



## NAD Youth Ministries Safety Resources

# SOME FACTS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

### What are Some FACTS of Sexual Abuse?

- Research suggests that one in 20 men may have sexually molested children, and between 5 and 20% of the individuals who offend children are females. Also, 40% of children who are abused are abused by older children or teens. There is NO easy way to identify an offender at a glance. Therefore, the only way your children can be kept safe is for you to know where your child is and what he/she is doing at **all times!**
- Offenders who primarily target boys abuse an average of 30 boys before being apprehended.
- One out of every 3 to 5 girls and one out of every 4 to 6 boys are molested prior to their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- Over the course of their lifetime, 28% of U.S. youth ages 14 to 17 have been sexually victimized.
- Children are most vulnerable to sexual abuse between the ages of 7 and 13.
- Sex offenders commit an average of 120 separate crimes before they are caught.
- There are offenders living in all of our neighborhoods and communities.
- Child sexual abuse is not solely restricted to physical contact; such abuse could include noncontact abuse, such as exposure, voyeurism, and child pornography.

### With Whom Is Sexual Abuse Most Likely to Occur?

- 85% of cases involve parents, step-parents, boyfriends, in-laws, grandparents, uncles, friends of the family, or neighbors.
- 25% involve people who work in youth service organizations such as sports, youth clubs, camps, churches, and daycare programs.
- 5% of cases involve strangers.

### How Does Criminal Sexual Behavior Start?

- Most sex offenders grow up in homes where there is a lower level of stability and empathy for others.
- The majority report childhood neglect, emotional and physical abuse, and domestic violence. These experiences create self-centeredness and interfere with the development of pro-social behavior and moral development.
- 75% of offenders started offending prior to age 18. The average age of first offense is 14.

## **How Does Domestic Violence and Substance Abuse Contribute to Sexual Abuse?**

- There is evidence that exposure to domestic violence may cause more long-term harm than other forms of child abuse.
- Exposure to domestic violence may cause male children to develop pro-rape attitudes and arousal to violence.
- Parents who abuse drugs and alcohol provide a lower level of care and stability for children, forget to feed them, don't supervise them, thus making these an easier prey for offenders.
- Some offenders specifically target drug addicts to "trade sex for drugs" and abuse their children.
- When "high," some offenders become hyper-sexual.

## **What Are Some Dangers of the Internet?**

- The Internet offers offenders another avenue to contact and approach children.
- The Internet is causing some people to cross the line for the first time in their lives.
- Cyber-sex becomes addictive to some people.
- The Internet is exposing children to more, and worse deviant forms of sexuality.
- 20% of children are accidentally exposed to pornography via the Internet.
- One in five children who use the Internet are approached online by an adult seeking sex.

## **What Are Some Sexual Behaviors Among Children?**

- Normal healthy children experience sexual curiosity and pleasurable feeling and sexual play.

## **What Are Some Inappropriate Sexual Behavior Clues?**

- Adults who seem pre-occupied with the sexual development of children, or make sexualized comments to or about children.
- Adults who act "flirty" around children or teens.
- Adults who act jealous of children's or teens' relationships with each other.
- Adults who "accidentally" touch private parts.

## **What Are Some "Boundary Violation" Clues?**

- Adults who engage in frequent physical contact with children (wrestling, tickling, horseplay, hugging or lap-sitting).
- Adults who don't allow children privacy, "walk in on them" while they are dressing or using the bathroom.
- Adults who act like children or allow children to do questionable or inappropriate things.

## What Are Some Child / Teen – Focused Lifestyle Clues

- Adults who work with children but also spend their free time doing “special” things with children.
- Adults who do not have children but seem to know a lot about the current fads or music that is popular with children or teens.
- Any behavior which seems abusive or inappropriate shall be reported to the pastor or church elder immediately.

## Is It “Too Good To Be True” Clues?

- Adults who buy children special gifts for no reason.
- Adults who want to take children on outings that involve being **alone** with them.
- Adults who seem able to infiltrate family / social functions or are always available to baby-sit.
- (Resources) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rWyEbKNynao>

## And Finally

- Remember, probably 90% or more of the people you know are good people.
- Adults, not children, are responsible for the safety and welfare of children.
- If a child says he / she has been abused, it’s likely true, believe them.
- Most victims can overcome the abuse if we all act calmly and responsibly.
- It’s best for everyone if we report and if the victim, family, and offender get good treatment.

*Some of the information above was collected from Cory Jewell Jensen – Co-Director, Center for Behavioral Intervention / Beaverton, Oregon 9700, Adventist Risk Management <https://adventistrisk.org/en-US/Safety-Resources/Pathfinder-Safety> and The National Center for Victims of Crime.*

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