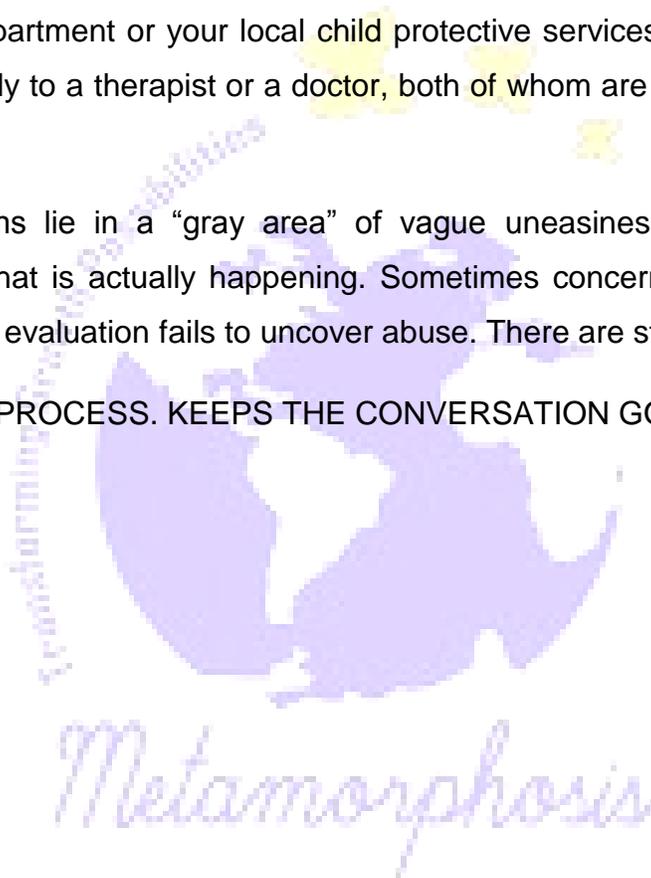
Our silence allows people who sexually abuse children to get and maintain access to vulnerable children.

We can all help prevent and stop the sexual abuse of children by speaking up and by learning some simple action steps.

If you know that a child has been sexually abused, you need to report it. You can call your local police department or your local child protective services office. You can also bring the child directly to a therapist or a doctor, both of whom are required to report the abuse.

More often, concerns lie in a “gray area” of vague uneasiness, sketchy details or uncertainty about what is actually happening. Sometimes concerns persist, even after an outside inquiry or evaluation fails to uncover abuse. There are still things you can do.

**PREVENTION IS A PROCESS. KEEPS THE CONVERSATION GOING!!**



**PROGRAM DEVELOPED BY METAMORPHOSIS, Transforming Growth Possibilities.**

**Chihuahua, Mexico. June 2010**