

Parents of Abused Children Resource: Reaction to being told that Your Child has been abused

Parents of Abused Children what is your first reaction when your child tells you that someone is touching them inappropriately?

Do you respond in fear: "That can't be right, don't lie to me."

Do you respond in disbelief: "So and so wouldn't do that."

Do you respond in anger: "You know the punishment of telling lies!"

Do you respond in silence: "....."

Your first reaction is hard to take back so prepare yourself for the situation, talk to your spouse and decide how you will react.

The following are helpful responses: "I'm sorry that happened to you, thank you for telling me"

"I believe you, why don't you tell me what happened."

"You are not in trouble, please tell me who did this"

There are important things that children that are abused need to hear, no matter who is doing the abusing (adult or another child). These are important because no matter who the abuser is, they all say the same things. Your child needs to know that everything their abuser said and did was a lie.

"It is not your fault/you did nothing wrong"

"You did the right thing by telling me"

"What they did to you was wrong" (this is especially important when the abuser is a child. Children that sexually abuse each other do so because the abuser was abused by someone else. Children do not grow up knowing how to abuse each other, they have to be taught. So if a child is abusing another child, both children need to be told that it is wrong to "play" in this way. There is another resource on <http://fracturedwholenessministries.com/> that explains this conversation and its importance in more detail).

"I believe you"

"I love you no matter what"

You will need to say these important things over and over throughout the years because the abuser not only abused their body but they also abused their emotional state and their relational state. Abusers violate more than the physical and you need to counteract that at every step.

The best way to prevent sexual abuse is to talk it about it with your kids before it happens.