

Did you know?

- ★ 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys is sexually abused before turning 18.
- ★ 1 in 5 children is sexually solicited while online.
- ★ 90% of child sexual abuse victims know their offender.

If you suspect a child is being abused, contact:

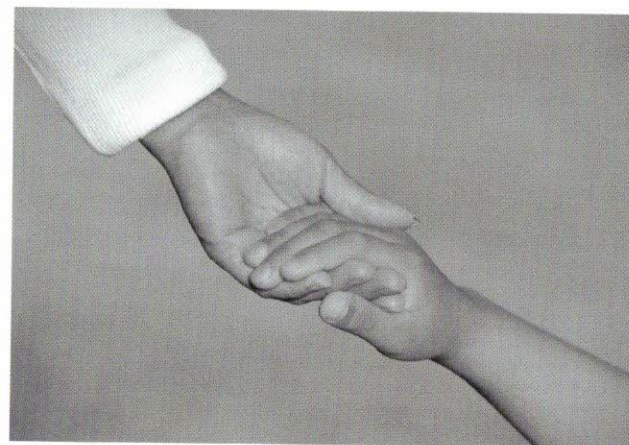
DCFS Hotline 1-800-252-2873

Or

Local Law Enforcement

Only 1 in 10 sexually abused children disclose their abuse.

Children of every gender, age, race, ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic status, religion, and family structure are at risk of abuse.



Do you know what to do when a child has the courage it takes to disclose?

An abused child may be feeling ashamed, angry, powerless, and/or scared (especially that you won't believe her/him).

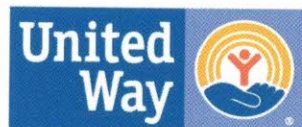
- ★ Stay calm. Do not overreact.
- ★ Find a private place to talk.
- ★ Allow the child to speak on their own terms in their own words.
- ★ Assure the child that you believe her/him.
- ★ Do not question the child or tell her/him what to say.
- ★ Let the child know that telling you was the right thing to do.
- ★ Let the child know that she/he is not in trouble.
- ★ Do not pressure the child to tell you more than he/she is comfortable talking about at this time.
- ★ Don't make victim blaming comments such as "Why didn't you tell me sooner?" or "How could you let this happen?"
- ★ Let the child know he/she can always come to you.
- ★ Support with compassion:

"I am glad you told me."

"This was not your fault."

"I am so proud of you."

"I will need to call someone to get some help to keep you safe."



United Way of Lee County
United Way of Ogle County
Community Partner



NATIONAL
CHILDREN'S
ALLIANCE®

ACCREDITED
MEMBER

Community Outreach

A vital component of the Shining Star CAC program is to help educate the local community about child abuse, as well as to heighten the public's awareness of the child advocacy services we provide. We are available to provide outreach presentations and professional training to local businesses, civic groups and organizations.

Shining Star CAC annually provides more than 200 children with healing and hope through comprehensive services at no cost to the victim.

Collaborative Partners

- ★ Lee County State's Attorney's Office
- ★ Ogle County State's Attorney's Office
- ★ Area Law Enforcement
- ★ Department of Children & Family Services
- ★ KSB Hospital
- ★ Alliances Counseling Services
- ★ YWCA of the Sauk Valley
- ★ Rockford Sexual Assault Counseling, Inc.
- ★ Lee County Health Department

This project was supported by Grant #15-VA-GX-0049, awarded by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, through the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority. Points of view or opinions contained within this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice, or the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority.



It's YOUR voice! Use it to...

- ★ *Speak Up!*
- ★ *Protect Children!*
- ★ *Get Help!*
- ★ *Share your story!*

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*Every child should be seen,
heard, and believed!*

What is Shining Star Children's Advocacy Center?

Shining Star CAC provides a team approach to child abuse investigations in Lee and Ogle Counties by bringing together professionals from multiple agencies such as law enforcement, the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), State's Attorneys' Offices, medical and mental health providers. This team approach facilitates victim recovery and can strengthen the chance for successful prosecution through improved investigations.

After a report of suspected child sexual abuse or serious physical abuse is made to the police or DCFS, the child and his or her family come to Shining Star CAC to talk about the abuse with a trained forensic interviewer in a non-threatening, compassionate, and child-friendly environment.



Advocacy

Our Family Advocate works with the child and his or her family to link them with appropriate mental health treatment, medical assistance, and other community resources. We maintain contact with families to ensure they are connecting with resources, provide ongoing support, and in some cases, assist in preparing them for trial.



Counseling

Recovering from the emotional and psychological effects of child abuse can be greatly assisted by professional therapy and counseling services.

Allowing your child to talk to a professional can be a positive step toward healing. If counseling is needed, Shining Star can provide referrals for services for the child and non-offending family members. Shining Star has on-site space to allow therapists and mental health counselors to provide their services in a child-friendly environment. The course and type of counseling a child may receive depends upon a number of factors, but common issues often explored include fear, guilt, sadness, anger, feelings of betrayal, and loss of trust.

Medical Evaluation

When there is a serious condition or disclosure of abuse, children deserve a medical evaluation performed by a health care provider with pediatric experience and child abuse expertise. The purpose of the exam is to:

- ★ Diagnose and treat medical conditions that may be related to the abuse.
- ★ Reassure the child that everything is ok with their body.
- ★ Document any significant physical and forensic findings.
- ★ Allow for the collection of evidence that may be present on the child's body or clothing (if reported within a certain period of time).



Shining Star's special medical room, like the rest of the facility, is designed to be child-friendly and non-threatening. Examinations are performed by a physician who has been specially trained in the detection and treatment of child sexual and physical abuse.

There is no cost to the child's family for the medical exam.

Our Mission

To transform victims of child sexual abuse and serious physical abuse into survivors.



How You Can Help

- ★ Talk to your children about body safety. *The best weapon we have against child abuse is to talk about it!*
- ★ Report suspected child abuse to local law enforcement or DCFS
- ★ Invite SSCAC to provide a presentation or workshop in your community or workplace.
- ★ Participate in our annual Champions for Children Walk to support abused children in our community.
- ★ Volunteer your time by joining our Friends Board.
- ★ Make an in-kind donation. *Give to United Way.*
- ★ Contact your legislators to express your support of Children's Advocacy Centers.
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