

If we don't understand child sexual abuse, we can't end it. We know today that:

- One in ten children will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday.
- 90% of child sexual abuse victims know their abuser.
- Approximately 30% of children who are sexually abused are abused by family members.
- 60% of child sexual abuse victims never tell anyone.
- False reports are rare. Research shows that only 4-8% of child sexual abuse reports are fabricated.

KNOW how to recognize boundary violations and how offenders operate. Teaching children about their bodies, recognizing warning signs, and responding to any concerns are important first steps. Even very young children can learn some skills to help keep themselves safe from sexual abuse, but it's up to parents to help them learn what they need to KNOW.

KNOW

HOW ABUSE HAPPENS



GATEWAY
REGION YMCA

Important things you can teach that will help you help your child stay safe:

Preschoolers understand the idea of rules, such as rules about playing nicely with others and rules about being safe, like wearing seat belts. So as you teach these rules, just add rules about touching their bodies.

First, talk to your child about body parts, including private parts. This will give your child words to use when he/she needs to tell you anything about his/her body, like an injury or rash or other problem in that area.

Then add rules about private parts, like "Never let other people touch your private parts unless Mommy or Daddy knows about it." Children also need to know what to do when someone breaks the rules about touching.

Teach children:

- What to say to someone who breaks the rules about touching
- To move away from someone who is breaking the rules about touching
- Phrases so he/she can tell others to stop and practice saying them with your child
- Teach your child to say this to anyone who invades their privacy (other children as well as to adults)
- Tell your child that it's ok to get out of someone's lap or pull away from a hug, even if an adult asks them not to
- To tell you or another adult, like a teacher or caregiver, if someone breaks the rules about touching them

For additional Child Abuse Prevention Resources:

Gateway Region YMCA main office: 314-436-1177
[Illinois Department of Child and Family Services](#)
[Missouri Department of Social Services](#)

[Darkness to Light: End Child Sexual Abuse](#)
[The CDC: Preventing Child Sexual Abuse](#)

The above statistics provided by Darkness to Light.