



# Protect Your Child from Sexual Abuse

**It's wise to warn your children** not to talk to strangers, but it's also important to teach them how to avoid situations that could lead to sexual abuse, and to speak up if someone tries to touch them inappropriately.

- **Begin teaching your children** at an early age that **they have the right to say no** if someone touches them in any way that makes them uncomfortable.
- Encourage your children **never to keep secrets from you**, even with another adult, if the circumstances make your child feel threatened or scared.
- **Reassure your child** that you will believe him or her if he or she tells you someone has touched him or her inappropriately.
- **Sexual abuse occurs at all ages**, and 9 years old is the median age for reported abuse.
- While **1 in 4 females** is sexually abused before age 18, **1 in 6 boys** is sexually abused during that same time frame.
- About 40 percent of victims are **abused by older or larger children** they know. **Only 10 percent are abused by strangers.**
- If your child shares with you that she has been touched inappropriately or worse, **act right away**. Contact your local law enforcement agency or your social services department to get help.

*Source: Darkness to Light, Statistics Surrounding Child Sexual Abuse, [www.D2L.org](http://www.D2L.org)*