

## Tips for Parents

- \* *Abusers are usually someone the child knows. Know who your child is spending time with.*
- \* *Keep an open line of communication with your child. Reassure them that there is nothing you cannot handle together.*
- \* *Monitor your child's technology use. Know who they are communicating with, which apps they are using and what games they are playing.*
- \* *Give your child permission to own his or her own body. Help them set respectful boundaries. Teach them that no one has the right to touch them without their permission!*
- \* *If a child discloses abuse, remain calm. Praise the child for telling. Listen to the child and believe him or her. Report the abuse. Seek counseling.*
- \* *Mutual Ground offers free, confidential counseling for victims of sexual abuse of all ages and genders. For more information, please call (630) 897-0084*

# MUTUAL GROUND

Where the Healing Begins

## Services Provided by Mutual Ground in English & Spanish

*(All counseling services are free and confidential)*

- Counseling for sexual abuse victims of all ages
- Counseling for victims of domestic violence and their children
- Group Counseling
- 24/7 Crisis Intervention at Hospitals
- Legal Advocacy
- Domestic Violence Shelter
- Prevention presentations for school and community groups

For more information on our Prevention Program please contact Rhonda Annala  
630-897-0084 ext 107 or  
[rannala@mutualground.org](mailto:rannala@mutualground.org)

Domestic Violence Hotline:  
630-897-0080  
Sexual Assault Hotline:  
630-897-8383

*Hotlines are anonymous and available 24/7  
No lines have Caller ID*



## Child Sexual Abuse: What parents need to know

*The discussion of sexual abuse can be a tough but important conversation for parents and their children.*

Parents can help reduce their child's risk of being abused by learning the facts about child sexual abuse.

Mutual Ground, Inc.  
630-897-0084

## Why is it important to talk to my child about sexual abuse?

- 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be a victim of child sexual abuse by age 18
- Anyone can be a victim-for elementary age children boys and girls are affected equally
- The median age of child sexual abuse victims is 9 years old
- Sexual abusers are usually not strangers– 93% of the time the abuser is someone the child knows
- 67% of sexual crimes in our country happen to people under 18
- Abusers take time in choosing and grooming victims. Grooming means preparing a child for abuse.
- Parents can help reduce the risk of their child becoming a victim by talking to them about sexual abuse and teaching them that secrets about touching are never OK



## How can I start the conversation?

- Start with teaching your child this simple safety rule:

***No one should touch your private parts except to keep you clean and healthy.***

- Tell your child that if anyone tries to break this rule they should Yell NO! Get to a safe place, and tell an adult right away.
- Encourage your child to talk to you or another trusted adult if anyone makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable



- Teach your child the difference between safe and unsafe secrets and reinforce that there is no topic your child can't discuss with you.
- Remind your child that you will always listen to them and believe them!

## Tricks abusers use

***Abusers use tricks to gain a child's trust and to get them to keep the abuse a secret. Some of those tricks include:***

- Blaming the child for the abuse
- Convincing the child that no one will believe him or her
- Telling the child he or she will get in trouble
- Bribing the child by buying presents or being a fake friend
- Threatening the child if they tell or do not comply
- Encouraging the child to break their parents' rules and to keep secrets from their parents
- Using drugs and alcohol
- Confusing the child by telling him or her that what the offender is doing is normal or OK

**Mutual Ground is located at  
418 Oak Avenue  
Aurora, Illinois**