

FAMILY VIOLENCE TIPS FOR CHILDREN

If you live in a home where there is violence, it can be very upsetting and frightening. Violence in the home is always wrong and it's never your fault.

Violence At Home Can Make You Feel Bad

The violence at home may be directed at your mother or father and you may see this happening. The violence may also be towards you. This is called child abuse. It can make you feel really sad and awful. Often children think they have done something to cause the violence in their family. This is not true, but sometimes you might:

- Blame yourself for the violence.
- Feel frightened, sad, ashamed, confused or unhappy.
- Feel sick, have stomach pains or headaches.
- Stop eating, eat too much or not feel like eating.
- Sleep badly or have nightmares or wet the bed.
- Find school difficult or lose interest in your school work or your friends.
- Have trouble talking - for example, you might stutter.
- Worry about your parent's safety.

Types of Violence

Family violence can mean lots of different things - it's not just being hit. There are different kinds of violence that can happen in the home. The violence may be directed at your mother or father, at the children only, or to both children and parents.

Some examples of violence that may affect you are:

- Find someone who you trust to tell (perhaps a neighbor, a teacher, a counselor, a police officer, or a friend's mother).
- Physical violence - hitting, slapping, shoving, pushing, biting, kicking or burning. Someone throwing or breaking things in your home. Seeing your parents or brother or sister hurt or threatened in any of these ways.
- Verbal violence - yelling mean and nasty things, calling rude names, or shouting or talking in a scary or threatening way.
- Sexual violence - being touched inappropriately or forced to touch someone's private parts. Tell someone about family violence and abuse at home.

If you think you are being abused or see your mother or anyone in your family being abused, there are important things you should remember:

- Someone may try to make you feel ashamed or guilty about what is happening. You are not to blame for something they have done wrong. It is not your fault and it's not a special secret.
- Don't believe them if they say something bad will happen to you if you tell; there are people who can help you.
- It is an unsafe secret to keep; it's okay to tell someone and it will help you or your mother to be safe.
- Nothing is so awful that it can't be talked about.
- Help is available.

Tell someone about family violence and abuse at home.

You can report family violence at home and get help in many ways:

- Find someone who you trust to tell (perhaps a neighbor, a teacher, a counselor, a police officer, or a friend's mother).
- Tell a trusted adult who can keep you safe and help stop the abuse at home.
- Take your time and try to explain how you or your mother has been hurt. It may be very difficult or scary for you to tell and it may be hard for you to find the right words to explain. Just do the best you can to explain.
- If the person hurting you or your mother is someone in your family, you may feel safer if you tell someone outside your family - like your teacher or a police officer.

Where to get help

- Emergency.....911
- Trusted family member or friend.
- Teacher, school counselor or trusted adult.

Things to remember

- Family violence is never your fault.
- Learn how to stay safe.
- Get help by telling someone about the problem.

BE SAFE FROM BULLYING

- Do not join in if you see someone who is being bullied.
- Try to help the person who is being bullied if you can, but do not place yourself at risk. If you do nothing it implies that you think it is o.k. to hurt and bully others.
- Get a teacher, counselor, parent or other responsible adult to come and help.
- Tell a trusted adult yourself if the target is unwilling to report the bullying.

Report Abuse Florida Abuse Hotline 1-800-96-ABUSE

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Division of Student Services
Deborah Montilla, Executive Director
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Rosa Maria Plasencia, President & CEO
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Information courtesy of National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect Information and Child Welfare Information Gateway.



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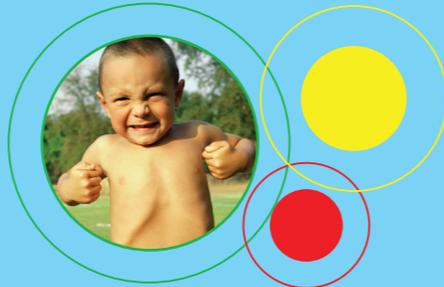


BE SAFE

- **Tell your parent(s)/guardian(s)** where you are going, how you will get there, who you will be going with, and when you will be back.
- **Always get permission** from your parent(s)/guardian(s) before getting into a car or leaving with anyone, even if it is someone you know.
- **Always use the “buddy system.”** Be with other people when going places or playing outside.



- **Say “NO”** if someone tries to touch you in ways that makes you feel frightened, uncomfortable or confused. Then tell a grown-up you trust what happened.



BE SAFE

- **Know that it is not your fault** if someone touches you in a way that is not O.K. You don't have to keep secrets about those touches.
- **Trust your feelings and talk** to grown-ups about problems that are too big for you to handle on your own.
- **It is never too late to ask for help.** You can keep asking until you get the help you need.
- **Memorize** your full name, address including city and state, and telephone number including area code.
- **Know** how to call 9-1-1 for emergencies and what information to give the operator.
- **Know** how to make a local call, a long distance call, a collect call and how to reach the operator.
- **Know** what to do when someone is at the door or the phone rings.

BE SAFE

- **Know how to get out of the house** quickly, in case of a fire or other emergency.
- **Run to the nearest public place** where there are people or run to a neighbor's house for help, if you think you are being followed.

BE NET SMART

- **Be careful** about strangers on the Internet.
- **Don't respond and do log off** if anyone uses nasty language or mentions things that make you feel uncomfortable.
- **Never** give your real last name, address, or telephone number to anyone on the Internet. If someone asks for this information, or for your password, don't respond. Log off and tell a trusted adult.
- **Never** agree to meet with someone you've chatted with on the Internet.
- **Learn** about the consequences of sending sexually explicit images between cell phones (sexting) or other electronic media.
- **Never** send or possess sexually explicit images or photos on phones, computers or other electronic media
- **Know** that sending sexually explicit images or photos via electronic media is illegal.

SAFETY RULES

- **Do not** take candy from strangers.
- **Do not** get into a car with someone you don't know.
- **Do not** let anyone touch your body in ways that hurt, frighten, or confuse you.
- **Do not** keep secrets from your parent(s)/guardian(s). Keeping secrets may prevent your friend from getting the needed or expected help from an adult. Be sure to tell a trusted adult such as your teacher, counselor, or principal.
- **Always talk to your parent(s)/guardian(s)** no matter how embarrassing or scary the subject might be.
- **Be careful of strangers on the Internet** and never agree to meet with them.

GUN SAFETY TIPS

REMEMBER: IF YOU SEE A GUN

- Even pellet, BB guns, and paintballguns can cause serious injuries.
- Toys guns can cause eye injuries.
- Do not fire cap guns close to your ears.

