

Tips for Reporting Child Abuse

✓ **Call Law Enforcement.**

✓ **Call Child Protection.**

Go to CornerHouse's website for links to Law Enforcement agencies in Minnesota, for information about making a report outside of Minnesota, and for a list of Child Protection Agencies and Sheriff's Departments in Minnesota.

There is also information about additional programs and assistance in Minnesota and Nationwide, such as financial assistance for victims of violent crime and for help finding mental health support services.

www.cornerhousemn.org/resources.html



What to do when a child reports possible abuse:

- Be prepared – children can disclose abuse at any time
- Give the child your undivided attention
- Document the child's exact words
- Provide an appropriate and supportive response such as "I believe you" or "It's not your fault"
- Reassure the child about telling by saying something like "I'm so proud you told me"
- Reassure the child that he or she is not in trouble
- Respect the child and her or his disclosure
- Call 911 immediately
- Consider how your body language, facial expressions, and words may affect the child
- Consider the child's safety – e.g. can the child go home today?
- Consider the child's privacy

Behaviors to avoid when a child reports possible abuse:

- Do not react with panic or other strong emotions; the child may view negative reactions as a reflection on him/herself rather than the perpetrator or situation
- Do not try to conduct your own investigation or try to validate the child's report
- Do not ask detail-seeking questions
- Do not use interview tools such as dolls or diagrams to learn more
- Do not ask the child to repeat his or her statement for others
- Do not share the information with those who don't need to know
- Do not confront or challenge the child
- Do not try to reframe what the child has told you
- Do not lie or make promises about what will happen next