

What you can do to help a child who is being abused

Listen and believe. If children disclose information about being abused, they are saying they trust you. Listen and believe!

Important messages for children to hear are:

- Violence is not okay; no one deserves to be abused.
- It's not your fault. You are not to blame for the violence.
- All feelings are okay. Feeling angry is okay, but it's not okay to hurt others because you are angry.
- You have the right to be safe and happy.
- If you are feeling sad or scared, tell someone. We don't have to keep secrets that make us feel that way.

Give them the **Kids Help Phone # 1 800 688 6868**. Young people can call and talk about a problem that's bothering them. Nobody else needs to know and it's free.

Help children work out what they can do when they are scared and need to get away from the violence. Help them make a safety plan.

Be a friend to a child. Show her or him by example that people can settle problems without violence.

Pay attention to the overly aggressive child, the withdrawn and submissive child, or the child who is failing to thrive. These are often signs of abuse.

Involve children in community activities. Friendships can help them gain the security they are missing in their families.

If you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, report your concerns to the Child, Youth and Family Services authorities or police in your community.

Adapted from: National Clearinghouse on Family Violence website.