



Building
stronger
families

Family Action Kids Information Booklet

Ages 5 - 11



Many thanks to the Leicester PSA team in producing this booklet and to the families and agencies who contributed.

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Family Action

Leicester PSA service

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Why have I been given this booklet?

You have been given this booklet because you have been sexually abused and the adults around you want to help you understand what has happened to you and help you to feel better.

You are not alone. We know that there are lots of children from all different backgrounds who have been sexually abused, but we also know that most people don't go around sexually abusing children.

You might like to read this booklet with an adult you trust and you might want to ask questions about anything you don't understand.

What is sexual abuse?

We all have special parts of our bodies that are covered by our swimming costumes. These have lots of different names including private parts. Your private parts are good and special and belong only to you. Sexual abuse is when someone tricks or forces you to let them touch a private part of your body or makes you touch a private part of their body. Sometimes we call it rude touching. Sometimes there isn't any touching and you might be made to watch another person doing things or they may ask you to do things that involve private parts. This can happen face to face or online - on a screen like a mobile phone or laptop.



Who might sexually abuse you?

Most people do not sexually abuse children. When it does happen, children are most often sexually abused by someone they know. This could be someone in their family or a family friend. They could be an adult or another child. Sometimes it can be someone you don't know.

What happens after you have told someone?

When you have told someone about the sexual abuse, other adults will need to talk to you about what has happened. They will want to protect you and make you feel safe.

A **social worker's** job is to make sure you are safe. They might come and see you and your family a few times or lots of times.

A **police officer's** job is to protect you. They will talk to you in a special place for children. It will be recorded on a video. Your trusted adult can take you there. The police officer will also want to speak to the person who hurt you.

A **special doctor** might want to see you to make sure you are okay. If this happens, your trusted adult can go with you.

Will the person who hurt me get into trouble?

You might not want the person who hurt you to get into trouble, but it is important that you are kept safe.

Sometimes the person who has hurt you will go to court and they might go to prison.

Sometimes the person might not go to court or to prison. This does **NOT** mean that it didn't happen or that people don't believe you.



If the person who hurt you is a young person they might have to do some special work to help them sort out their touching problem.

Will I still see the person who hurt me?

Sometimes it is not safe for you to see the person who hurt you.

Sometimes the person who hurt you might not be around anymore.

Sometimes you might be able to see the person who hurt you with some rules in place to keep you safe.

Tricks, traps and treats

People who abuse children use tricks, traps or treats to make children go along with the rude touching and keep it a secret and not tell anyone.

You might have been **tricked** by the person:

- telling you that it is okay to do what they say

- telling you that they love you or you are special or other nice things

- making it into a game or making you think what was happening was okay

You might have been **trapped** by the person:

- threatening you or scaring you to make you do what they want

- telling you not to tell anyone what they have done or asking you to keep it a secret

- hurting you or people in your family to make you do what they want

You might have been given **treats**:

- giving you a present/sweets/money **if** you do what they want



Why it is hard to tell

Sometimes children can feel bad that they didn't tell anyone sooner about what was happening. But we know that it is very difficult to tell. Here are some things that other children have said about why it can be hard to tell:

- They didn't know or understand that what was happening was not okay
- They didn't want to get the person in trouble
- They thought no one would believe them
- They didn't know how to explain what was happening
- They felt too scared to tell
- They were worried about the family splitting up
- They didn't know who to talk to
- They were worried about everyone finding out
- They thought it was all their fault.



How you might feel and behave

You might have lots of feelings about what has happened—remember all your feelings are okay and important. Talk to the safe people in your life about how you feel

Embarrassed

Confused

Sad

Worried

Scared

Angry

Sometimes your feelings can come out in the way you act or behave -

- Having nightmares or flashbacks
- Wetting the bed
- Having trouble sleeping
- Angry outbursts
- Not wanting to talk to anyone/wanting to be alone
- Not wanting to be away from your parent/carer
- Not wanting to go to school



Ideas for relaxing and feeling better

Sometimes children can feel sad or worried when they think about what has happened. Here are some ideas of things you can do to help you to feel better:

If you are feeling sad try:

- Hot chocolate and a biscuit
- Apply some hand lotion/body lotion
- Make/play with slime
- Cuddle your favourite soft toy/ blanket
- Ask someone to read you a story

If you are feeling worried try:

- Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth – pretend you are blowing up a balloon.
- Visit a safe and imaginary place in your head.
- Squeeze a ball, squish clay, cuddle a toy.
- Do something active – hop up and down.
- Listen to music.
- Talk to someone you trust about how you are feeling or write down how you are feeling and show them.

What you need to know

It is **NEVER** a child's fault when they have been sexually abused - nothing you did made it happen. You are not in trouble and you have not done anything wrong.

It is normal if some of the touching felt nice as our bodies are made to feel nice when they are touched.

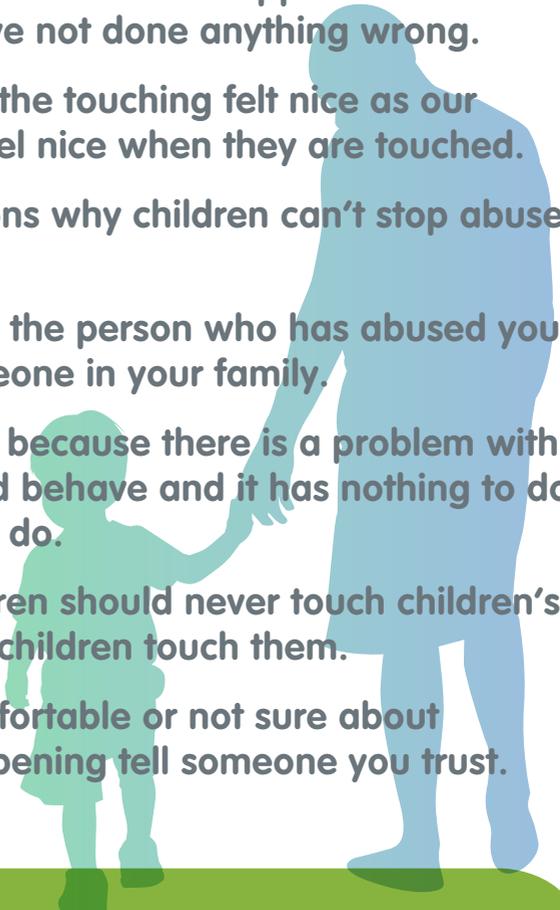
There are lots of reasons why children can't stop abuse from happening.

It is normal if you miss the person who has abused you as they are often someone in your family.

People abuse children because there is a problem with the way they think and behave and it has nothing to do with anything children do.

Adults and other children should never touch children's private parts or make children touch them.

If you ever feel uncomfortable or not sure about something that is happening tell someone you trust.

A blue silhouette of an adult and a green silhouette of a child are shown from the back, holding hands. They are standing on a green rounded rectangular base.

Well done for telling! Even if other people seem upset or unhappy and you are worried that you have done something wrong by telling, remember that you have done something very right!

Our service

Sometimes it can be helpful for children to talk to an adult outside their family about their feelings and worries.

We work with children to help them understand that what happened wasn't their fault. We also help them to get better at coping when they feel sad or worried. We might use talking, drawing or painting.

If you would like some help you can ask a parent, a teacher or an adult you trust to contact us.

www.family-action.org.uk/psa

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About Family Action

Family Action is a charity committed to building stronger families and brighter lives.

We provide innovative and effective services and support to many of the UK's most vulnerable people, helping individuals and communities address the challenges they face through practical, emotional and financial support.



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