Parents Can Help Prevent Child Sexual Abuse

Knowledge about sexual abuse helps protect children.
Lack of knowledge leaves children vulnerable.

Why are PARENTS the right people to teach their children about sexual abuse?

PARENTS:
- Influence children’s KNOWLEDGE and VALUES
- TEACH children the facts
- Have more influence on children’s decisions about sex than their friends

How to talk to children about sexual abuse:
- Start at an EARLY AGE
- Keep discussions DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE, with an awareness of normal behaviors
- REPEAT the message
- Promote HEALTHY SEXUALITY by teaching respect and value of body and gender
- Teach CORRECT NAMES FOR BODY PARTS, to reduce children’s vulnerability
- Establish PRIVACY RULES in the home and away from home
- Talk about SECRETS/TRICKS/THREATS that a perpetrator may use to keep children from telling
- Educate children on VULNERABLE SITUATIONS, including social media and activities
- Educate children BEYOND “STRANGER DANGER.” Approximately 90% of sexual abuse is perpetrated by someone the child knows
- Give children PERMISSION to tell you about anything happening to them

What do you do if a child discloses sexual abuse?
- Stay CALM and LISTEN to the child
- Tell the child you BELIEVE him/her and are glad they told you
- Tell the child that what happened is NOT THEIR FAULT
- REPORT THE DISCLOSURE to professionals for investigation and help
- DO NOT ASK A LOT OF QUESTIONS. DO NOT CONDUCT YOUR OWN INVESTIGATION