



Tips for Telling About Abuse

If you have experienced sexual abuse or assault: Tell someone.

If you have experienced sexual abuse or assault that no one else knows about, it's very important that you tell someone about what is happening. Many times, sexual offenders will tell you that the abuse/assault is a secret. **THIS IS NOT TRUE.** You always have the right to tell someone you trust. These are some tips for telling about sexual abuse and assault. Telling is the first step in making the abuse or assault come to an end.



Important Tips and Reminders

- Choose people who are likely to believe and support you
- People who support you often will want to help you report what has happened to law enforcement
- Some individuals, such as care providers, are called “mandatory reporters” and are required by law to report sexual abuse and assault
- Try to find a time when you can tell the other person in private and when the other person has time to listen and help you come up with a plan for ending the abuse/assault
- If the person you tell does not believe you or does not help you stop the abuse or assault, keep telling until someone believes you and helps
- If a person is touching your private parts, use appropriate names for those parts. Private parts are parts of the body covered by bathing suits, including penis, vagina, breasts, buttocks
- Telling what happened may be stressful – plan to do something to cope with emotions and take care of yourself after you tell

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