

A Guide: Reporting Child Abuse

Talking to a Child:

It takes a lot of courage, bravery, and trust for a child to tell an adult that another adult is hurting them. Your initial reactions are critical for the child's path to healing and recovery.

If a child discloses abuse to you:

1. **Listen** carefully to the child – be mindful of your reactions, remain calm and try to stay neutral.
2. Allow the child to **share their story in their own words** – let the child do most of the talking, and if more information is needed, use open ended questions.
3. **Support and acknowledge** their feelings – let them know they have done the right thing by telling you.
4. Assure them that **it is not their fault**.
5. Let the child know that **you believe** them and that you are going to do something to help.
6. **Do not attempt to intervene** on your own – this could make the situation worse for the child.
7. **Report your concerns**. Reach out for help. It is crucial you report as soon as possible so details can be remembered clearer, and actions can be taken.

There are two easy ways to report a concern:

- Call the Kids Help Phone, at **1-800-387-5437(kids)**
- Call the Central Alberta Children & Family Services Child Abuse Hotline After-Hours office at **1-800-638-0715** (Press 1 for Red Deer or South of Red Deer; Press 2 for north of Red Deer).

How to Report:

It is mandatory for every adult citizen to report every case where there are reasonable and probable grounds to believe that a child has been, or there is substantial risk that he or she will be abused or neglected by a parent/guardian and the child is in need of intervention services. It is not the duty of city personnel to assess the severity of the abuse but to provide the following information plus any of the other information.

- the child's name
- the child's age
- the child's address
- name, and address of alleged perpetrator.
- when and where alleged incident or disclosure took place
- description of indicators
- additional concerns or information.

Communicate to your facility administration.

Once you have reported to either Children & Family Services or the RCMP, inform your facility Administrator that you have made a report.

If a child is in Immediate Danger, please call 911