



A Guide for Parents & Caregivers

A NOTE FROM THE FOUNDERS

Indianapolis Colts Head Coach Frank Reich and his wife Linda, business owners, speakers, and philanthropists, bring their hearts and passion to kNot Today to generate **awareness**, initiate **prevention** strategies, and assist in the development of innovative **healing** programs for sexually abused, exploited, and trafficked children.

While living and engaging in communities from coast to coast, they have learned all too well how big the problem is and how close it can hit to home.



As parents and grandparents, they were compelled to make an impact on behalf of children everywhere.

Frank and Linda Reich

Why this Book?

To mitigate this tragedy against our nation's children, we developed a user-friendly, quick resource guide to educate parents and caregivers on the potential dangers and risks children have from sexual predators.

Every **9 minutes**, a child is sexually assaulted in America¹

1 in 4 girls and **1 in 13** boys experience child sexual abuse at some point in childhood²

91% of child sexual abuse is perpetrated by someone the child or child's family knows²

There were **70 Million** Images and Videos of child pornography reported to Authorities in 2020³

This booklet has been designed to equip you with valuable tools and words to create conversation with your child to protect them from experiencing the trauma of sexual abuse, exploitation, and trafficking.

¹ "Free Planned Giving Resource." RAINN, www.rainn.org/

² "Preventing Child Sexual Abuse |Violence Prevention|Injury Center|CDC." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 30 Apr. 2021,

³ Home, www.missingkids.org/home



Take Time to Talk

It is NEVER too early to start the conversation!

TALK AND LISTEN TO YOUR CHILDREN

Create a comfortable and safe environment to talk with your child

Discuss the difference between good secrets and bad secrets

- Birthday presents & surprises vs. keeping secrets from your parents

Create a “safe word” and an action plan to use if they are scared, in trouble, or need help

Describe and discuss safe online and mobile phone communications and photographs

- Never talk to strangers online
- Never share location or address
- Never share pictures of their naked body or private parts with anyone

Identify 5 trusted adults with whom your child could go to or talk to if something “doesn’t feel right”

Ask your child questions about his or her interactions.

- Has anything happened to your body that you did not like?
- Has someone asked you to do something that did not feel right?
- Tell me more?

If your child shares something that shocks or concerns you

- Stay calm and don't overreact
- Affirm it was brave to share
- ALWAYS believe your child - 94% of the time child sexual abuse reports are true⁴

REVIEW BODY BOUNDARIES

Teach your children the proper anatomical names for body parts, use them openly and regularly

Discuss private parts where bathing suit covers

Never force your child to hug or kiss an adult

Tell them it is okay to say NO if something “doesn't feel right”

⁴ “https://www.d2l.Org/Wp-Content/Uploads/2017/01/all_statistics_20150619.Pdf.”



Take Time to Notice

RED FLAGS IN CHILDREN

Change in mood or personality

Fear, crying, anger, anxiety

Change in behavior

Resistance to certain people or places

Significant changes in school performance

Bed wetting

Negative self-talk

"I hate myself"

Self-Harm

Cutting

Significant changes in weight

Unexplained chronic symptoms

Headaches and stomachaches

Physical signs

Bruises or bleeding

Sexual talk or behavior inappropriate for age

Illicit use of illegal drugs / alcohol

RED FLAGS IN SEXUAL PREDATORS

Tells the child to keep the relationship secret

Makes an emotional connection and mimics the behavior of a friend their age

Asks for a lot of personal information
Learns a child's likes and interests

Promises favors and gifts

Contacts the child through multiple platforms and services
Video games and social media

Initiates intimate discussions about the child's appearance

Insists on meeting face-to-face

Often works in professions associated with children

Often shows inappropriate behaviors
Excessive touching

Engages in manipulative language
Gas lighting and grooming

Expresses jealousy and controlling behavior towards the child



Take Time to Know

WAYS TO MINIMIZE RISK

Watch carefully those people who go above and beyond to spend time with your child, especially if they seek one-on-one time

- Free babysitting
- Many times, when something looks too good to be true it probably is

Know who else is in the home or place of care when child is there

Make unannounced visits to your child's caregiver / school

Be cautious of others who do not respect your child's personal space

Technology Safety (online / mobile devices)

- Know your child's online friends lead by example and always model safe, positive online behaviors
- Keep track of online / mobile device time and activity
- Be aware if your child habitually seeks closed door conversations with an individual

Don't be afraid to ask your child questions

Trust your gut and instincts!



Take Time to Learn

WATCH WORDS

Child Exploitation – When a child is deceived, coerced or forced to take part in sexual activity.

Child Sexual Abuse - Inducing or coercing a child to engage in sexual acts. This does include acts such as fondling and exposure to sexually explicit acts or materials. It is a criminal offense.

Child Sexual Abuse Images - Is a form of child sexual exploitation. Federal law defines child pornography as any visual depiction of sexually explicit conduct involving a minor (persons less than 18 years old).

Gas Lighting - Is a form of psychological manipulation where the perpetrator makes a child question their own sanity, perception of reality, or memories in favor of the abuser's version of events.

Grooming - When a person builds a trusting relationship to prepare a child or young person for pornographic or sexual activity.



Take Time to Learn

WATCH WORDS (CONTINUED)

Internet Predators - A person who uses the Internet to locate and lure their intended sexual prey, especially children.

Pedophile- A person who is sexually attracted to children.

Sexting - Sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit messages, photographs, or videos through digital devices.

Sextortion – Children are coerced into sending explicit imagery of themselves.

Sex Trafficking – Occurs when someone uses force, fraud, or coercion to cause a minor to commit a commercial sex act including prostitution and pornography.

Victim-blaming – When a child assumes the guilt that their actions, dress, or words provoked or warranted the abuse.



You are your child's best advocate, never hesitate to ask anyone questions concerning your child.

The single best way to protect your child is to empower them.



THE TIME IS NOW!

Protect the Beauty and Innocence of Childhood

Donate: Text KNOT to 55433

Communicate: info@kNotToday.org

Participate: If your life has been touched by this issue in anyway, please participate in this brief anonymous survey to help us expand our prevention efforts.

SCAN FOR
SURVEY



KNOW WHERE TO GO

www.RAINN.org

CDC.gov/ViolencePrevention

www.MissingKids.org

www.d2l.org

Childhelp National Abuse Hotline

Call or Text: 1(800) 422-4453

Child Sexual Abuse National Hotline

1(800) 843-5678



www.USIAHT.org

We gratefully acknowledge the contribution of Dr. Holly Robinson in the formulation of this guide. Dr. Robinson has been active in child abuse pediatrics for over 20 years and continues to help children and their families prevent and recover from abuse.

For a downloadable version visit:

kNotToday.org/guide