

Keeping our children safe from sexual abuse

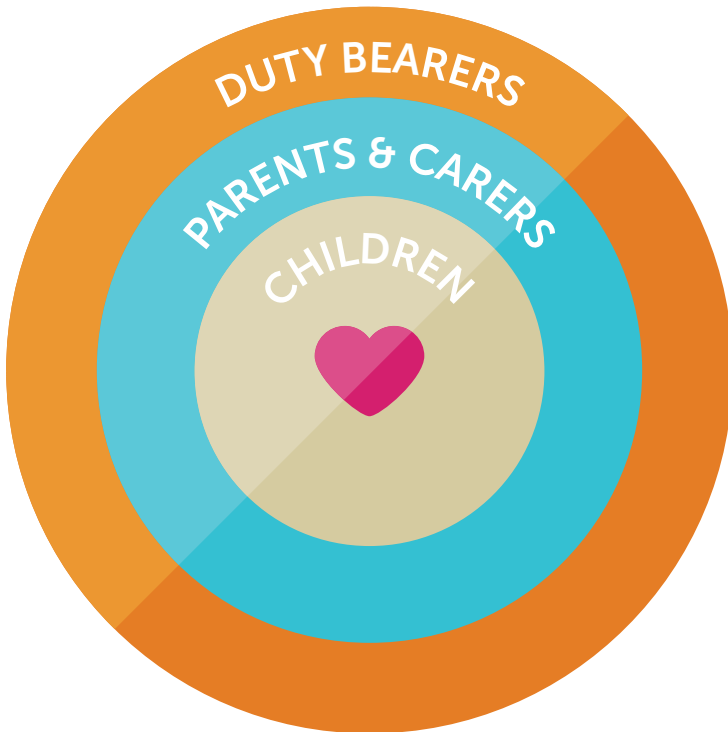
Community Representatives





Protecting children is everyone's responsibility

A 'child' is anyone under the age of 18 years. Children need special protection. Everyone who has professional contact with children in the community (including teachers, health workers, social workers and youth workers, faith-based leaders, police officers, community officials) has an important role to play in preventing, identifying and responding to risks faced by children.



Together we can build a child safe community.



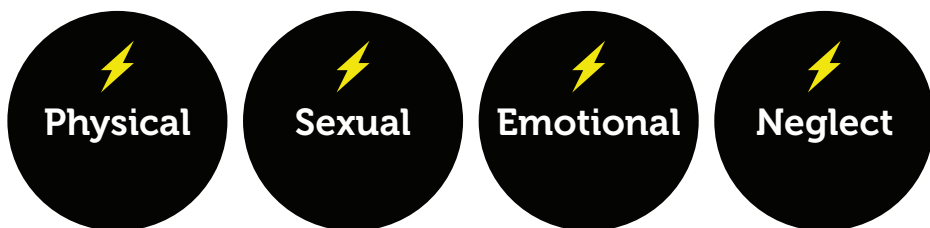
What is child abuse?

Child abuse is any action (or non-action) that is not accidental and hurts a child or puts a child in danger.

Millions of children around the world suffer abuse every day. Child abuse occurs in every country of the world.

Types of child abuse

There are four main forms of child abuse. Often, more than one type of abuse occurs at the same time.



Impacts of child abuse

Abuse has serious effects on children and can result in long-term physical and psychological problems.

The consequences of abuse extend beyond the immediate victims and affect families, communities and broader society.

Children should never be blamed for their abuse or the impacts that extend to families and communities.

What is child abuse?



Verbally abusing a child



Teasing a child unnecessarily



Touching a child where he/she doesn't want to be touched



Ignoring a child



Exposing a child to pornographic acts or literature



Forcing a child to touch you



Breaking down the self confidence of a child



Hitting or hurting a child – often to relieve your own frustration



Manipulating a child



Not taking care of a child, for example: unclean, unclothed, unfed



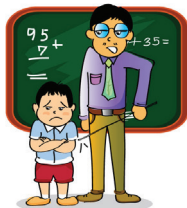
Using a child as a servant



Neglecting emotional needs of a child



Making your own child a 'servant' depriving of time for education / leisure



Hitting and ridiculing a child at school



Neglecting a child's medical needs



Neglecting a child's educational needs



Leaving a child without supervision



What is child sexual abuse?

- Child sexual abuse occurs when someone involves a child in a sexual activity by using their power over them or taking advantage of their trust.
- Child sexual abuse includes all forms of unwanted sexual behaviour. This can involve touching or no contact at all.
- Child sexual abuse includes:
 - making abusive images/photographs/videos of children.
 - forcing children to watch or take part in sexual acts.
 - forcing/coercing children to have sex or engage in sexual acts with other children or adults.



Did you know?

Child sexual abuse is a global problem

Child sexual abuse occurs in all countries of the world. Even our community is not immune from child sexual abuse. The majority of abusers in any given community will be local.

Victims of sexual abuse can be girls and boys

Both girls and boys can be victims of sexual abuse. Third gender children or children who are exploring their sexuality can be at increased risk. Children with disabilities (all types of disabilities) can also be at increased risk. Sexual abuse can happen to any child from any background.

An abuser is often someone known to the child

Child sex abusers are often a member of the family, the community or someone in a position of trust.

Abusers can befriend victims and their families

Abusers often build friendships with the victim and their family as a way to 'hide' their abuse.

Child sexual abuse can occur in the context of tourism

A small minority of foreigners use travel as an opportunity to sexually abuse children. Travelling child sex offenders are tourists, travellers or foreign residents who commit child sexual abuse in the country or countries in which they are living or visiting.

Children often do not tell an adult about abuse

For many reasons, children often stay silent about abuse. Look for signs, rather than waiting for children to report.

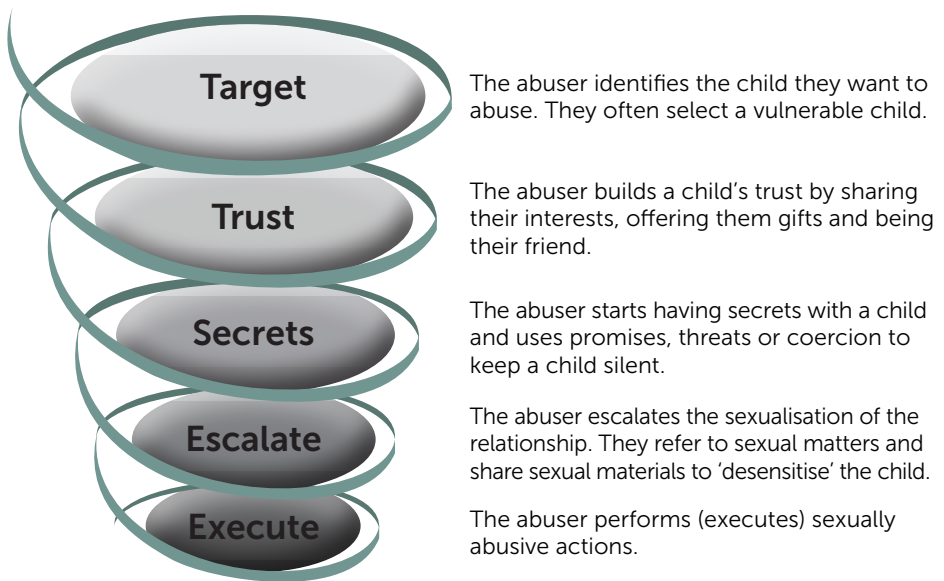
All children have the right to protection

All children around the world have the right to protection from all forms of abuse. As adults, it is our responsibility to protect children from harm. Children should never be blamed for their abuse.

How do child sex abusers operate?

Abusers use many ways to access and abuse children.

People often think that child sexual abuse occurs as a random attack by a stranger. Actually, it is common that an abuser and/or an intermediary will spend time building a relationship with the child (and sometimes their family). This process is known as “grooming” and can involve a number of steps:



Not all abusers use grooming techniques. Other ways include sudden attack, procurement, deceit and manipulation, and coercion.

Often abusers do not act alone. They may be aided or supported by another person such as assistants, procurers, agents, intermediaries, and facilitators.



What signs indicate a child may be at risk?

1 The behaviour of children

While these signs do not necessarily mean a child has/is being abused, they indicate a need to pay more attention to the situation:

- Mood swings, becoming withdrawn, depression, sudden anger or aggression.
- Running away from home or going missing for long periods.
- A change in their school performance or missing school without reason.
- Unexplained money, gifts, mobile phones.
- Substance abuse (including drugs and alcohol).
- Inappropriate sexualised behaviour for their age.
- Children that are labelled as 'troublemakers'.

2 The behaviour of other persons

Be aware of the behaviour of adults around children. This behaviour can include: excessive attention, giving gifts, excessive affection, requests to spend time alone and unsupervised visits.

3 Physical signs and symptoms

Physical signs and symptoms include pregnancy, physical injuries or those related to infections (such as sexually transmitted infections and diseases).

4 Disclosure by the child

Sometimes when children do not feel comfortable to speak with a parent or carer, they will disclose abuse to another adult they trust.

5 Community warning signs

When children are living in difficult circumstances, they are vulnerable to abuse. At the community level, look out for: children begging, not going to school, living and/or working on the streets, without adequate parental supervision, living in vulnerable families, addicted to internet/gaming. Also look out for an increase in adult or night entertainment venues or tourism services linked to the sex industry.



How safe is my community for children?

Take the test

Please mark your answer with a tick ✓

Yes No

1. I know how to identify signs that children may be at risk or experiencing sexual abuse.		
2. I know how to respond if children are at risk of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect).		
3. I know the number to contact to refer and report cases of suspected child abuse (physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect).		
4. Children in my community receive appropriate education to protect them from sexual abuse.		
5. My workplace has a child protection policy and all staff are familiar with the application of the policy.		
6. My organisation educates the public on how to protect children from abuse (physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect).		
7. Our community has a network of service providers who work together to refer cases of child sexual abuse and protect child victims.		

Results:

If you ticked 'Yes' for all of the above questions, Community Representatives are taking excellent steps to protect children. Keep up the good work!

If you ticked 'No' for any questions, refer to the next card for ways to build a protective environment for children in your community.



How can we make our community safe for children?

1 Open dialogue and communication

- Direct and communicative relationships between children and their parents.
- Open dialogue on child protection through the media, in schools, in institutions and amongst the community.

2 Prevention

- Undertake background checks and vet persons that volunteer or work with children.
- Take reports seriously and investigate suspicions.
- Limit stranger access to children and places where children can be alone with adults.
- Show intolerance of child sexual abuse in the community.
- Early intervention programs to support vulnerable families.

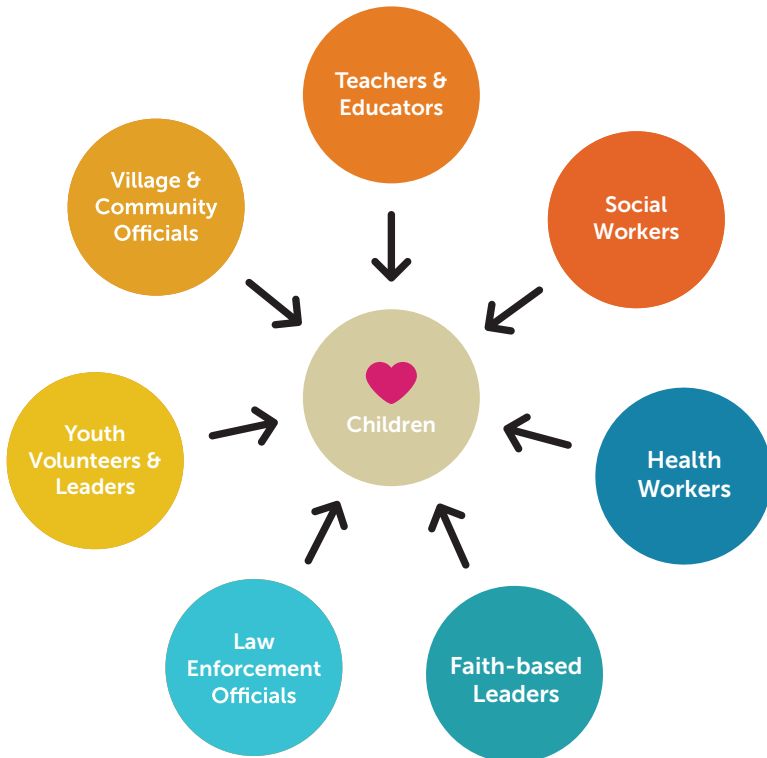
3 Protection

- Be alert! Look out for signs that indicate a child could be at risk.
- Take immediate action if you receive information that a child is at risk of abuse or is a victim of abuse.
- Physically safeguard the child(ren) in question.
- Refer cases to the designated person/ agency.
- Follow the agreed community procedures.



Which community representatives can help?

As a teacher, nurse, doctor, faith-based leader, police officer, social worker, village leader, community official, youth worker or professional working with children, each one of you can help to keep children safe from sexual abuse in your communities.



Collaboration is the key to child protection success. Make sure you know who is in your local network so you can take immediate and suitable action when a child is at risk of sexual abuse.



Where can I get help?

Do you need more information? Or, do you know a situation where a child may be at risk of abuse?



Call the national child protection hotline

.....



Contact the local authorities

.....



Contact a reputable child protection agency

.....

w: childsafetourism.org and wvi.org/asiapacific/childsafetourism
f: facebook.com/ChildSafeTourism t: twitter.com/childsafetravel



Child Safe Tourism

Take action against abuse