



GATEWAY
REGION YMCA



RESPOND

TO WARNINGS OF CHILD ABUSE

If you see warning signs from your child or an adult, or you hear about something that sounds like abuse, **RESPOND** by reporting it immediately.

What to do if you believe a child is being abused:

You do not need to have proof that abuse is occurring to make a report, only reasonable suspicion. Reasonable suspicion means that you have witnessed maltreatment or boundary violations, either in the child or adult, or both. Or, you have received a disclosure from a child about abuse, neglect, or boundary violations towards them.



FILE A REPORT

Child sexual abuse reports should be made to the police and/or state child protective services.

In Illinois, [report online](#) or call 1-800-252-2873.

In Missouri, [report online](#) or call 1-800-392-3738.



SEEK ASSISTANCE

Contact the Darkness to Light, a national organization that works to end child sexual abuse, on their helpline at 1.866.FOR.LIGHT (1.866.367.54448) or text LIGHT to 741741 to have questions answered by trained counselors at no charge. Visit their website at d2i.org.

To make an anonymous report to the Gateway Region YMCA, please fill out this [form](#) OR call 855-347-0751. Reports can be made 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All calls and reports are confidential.

How to react if your child tells you about sexual abuse or inappropriate behavior:

Your response plays a big role in how your child understands abuse and how he/she recovers.

- Give attention, compassion, and belief
- Listen calmly and openly
- Don't fill in gaps
- Don't ask leading questions about the details
- Ask open-ended questions like, "what happened next?"
- Don't overreact
- Say, "I believe you" and "what happened is not your fault"

Contact the Gateway Region YMCA with additional questions at 314-436-1177.