Caring for Young Survivors of Sexual Assault

Sexual Assault Response Network
A Community Program of HelpLine

Caring for Young Survivors

Child sexual abuse is physical, visual, or verbal sexual contact with a minor by an adult, teen, or another child. Child sexual abuse is often a gradual process, with the adult deliberately testing a child’s boundaries using their familiarity with the child, social status, or power - also called “grooming”.

- 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually assaulted before age 18
- Children with disabilities are five times more likely to be assaulted
- 1 in 2 transgender children are sexually assaulted
- LGBTQIA+ youth are assaulted at a much greater rate than their straight-identified peers


Caring for a young survivor after a disclosure of sexual abuse can be challenging. While children are resilient and can heal from this abuse, healing takes time and patience.

- Listen, believe, and accept them. Your support is extremely important
- Be available and open to kids’ needs to help re-establish their sense of security, safety, and control
- Allow them to express their range of feelings in a safe way

Call our support and information line at 1.800.684.2324 and 211
or text helpline to 898211
Suicide and crisis lifeline, 988
Deaf or hard of hearing: 711 or 1.800.750.0750
Language Services Available

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HelpLine is a provider agency of the Delaware-Morrow Mental Health & Recovery Services Board, a partner of the United Ways of Delaware, Morrow, Union, Counties, partially funded by SourcePoint, the Ohio Attorney General’s Crime Victims Services Office, Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services, Ohio Department of Health, and private donations. HelpLine is certified by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, certified by the American Association of Suicidology and accredited by the national Alliance of Information and Referral Systems. HelpLine is a tax-exempt organization under the 501(c) 3 Internal Revenue Code. Calls are toll-free and standard rates apply when using our text service.

HelpLine is an equal opportunity employer/provider.