Missouri’s kids count on the adults in their lives to report child abuse and neglect.

The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted families in Missouri emotionally and financially. Research shows that in times of crisis and economic instability, child abuse and neglect rates increase. Read on to learn how #Essential4Kids educates adults about the signs of abuse and neglect and why it is important to take action! We invite you to join us as a partner!

Join Us

Go to www.essential4kids.org
Resources are available for all adults. Specialized resources include downloadable one-page flyers for: schools, youth serving organizations, faith communities, law enforcement, and childcare providers.

Start a conversation with your community about the information and share the resources provided in the #Essential4Kids campaign. This campaign is for ALL adults: friends, family, neighbors, faith communities, community organizations, schools, and anyone who cares about child safety.

Share the information you learn from the #Essential4Kids campaign on your social networks.

Subscribe to the Missouri KidsFirst Newsletter and follow Missouri KidsFirst on social media.

REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT IS EVERYONE’S RESPONSIBILITY.
For more resources: essential4kids.org
For free child abuse or neglect reporting training: protectmokids.com

#Essential4Kids
missourikidsfirst.org
Funded by the Children’s Justice Act and MRCAC
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TALKING POINTS FOR PARTNERS

Learn the facts and share

The Facts

- It is a sad fact that the vast majority of abuse happens in the home. 81% of perpetrators are either a parent or an unmarried partner of a parent.
- Additionally, 87% of cases happen within the family.
- National Children’s Alliance statistics collected at Children’s Advocacy Centers (CACs) show that in about 20-25% of cases are when kids harm other kids. In many cases, that’s a sibling.

Why do I need to know about reporting child abuse?

Two factors affect the reporting of child abuse: where the abuse happens, and where the abuse is disclosed or discovered. YOU may be the only adult a child chooses to tell or you may discover that a child is being abused. If so, you need to be prepared to react responsibly.

YOU may be a safe adult for a child!

You don’t need to be a parent to be a safe adult. You might be a teacher, coach, mentor, aunt/uncle or play another role in a child’s life.

A safe adult is someone who:

- is an adult that can get a child help if they’re ever hurt or unsafe;
- doesn’t break boundaries or safety rules, or try to get the child to break them;
- the child feels comfortable with and can easily talk to about things that may be difficult to talk about;
- the child can trust to keep them safe.

Cultivating a healthy, trusting relationship with a child is actually one of the best protections against abuse!

Check out Darkness to Light to learn more about being a Safe Adult: d2l.org/how-to-be-a-safe-adult/

Effectively Reporting

- Explain how the suspected abuse has impacted the child.
- Be precise with dates, times, and locations, if available.
- Describe specific changes in behavior/emotions: expressions of fear, interactions with other children and adults, impact on grades, and/or impact of an unsafe environment.

How can YOU keep kids safe?

Ask for help:

Making a report is asking for help and services. You are not making an accusation when you report, you are requesting professional help for a child and their family.

You may be the only person to act:

Do not assume that someone else has already made the call. Make a call to Children’s Division and let them know you are concerned. Anonymous reports are accepted.

If a child expresses to you that they have been abused – Stay calm and listen with compassion.

- Tell the child, “I believe you.”
- Only ask open ended questions, like “Tell me more.”
- Avoid trying to dig for details or having different adults question the child’s story. This can re-traumatize the child and damage the investigation and/or prosecution.

https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/resource/child-maltreatment-2018

Trust Your Gut

If something does not look safe, sound safe, or feel safe – report.
1-800-392-3738