

How to Identify and Report Child Sexual Abuse



Know Your Role

Indiana is a mandatory reporting state; *anyone* who has reason to believe a child has been neglected or abused *must* by state law make a report. You don't need proof to report suspected child abuse. These reports by law will remain anonymous. Indiana has a hotline that serves as the reporting center for all allegations of child abuse or neglect in the state of Indiana.

Know Some of the Signs of Child Sexual Abuse¹

Behavioral signs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Sexual behavior that is inappropriate for the child's age-Keeping secrets-Not wanting to be left alone with certain people especially if this is a new behavior-Regressive behaviors such as thumb sucking or bedwetting-Overly compliant behavior-Spending an unusual amount of time alone-Trying to avoid removing clothing to change or bathe	Emotional signs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Change in eating habits-Change in mood or personality, such as increased aggression-Decrease in confidence or self-image-Excessive worry or fearfulness-Increase in unexplained health problems such as stomachaches and headaches-Loss or decrease in interest in school, activities, and friends-Nightmares or fear of being alone at night-Self-harming behaviors
Physical signs: <ul style="list-style-type: none">-Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)-Signs of trauma to the genital area, such as unexplained bleeding, bruising, or blood on the sheets, underwear, or other clothing	

Know the Next Steps

A disclosure, now what...²

1. Remain calm and listen carefully.
2. Allow the child to do the talking.
3. Offer reassurance but make no promises.
4. After the conversation, DOCUMENT EVERYTHING VERBATIM.
5. Immediately report to DCS or law enforcement..

Reporting³

When making a report, the intake specialist might ask you for the following information:

- Who was involved
- What occurred
- When and where it occurred
- The extent of any injuries sustained
- Any other relevant information

You may be asked for more detailed information such as names, addresses, and phone numbers for the child, parent or alleged perpetrator.

If you are not able to provide all of this information, it is still necessary to call the hotline to make a report. Once a report has been made, do NOT initiate conversation about the report with the child.

IN Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline: 1-800-800-5556

www.knottoday.org | [@knottodayfdn](https://twitter.com/knottodayfdn) | info@knottoday.org

This bulletin is intended as a resource only and should not be relied upon as legal advice.

¹ RAINN
² Susie's Place Child Advocacy Center
³ IN Department of Child Services