



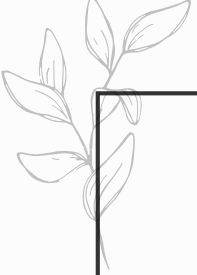

## HOW TO PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL ABUSE

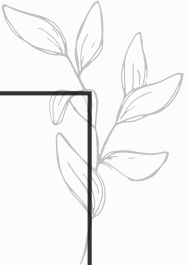
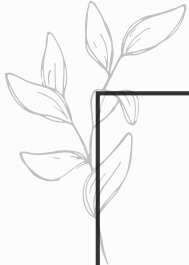
*and*

## HOW TO STOP THE PERPETUATING CULTURE OF ABUSE

If this is important to you, make a list of what you are committed to do to protect your children.

- When I take my little ones into the world and into groups of people including my family and church, it's the most important time to be a parent. If I'm too tired or don't want to be a parent there and be extra vigilant, then I shouldn't go.
- Family functions are for all in the family to be included and invited. Churches, including all of their activities, are for all in the congregation. It's inclusive, so I am extra vigilant. The invite list is not always something I get to control. What I can control is how or if I participate and how I allow my children to participate. I can do a buddy system and teach my kids to stay with their buddy at all times. I can have each parent on a child or buddy system or have eyes on a known past abuser and go where he/she goes instead of following each of the children. I will create a strategy and follow through on it. I will go home early if I need to or just opt out altogether if I feel that it is best for my family.
- I learn about grooming and teach counter-grooming. I teach what private body parts are. We teach what is not game play and what is inappropriate behavior and touching. I teach that some people have been taught that inappropriate things are okay. Deep down they know it's not okay. We know this because they hide it. It's not okay and it hurts people. I teach them that hurt people hurt people.

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- I talk to my kids about bodies, sex, and abuse at a young age. We use proper technical language. I take age into consideration when talking to each child. It's age appropriate with the intention to give them the information they need to stay safe
  - I teach them about manipulation and to never believe people who break the law in this way. They are liars trying to keep inappropriate things hidden. They are scared of their parents stopping them. Their parents WILL stop them.
    - We teach them how to protect themselves. We will practice yelling "Stop" and "Help." We will encourage them to fight to get away and to keep yelling. We will teach them to find a trusted adult and to talk to us about it. We teach the importance of talking about it and getting police involved so no other little people get hurt.
  - We have an open door policy. I will teach my kids to not go behind closed doors alone with anyone no matter the age.
  - I take my young children to the bathroom before their class. I ask church teachers to not let them go to the bathroom alone and to come get me if they need to go to the bathroom.
    - I help them develop their spidey sense. I teach them to recognize their gut, to recognize how they feel. I teach them to recognize when someone makes them feel uncomfortable. I teach them to pay attention to how different people make them feel and to trust themselves.
      - I teach them to pray for and to rely on and listen to the Spirit.
  - I teach them how to set appropriate boundaries. I teach them that boundaries are for them to take care of themselves. If someone does something you don't like, you leave the situation and tell a trusted adult and your parents. We teach them not to sacrifice their self-care for others.
  - We teach that not all adults can be trusted. Trust is earned and can be lost. We teach them how little things can earn it and take it away. We teach them that their spidey sense helps to develop or take away trust. We don't include some people in our lives.



- When I feel it's age appropriate in age appropriate language, I tell them about the abuse that happened to me. I tell them who hurt me if it's someone I want them to be more careful around. (The abuser is in my family)

- We don't do sleep-overs at our house or other people's houses.

- I make my home a sanctuary from the world.

- I talk openly about these things so when they need to come to me it's not a scary, new, first time thing. I let my children know that if something does happen to them, when they come to me, they will not be in trouble and that we will believe them.

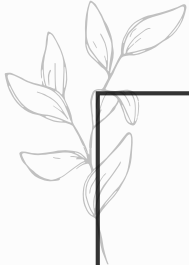
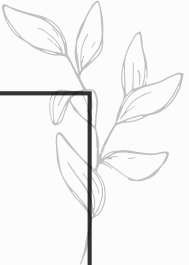
- I take one on one time to talk and listen to my kids. I let them know I'm here, I care, and am available when they need to talk.

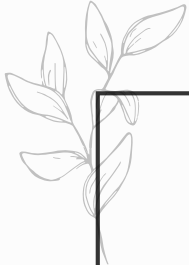

- I have compassion for my kids and their struggles and negative behavior. I teach them to love the sinner but not the sin. I teach them what is appropriate and what is not. I protect my children from each other. I teach them about the atonement. I don't judge them. I love them. I teach them to turn to the Savior. I teach them that their worth is set and that they cannot change that no matter what they do or what has happened to them. It is divinely given, not earned. I teach them they are 100% lovable.

- I teach my children to have respect for themselves and others. I teach them how to create privacy for themselves. I teach them to respect those younger and smaller than them. I teach my boys to have a healthy respect towards girls and women. I teach my kids to be accountable their for own feelings, actions, thoughts, and desires and to not put those on others.

- I teach my kids that human beings are sexual beings and that God designed us that way. I teach them to be sex positive and that those desires are good. I teach them that sexual abuse is abusing that sacred gift.

- We use our internal guidance system and the Spirit to help us make decisions for babysitters, for family friends, for houses our kids get to go to, for people we invite into our home, for teachers, for leaders, and for kids that play with our kids.

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- We choose to be extra, extra careful when our kids are little.
  - When I am thinking of allowing my kids to go to other's homes, I will be curious. I will think about who is going to be there or who may be invited into that home? If I know abuse has happened with someone in household, I will be extra cautious and vigilant.
  - Abuse happens most often with people you know well such as family friends or actual family members. An abuser can be anyone. I will take caution with everyone.
  - Of sexual abuse cases reported to law enforcement, 93% of juvenile victims knew the perpetrator, 59% were acquaintances, 34% were family members, and 7% were strangers to the victim. One in four girls and one in six boys will be sexually abused before they turn 18 years old. 96% of people who sexually abuse children are male, and 76.8% of people who sexually abuse children are adults. I will be vigilant.
  - If a sexual crime is committed I will call the police and get the victim and the abuser the help they need. My goal is to stop the abuse and to prevent future abuse. I get the authorities involved. I don't become the authority. I allow the justice system and God to provide justice.
  - Therapy is needed for both the victim and the abuser. It's my job to get my child help.
    - I teach that forgiveness is for the victim to let go of the hate and dirty pain within them. Forgiveness and trust do not go together when it comes to abuse. Abuse can become an addictive behavior for anyone, male or female. It stays in the dark and can be hidden for years even if you think it has stopped. It perpetuates itself.
  - If I find out that my partner or child is abusing one or more of my children and they all live in the same home, I will not keep it hidden. I will not be afraid of airing our dirty laundry over protecting my child. I will separate the victim and abuser and get the authorities involved. If I fail to separate or remove the abuser from the home, I could have criminal charges come against me and could possibly lose my children. Not separating the victim from the abuser by having them in two different homes, WILL perpetuate the abuse.

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- I will advocate for my child to get the help they need to stop abusing and to heal. I will advocate for my children if they are abused to protect them from further abuse and to get the healing they need.
  - I will encourage openness, communication, and will have compassion for my children if they were abused. "If you put shame in a Petri dish, it needs three things to grow exponentially: secrecy, silence and judgment." ~Brené Brown
  - I will be a safe person for my child. I will do what's best for them no matter the discomfort I might feel. The safety of my child comes first.