

Helping Children Heal from Sexual Abuse

Outline

- What type of abuse is considered “sexual abuse”?
- Parents often don’t know prior to fostering or adopting that the child has experienced sexual abuse. What behaviors might indicate that a child has been abused sexually?
- What kids are at greatest risk for being sexually abused? Kids without parents or caring adults active in their life. Children who are sexually abused at greater risk for abuse in the future, even if they have been removed from the abusive environment.
- How does the impact of the abuse differ on the child depending on their relationship to the abuser?
- Brief refresher on typical psycho-sexual development in children without abuse and how sexual abuse can alter this.
- Children can and do heal from sexual abuse.
- Not all kids who were sexually abused become sexual abusers. Is there research on this? Rough percentage?
 - However, sexual abuse can leave scars.
- The presence of a supportive adult who believes the child can make a difference in how a child recovers.
- How can parents help children heal from sexual abuse?
- How can parents develop confidence that healing can occur and that they can help it occur?
- How should a parent respond if a child discloses sexual abuse?
- What are protective factors in children or families make recovery more likely?
- Identify practical tools and talking points to assist a child in the re-learning of healthy boundaries and expressions of healthy affection.
- How to find a therapist to help a child heal from sexual abuse.
- What safeguards should a family have in place when accepting placement of a child who may have been sexually abused? How to protect other children in the home?