

## Resources

Emergency: 911 or local police

The Assaulted Women's Helpline:  
(anonymous, confidential, and services  
provided in up to 154 languages)  
1-866-863-0511  
1-866-863-7868 (TTY)

Kids Help Phone:  
1-800-668-6868

Femaide (French crisis line)  
1-877-336-2433  
1-866-860-7082 (TTY)

Community Connection (Niagara  
Region, Georgian Bay, Toronto):  
211

Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youthline:  
1-800-268-9688

Ontario Association of Children's  
Aid Societies (info on how and  
when to report child abuse):  
[www.oacas.org](http://www.oacas.org)

Suspected Child Abuse and  
Neglect Program (Toronto):  
416-813-6275

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Sexual Assault Centres: [occcc.ca](http://occcc.ca)

Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence  
Treatment Centres:  
[satcontario.com](http://satcontario.com)

Shelters: [shelternet.ca](http://shelternet.ca)

Sexual and reproductive health  
info: [spiderbytes.ca](http://spiderbytes.ca)

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Metropolitan Action Committee on  
Violence Against Women and Children

158 Spadina Road, Toronto, ON, M5R 2T8  
1-877-558-5570 | 416-392-3031 (TTY)  
[info@metrac.org](mailto:info@metrac.org)  
More info and statistics:  
[www.metrac.org](http://www.metrac.org) | [www.owjn.org](http://www.owjn.org)



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## Definition

Sexual abuse is unwanted sexual touching or behaviour. It happens when someone tricks, forces, or confuses someone into sexual activities. Children and youth most often get sexually abused by older youth or adults. Girls and boys can experience sexual abuse, but statistics show that girls are more at risk of being abused, usually by men they know and trust.

Sexual abuse can include getting your picture taken with no clothes on, being forced/tricked into looking at sexual pictures, someone touching your private parts, and being forced/tricked into touching someone else's private parts.

A friend or family member can sexually abuse you. It's never okay, no matter who the abuser is.

The law says children and youth under 14 can't consent to sexual activity (consent means agree to). Youth between 14 and 17 can't consent to sexual activity with a person in a position of authority or

someone they depend upon (e.g. parent, teacher, youth worker, community leader).

## Knowing What Sexual Abuse Is

It can be hard to know what sexual abuse is. But a situation **M.U.S.T.** be sexually abusive if someone **Makes** you do something or does something to you that feels **Uncomfortable**, tells you to keep it **Secret**, and/or uses **Tricks** to get you to do sexual things.

People who abuse know what they're doing is wrong, so they may try to trick, bribe, or force you not to tell. They might:

- Give you gifts, favours, or money or take you on fun trips
- Threaten to hurt you or your pet, friend, parent, or sibling
- Say that what they did was okay
- Say they did it because "you're special" and make you feel loved
- Make you feel guilty or confused
- Tell you that you "wanted it" or that no one will believe you if you

tell

- Hurt you physically (e.g., pushing, shaking, slapping) to scare you

Children/youth often get abused by someone they know, trust, or like. It can be confusing when someone you like abuses you. Planning may help you handle a bad situation.

- Try to think about unsafe situations you or someone you knew went through. How did they deal with it? Did they run, call for help, or talk out of it? Think about what you could do.
- Sometimes when you're feeling uncomfortable or afraid, your mind and body send you messages. Listen to those messages and try to go where you'll feel safe again.
- Sometimes you may feel afraid or confused about a situation. It can help to talk about it with a trusted adult or friend. You can also call a crisis phone line.

These are only suggestions that might help you. Remember that if someone abuses you, it's never your fault.

You have the right to say no and the right to be listened to. Tell someone you can trust who will help you or contact a community service.

## What to do if Something Happens

An abuser will try to make you stay quiet about being abused. But you can tell an adult or friend that you trust. You can call a youth help line to talk about what happened and figure out what to do. You don't have to feel alone and you can find help.

You have the right to have control of your body. You shouldn't have to touch someone, get touched, or be involved in things that make you uncomfortable. You shouldn't have to do sexual things to get love or attention, even from family members, adults, or friends. That's abuse.

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