



## Prevention Tips for Caregivers

### How to Be a Safe Adult

Every adult believes they are a safe adult, but a large portion of abused children do not identify their parent or caregiver as a safe adult.

Why not a trusted adult? We use the term Safe Adult because many children have trusted adults in their lives who have hurt them, simply saying trusted adult does not ensure that those adults are safe.

Here's what you can do to ensure you are being a safe adult for the kids in your life and the community.

1. A Safe Adult is someone who can and will get help for a child who has been hurt or feels unsafe.
2. A Safe Adult is someone a child feels comfortable with and can easily talk about things that are difficult.
3. A Safe Adult is someone who does not break the Safety Rules or has the child break the Safety Rules.
4. A safe adult is someone who reacts responsibly, without blaming or shaming the child, if the child discloses they have been hurt or abused.

### Learn the Facts

Our choices about children's safety should be guided by reality rather than passive trust. Recognize the prevalence of child abuse and understand how it occurs.

### Minimize Opportunity

- Eliminate or reduce isolated one-on-one situations and carefully screen those who care for children in youth-serving settings.
- Be aware of who your children are spending time with. People who sexually abuse children often become friendly with potential victims and their families. They participate in family activities, earn trust, and gain time alone with children.
- Monitor internet and smartphone use. The internet is an unsafe one-on-one environment for youth because offenders often lure children there. Create rules and engage kids in making it safer.
- Screen out people who may abuse children via background checks, in-person interviews that focus on boundaries with children, personal and professional references, and obtain prevention training.
- [Learn about Prevention Education.](#)

### Talk About It

- Discuss with your children what abuse is, the signs they should look for when interacting with others, and who they can talk to as trusted adults.
- Talking about abuse with children not only increases their knowledge but also decreases the stigma of them telling you something has happened.

### Recognize the Signs

- Review the [indicators of abuse](#).

### React Responsibly (if a child discloses to you)

- Do not overreact; do your best to keep calm
- Be patient as they talk about what happened. Limit your questions to getting the major details: who, what, when, where
- Make a report to the [ChildLine](#) hotline: [1-800-932-0313](tel:1-800-932-0313).