

PROTECT CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL ABUSE



Types of child sexual abuse

- **Contact abuse:** sexual touch of a child's body or making a child touch someone else's genitals, penetration of mouth, vagina, anus with sexual organs, fingers or other objects
- **Non-contact abuse:** getting a child to watch live sexual acts or view them in photos or video, making sexually suggestive remarks either verbally or online, exploitation by creating sexual images of children and distributing them online



Behaviour that should raise concern

- Avoidance of certain people
- Becoming withdrawn, anxious or fearful
- Sudden falling grades at school
- Self-harming and suicidal thoughts
- Returning to previous childish habits (e.g. thumb sucking)
- Recurrent nightmares or bed-wetting
- Runs away from home or school
- Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviours



Physical symptoms

- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Bloody, torn, or stained underclothes
- Pain, injury or discharge in genital area
- Frequent urinary or yeast infections
- Signs of pregnancy in a teenager



Warn your child of adults who:



- Find ways to be alone with the child i.e. suggesting outings alone, offering to "look after" or babysit child alone
- Ignore the child's needs for privacy e.g. bathroom
- Give gifts or money for no particular reason
- Communicate excessively with the child – text messages, calling, etc.



Never ignore a child who reports sexual abuse or has any of the above physical symptoms. Listen carefully to what he/she has to say and seek medical advice. If a child displays behaviour that raises concern, take him/her aside and ask if something is bothering him/her. Do not shout or threaten them because you are anxious. They will be more likely to share problems if you are calm

and gentle. If they reveal something suspicious or display behaviour which suggests possible sexual abuse, consult a doctor for advice. Always remember that both boys and girls can become victims of child sexual abuse. To lodge a report, contact the police or call Talian Kasih at 15999 (24-hour hotline).

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