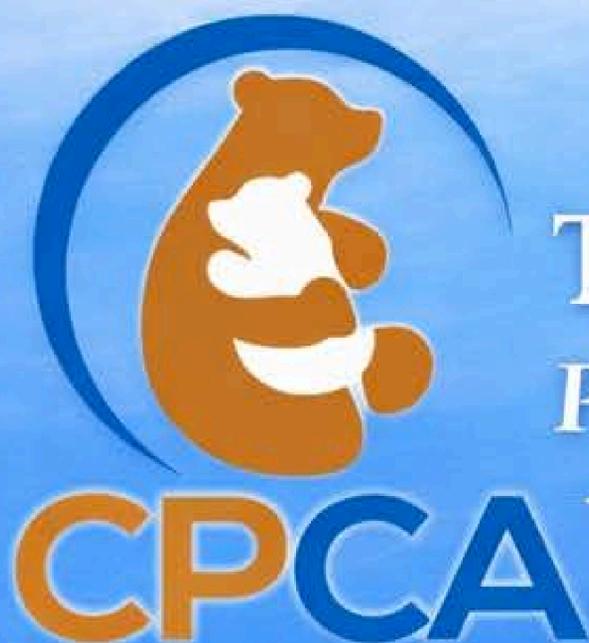


2026  
Child Abuse  
Prevention Month  
Toolkit



*The Center for the  
Prevention of Child Abuse*

---

*empowering & protecting children*

# STEPS TO PRO

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# INTRODUCTION



**The mission of the Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse (CPCA) is to prevent child abuse. In honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month, we are highlighting ways to prevent abuse and promote safe, nurturing environments for children.** By providing education and resources, we can help families and communities recognize warning signs, understand risks, and take steps to protect children and support their well-being.





CPCA has created a free toolkit to give you the information and materials needed to raise awareness in your schools, organizations, and communities. This toolkit includes infographics, resources, handouts, and age-appropriate activities designed to teach children about personal safety and healthy boundaries. It also provides guidance and resources for caregivers, educators, and community members to recognize and respond to signs of abuse, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to grow up safe, supported, and protected.

# Understanding Child Abuse



# What Is Child Abuse?

Child abuse is any act, or failure to act, by a parent, caregiver, or another person that causes harm, risk of harm, or threat of harm to a child or teen under the age of 18.

Child abuse can happen in many ways. It may involve physical injury, sexual harm, emotional harm, or not providing for a child's basic needs. Abuse is never the child's fault, and no child ever deserves to be hurt.

## 4 Types of Child Abuse

- 1) Physical Abuse
- 2) Neglect
- 3) Emotional Abuse
- 4) Sexual Abuse





# Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is when someone intentionally uses physical force that causes injury, pain, or physical harm to a child or teen.

This can include hitting, punching, kicking, shaking, choking, burning, or any physical punishment that goes too far. Physical abuse may leave injuries like bruises, cuts, welts, broken bones, or internal injuries, but even if marks are not visible, it can still be abuse.

# Neglect

Neglect is when a child or teen is not given what they need to be safe, healthy, and cared for.

Neglect is not about wants, it is about basic needs. This may include not providing proper supervision, food, shelter, medical care, hygiene, safe living conditions, or access to education. Neglect can be ongoing or repeated, and it can seriously impact a child's physical and emotional development.



# Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is a repeated pattern of behavior that harms a child's sense of self-worth, emotional well-being, or sense of safety.

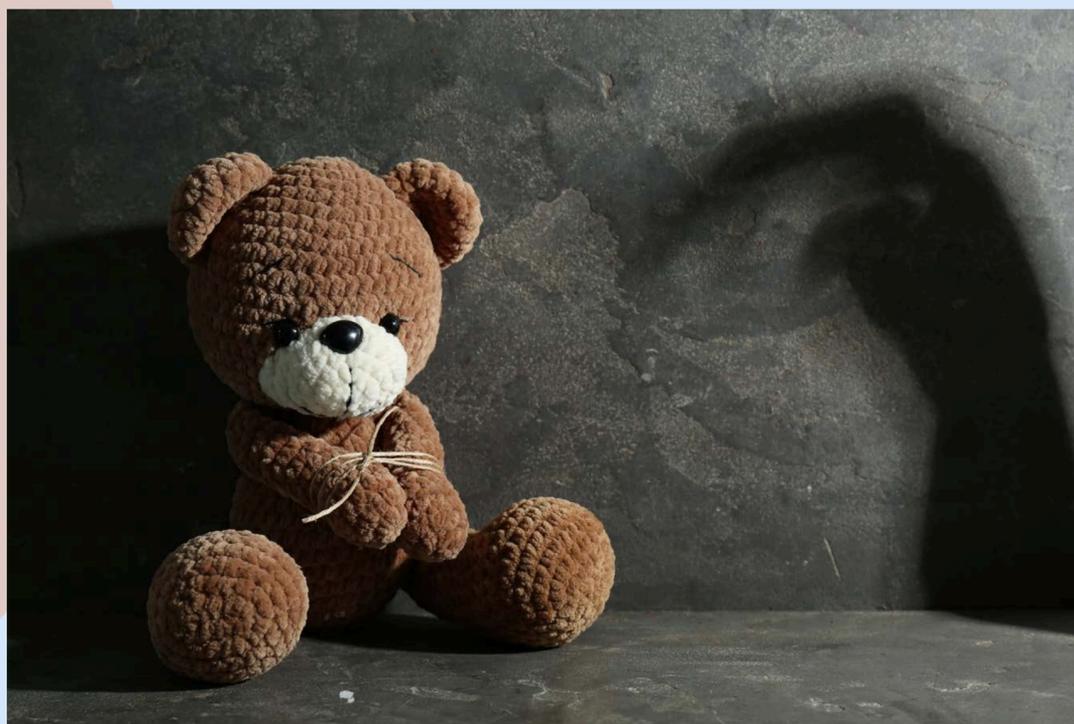


This can include constant criticism, humiliation, insults, threats, rejection, intimidation, or withholding love and affection as punishment. Emotional abuse is not a caregiver getting upset once, it is ongoing harmful behavior that makes a child feel unloved, unsafe, worthless, or afraid.

# Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is any sexual activity involving a child or teen, including any sexual contact, exploitation, or sexual behavior that a child cannot legally or developmentally consent to.

Sexual abuse can include touching over or under clothing, forced kissing, oral sex, intercourse, exposing a child to pornography, taking sexual pictures, or making sexual comments toward a child. It may involve force, threats, manipulation, grooming, or taking advantage of a power difference.



Sexual abuse can be committed by an adult or by another youth when consent is not present, when force or coercion is used, or when there is a significant power imbalance.

# RESOURCES



# Recognize. Respond. Report.

- Child Abuse Awareness Flyer
- Dutchess County Pocket Guide
- Help Prevent Child Abuse OCFS
- Identifying & Reporting Child Abuse Info Sheet
- Mandated Reporter Flyer
- Protective & Risk Factors
- What is Human Trafficking?



# Can you recognize when a child needs *your help?*

The signs of **child abuse** may be there,  
but they are not always so obvious.

Every year in Dutchess County

**1,000** cases of child abuse  
are reported

*but* **5X** as many  
go unreported



Take the pledge today with The Center for the  
Prevention of Child Abuse and learn how to  
keep children safe from abuse.

Register today at [thecpca.org/community-workshop](http://thecpca.org/community-workshop)

Funded in part by Dutchess County



# SAFE SPACE

a place to catch your breath

**River Haven Youth Shelter**  
(845) 454-3800  
Offers emergency housing and support services for runaway and homeless youth who can benefit from housing. They provide crisis intervention services like group counseling. The shelter is open 24/7, 365 days a year.

**Pete's Place**  
(845) 337-4407  
A youth and young adult drop-in center that offers access to housing and food. They also offer counseling services, internet access, recreational programming, and help with job searching.

**Pat's Place**  
(845) 343-0988 ext. 488  
A transitional supportive housing program designed to help youth and young adults ages 18-24 develop life skills, develop robust support systems and pursue education and career aspirations within a two-year timeframe.

**Teen Resource Activity Center**  
(845) 452-1110 ext. 3124  
An after-school program for teens to participate in recreation and healthy living programs. Teens can learn to produce their own music. Along with these activities there is homework and exam help.

**Dutchess County Family Services**  
(845) 452-7272  
A community agency that provides behavioral health, victim services, family programs, youth services, community safety, and prevention support and services.

**Family House (Ulster County)**  
(845) 358-8953  
Provides housing for runaway and homeless teens. They offer counseling for families and individuals, life skills training, and access to educational, mental health, and substance abuse services.

# HOT-LINES

no judgement just a listening ear.

**Dutchess County Human Trafficking Hotline**  
(845) 452-7272 OR  
[HUMANTRAFFICKING@DUTCHESSNY.GOV](mailto:HUMANTRAFFICKING@DUTCHESSNY.GOV)  
<http://www.dutchessny.gov/Departments/Community-Family-Services/Human-Trafficking.htm>  
Offers 24/7, 365 days a year hotline if you suspect or know someone who is being trafficked.

**988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline**  
988  
[https://988lifeline.org/?utm\\_source=google&utm\\_medium=web&utm\\_campaign=onboard](https://988lifeline.org/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=web&utm_campaign=onboard)  
Offers 24/7, 365 days a year free and confidential resource for those in distress, prevention, and crisis for you or those you know.

**National Human Trafficking Resource Center**  
1.888.3737.888  
[www.traffickingresourcecenter.org](http://www.traffickingresourcecenter.org)  
If you or someone you know has experienced human trafficking or is in a potential human trafficking situation, call this hotline for help and services.

**Runaway/Homeless Youth Hotline**  
800.999.9999 The Nine Line  
800.999.9915 TTY Line  
[www.nineline.org](http://www.nineline.org)  
Offers a hotline from 2pm-12am for anyone who wants to talk or needs someone to listen.

**The Trevor Project**  
866.488.7186  
[www.thetrevorproject.org](http://www.thetrevorproject.org)  
Helpline for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning youth in crisis or thinking about suicide. They also provide support resources for educators and parents.

## a quick refresh of THE BASICS

**EXPLOITATION** Taking advantage of someone or treating them unfairly for personal benefit or gain.

**HUMAN TRAFFICKING**  
*Labour Trafficking:* Labor for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery induced through the use of force, fraud, or coercion.  
*Sex Trafficking:* A commercial sex act induced through the use of force, fraud, or coercion in return for payment in money or in kind, paid to one or more third parties. In cases of trafficking of people under the age of 18 for sexual purposes, force, fraud or coercion do not need to be present.

**FORCE** Physical Restraint, Beatings, Rape, Confinement

**FRAUD** False Promises, Lying, Tricking, Withholding Wages

**COERCION** Threats, Blackmail

**COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN** Sexual abuse of a child (under the age of 18) by another person in return for something of value. CSEC includes child pornography, trafficking in children for sexual purposes, child sex tourism and child marriage when payment is exchanged.

**SEXUAL ASSAULT** Sexual contact or behavior that occurs without explicit consent of the victim.

**RAPE** Penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim. Rape is a crime that is motivated by power and control.

**CONSENT** When someone agrees, gives permission, or says "yes" to sexual activity with other persons. Consent is always freely given and all people in a sexual situation must feel that they are able to say "yes" or "no" or stop the sexual activity at any point. There are three main considerations in judging whether or not a sexual act is consensual or is a crime. Both people are: 1) old enough to consent, 2) have the capacity to consent, and 3) agreed to the sexual contact.

**SAFETY PLANNING** Prearranging ways to stay safe that may also help reduce the risk of future harm. It can include planning for a future crisis, considering your options, and making decisions about your next steps.

Don't have time for all this?  
**CALL 211**  
They'll be able to put you in touch with someone.

# a POCKET GUIDE to local help for youth

# SUBSTANCE ABUSE

killing your buzz... saving your life...

**Lexington Center for Recovery**  
(845) 486-2590 (Poughkeepsie) or (845) 765-2388 (Wappingers)  
Helps individuals, families, and the community affected by substance abuse by providing a holistic approach to recovery. Programs are available in Dutchess, Rockland, Sullivan, and Westchester counties.

**Dutchess CAPE**  
(845) 765-8391  
Provides prevention counseling and education to businesses, community organizations, and schools.

**Step 1 NY**  
(845) 691-6191  
Provides an outpatient facility with diagnosis and treatment for those struggling with addiction. Services are offered to patients and their family members/significant others.

**Al-Anon & AlaTeen**  
888.425.2886 | [www.al-anon-alateen.org](http://www.al-anon-alateen.org)  
Friends and families of problem drinkers find support at Al-Anon meetings. AlaTeen is specifically for teenagers whose lives have been affected by someone else's drinking.

**Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)**  
888.763.7712 | [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)  
AA is open to those trying to recover from alcoholism and provides a place to share experiences, strength and hope with each other so that people may solve their common problem and help others.

**Narcotics Anonymous (NA)**  
800.627.2643 | [www.na.org](http://www.na.org)  
NA is open to all drug addicts and provides a recovery process and peer support network that is linked together to help anyone struggling with a drug addiction.

# TRAFFICKED + EXPLOITED YOUTH

you deserve better. you always deserved better.

**Dutchess County Safe Harbour**  
(845) 249-4878 or [HumanTrafficking@DutchessNY.gov](mailto:HumanTrafficking@DutchessNY.gov)  
Working with youth up to 21 to reduce risky behaviors and exploitation. Provides access to community resources and referrals for additional services.

**Ulster County Safe Harbour**  
(845) 340-3927  
Identifies and responds to youth being trafficked with trauma informed resources such as food, clothing, medical attention, counseling.

**Worker Justice Center of New York (Kingston)**  
(845) 331-6015  
The Center supports rural and marginalized groups with legal, human trafficking, and outreach advocacy by direct service, education, and referrals. The programs focus on providing access to justice for exploited/abused workers and trauma informed services to help achieve safety for victims.

**Fearless Hudson Valley Inc. (Orange County)**  
(845) 773-1803  
Offers youth outreach to help educate them about local resources.

**Arbor House Youth Shelter (Brewster)**  
(845) 279-2995  
A voluntary temporary safe house serving 12-17-year-olds. They offer counseling for individuals and family. The shelter provides case management, referral services, and life skills training.

**Love 146**  
(800) 772-4428 or [info@love146.org](mailto:info@love146.org)  
Their goal is to end child trafficking by providing resources and educating the public.

# LGBTQ

people who get it.

**Dutchess County Pride Center**  
[dcpridecenter@gmail.com](mailto:dcpridecenter@gmail.com) or (845) 440-3430 (call)  
A safe space where LGBTQ+ individuals can find a community where they can participate in support groups and other events.

**Hudson Valley LGBTQ Community Center**  
(845) 331-8300  
Provides services, programs, events, and professional resources for the community. They have a well-being center focused on comprehensive and holistic services. There is no cost for the services.

# HEALTH

they have answers, and they're pro.

**Dutchess County Stabilization Center**  
(845) 455-0799  
A walk-in, voluntary center for individuals feeling overwhelmed by a mental health crisis or substance use. Open 24/7, 365 days a year.

**Sun River Health**  
(845) 790-7990  
Provides medical, dental, mental health, and urgent care services regardless of health insurance or ability to pay. Locations in Arden, Beacon, Dover, and Poughkeepsie.

**Planned Parenthood of Poughkeepsie**  
(845) 652-7880  
Provides healthcare for women and men along with other resources for related to sex education. Appointments offered in-person and online.

# DATING + SEXUAL VIOLENCE

love shouldn't hurt like this.

**Center for Victim Safety and Support**  
(845) 485-6580 or (845) 452-7272 (24-hour hotlines)  
Provides non-residential 24-hour services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and other crimes. The hotline is a community resource in need of assistance.

**Grace Smith House**  
(845) 471-3033 (24/7 Crisis Hotline)  
A crisis intervention shelter that has a 24-hour hotline to help victims. Provides residential and non-residential services for victims of domestic violence and their families along with counseling, support groups, and transitional housing.

## MY SAFE PEOPLE

A FRIEND I CAN TALK TO:

AN ADULT I CAN TALK TO:

# HELP PREVENT CHILD ABUSE...

## What Is Child Abuse and Maltreatment?

**Child abuse and maltreatment** is when a parent or other person legally responsible for a child's care causes harm or creates a risk of harm to a child. The child must be under the age of 18. Child abuse involves serious physical harm or sexual abuse. Maltreatment (neglect) involves physical, mental or emotional harm.

## More Information on Child Abuse and Maltreatment

**Physical abuse** is when a parent/caretaker hurts or lets someone else hurt a child physically, or creates a substantial risk that a child will be hurt. There must be a serious injury or a risk of serious injury such as a severe burn, a broken bone, the loss of a body part, an internal injury or death. The injury or risk of injury must not be due to an accident.

**Sexual abuse** is when a parent or caretaker commits a sexual offense against a child or allows someone else to do this. Sexual abuse includes both touching and non-touching sexual offenses.

- Examples of *touching* offenses include: fondling, intercourse, and sodomy (oral or anal sex acts).
- Examples of *non-touching* offenses include: using a child in a pornographic or sexually explicit video or picture, distributing such a video or picture, or using a child as a prostitute.

**Maltreatment (neglect)** is when a parent or caretaker does not provide for a child's basic needs, where the parent or caretaker has the means or is offered a reasonable way to do so. It also includes a parent or caretaker failing to properly supervise a child or hitting a child too hard. Examples of maltreatment may include: not getting, or waiting too long to get, health care for a child; not giving a child adequate food, shelter, or clothing; not properly looking after a child; beating a child; or not sending a child to school when the child is able to attend school. The parent or caretaker's actions must cause physical, mental or emotional harm, or a risk that the child will soon be harmed.

## What Are Some Signs of Child Abuse or Maltreatment?

You may see some signs of child abuse or maltreatment in the way a child looks or in the way a child acts.

**Physical signs can include:** a child whose hair, clothing or body is often very dirty; a child whose clothing is too hot or too cold for the season; a child who is not being watched properly; a child who is ill or hurt but is not seeing a doctor; or a child with bruises, burns, cuts, vaginal or rectal bleeding, or with soreness or itching in the genital area.



**Behavioral signs** can include: a child who is afraid to go home; a child who does not think well of him or herself, avoids people, or is very sad; a child who misuses drugs or alcohol, has an eating disorder or hurts him or herself; a child whose mood or behavior changes a lot without a reason; a child who acts in a sexual manner that is unusual for the child's age; or a child who often misses school without a good reason.

## **Whom Do I Call If I Think a Child May Be Abused or Maltreated?**

If a child is in immediate danger, call 911 or your local police department.

If you suspect a child is being abused or maltreated in New York State, call the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment at 1-800-342-3720. This Child Abuse Hotline is open 24 hours a day, every day of the year. You do not need proof of child abuse or maltreatment to make a report; you only need to think that it has happened or that a child is at risk of being abused or maltreated.

Your call to the Child Abuse Hotline is confidential. This means that only certain persons may learn about the information you report. The family you reported will not be told you made the report unless you say it is okay for them to know.

## **What Happens When I Call the Child Abuse Hotline?**

A hotline employee will answer your call and ask you for information about why you called. Based on the information you provide, the hotline employee will decide whether to take a report of child abuse or maltreatment. It is helpful if you can give information about who the child is and where he or she can be found; the person who you think abused or maltreated the child; and the child's parent, guardian or other person legally responsible for the child.

If a report is not taken, the hotline employee will tell you why it could not be taken. If you disagree, you can ask to speak with a supervisor.

If a report is taken, it will be sent right away to the local Child Protective Service (CPS), which is part of the county Department of Social Services. In New York City, the report will be sent to the Administration for Children's Services. A local CPS caseworker will start an investigation within 24 hours.

The CPS caseworker must work with the family on any issues that make the child unsafe. If the family does not want to make the changes needed for a child to be safe, CPS may go to court to ask a judge to require the family to make the changes or to remove the child from the home. However, in most cases, CPS can work with the family to protect the child in his or her home. This is done by making a plan with the child's parent or caretaker to change any unsafe actions, or to get services so that the child will be safe.



### **Remember...**

**You have the power to help prevent child abuse.**

**Your call may save the life of a child.**

**1-800-342-3720**

# Identifying & Reporting Child Abuse



Child abuse and neglect, which is defined by state statute, impacts millions of children every year in the United States. Therefore, it is important to recognize the indicators of abuse and understand one's obligations to report abuse to protect children.

## Indicators of Abuse:

- Malnourished/Hungry
- Tired/Lethargic
- Chronic injuries
- Bruises
- Human bite marks
- Untreated injuries
- Head injuries
- Non-accidental burns
- Poor relations with peers
- Poor academic performance
- Change in behavior or attitude
- Disruptive, impulsive, aggressive
- Passive, depressed, withdrawn

## Disclosure:

Disclosure is often a process, not a one-time event.

- Less than ¼ of victims disclose immediately after abuse occurs
- Less than ¼ may disclose from 1 month to 5 years later.
- Over ½ may wait more than 5 years to disclose, if at all.

Ways children may attempt to disclose abuse:

- **Hinted disclosure:** "A neighbor is messing with me."
- **Questioned disclosure:** "What would happen if somebody was hurting a kid and they told someone about it?"
- **Conditional disclosure:** "I need to tell you something, but if I do, you have to promise not to tell."

## Do...

- Support, believe, and reassure the child
- Understand your limits; you are not an investigator
- Provide a quiet, safe environment
- When you are done talking to the child, write down the child's exact words
- Ask limited, open-ended questions
- Respect the child's right to privacy
- Seek help and advice
- Report any suspicions of abuse/neglect

## Don't...

- Make assumptions or promises
- Show shock or other emotions
- Interrogate or investigate
- Put words in the child's mouth
- Be judgmental about the abuser; it is often someone the child loves/trusts
- Assume someone else will report the abuse

## Reporting Abuse:

In **New York State**, certain professionals who work with children are **Mandated Reporters**. Mandated Reporters are required by law to report suspected child abuse or maltreatment when they have **reasonable cause to suspect** a child is being abused or neglected. You do **not** need proof that abuse is occurring. If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, reports are made to the **New York Statewide Central Register (SCR) of Child Abuse and Maltreatment**.

**Mandated Reporters** should call: **1-800-635-1522**

**Non-mandated reporters (general public)** can call: **1-800-342-3720**

# MANDATED REPORTER TRAINING



## What:

A license requirement for many NYS professionals due to be completed by November 17, 2026

- identify the signs of child abuse and maltreatment
- understand when you have a legal obligation to call the Statewide Central Register

**\*NEW\*** -recognize signs of intellectual and/or developmental disabilities in children

## Details:

- Two hour training
- \$25 per person, group rates available
- Certificates provided once training is completed
- We will also submit to NYS on your behalf

## Who:

For anyone who is a Mandated Reporter

## Where:

In-person or live Zoom training

## Questions?

Contact Jen Hoover at  
[jhoover@thecpca.org](mailto:jhoover@thecpca.org)  
845-249-4883



# CHILD ABUSE RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

*What increases risk – and what helps protect children*

## RISK FACTORS

*Things that may increase the chance of child abuse or neglect*

- High family stress or crisis
- Substance use in the home
- Untreated mental health concerns
- History of abuse or trauma in caregivers
- Social isolation or lack of support
- Poverty or housing instability
- Community violence
- Limited access to services
- Lack of childcare support
- Unsafe neighborhoods

## PROTECTIVE FACTORS

*Things that help keep children safe and families strong*

- Strong guardian-child bonds
- Positive parenting skills
- Healthy coping strategies
- Stable routines and structure
- Willingness to seek help
- Supportive relatives & friends
- Access to counseling/services
- Safe schools & programs
- Trusted adults in a child's life
- Community education & resources

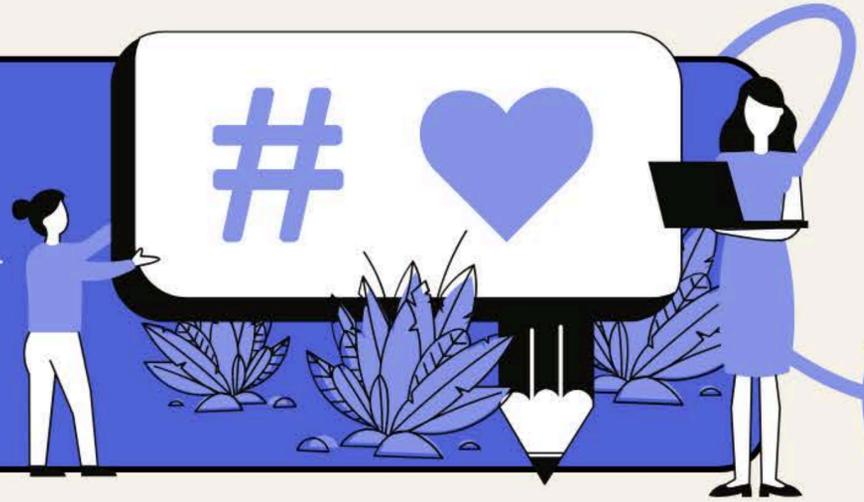


# What is Human Trafficking?



## Human Trafficking is...

Human trafficking is a form of modern-day slavery that involves the use of force, fraud, or coercion to exploit a person for labor or commercial sex.



## Sex Trafficking

When a person is forced, tricked, or pressured into sexual acts for money or something of value.

- Includes prostitution, pornography, escorting
- Any minor involved in commercial sex = trafficking, even without force



## Labor Trafficking

When people are forced to work under threats, debt, or false promises.

Common industries:

- Agriculture
- Construction
- Restaurants & food service
- Domestic work
- Factories & warehouses

## Who is at risk?

While anyone can be affected, higher risk groups include:

- Youth & young adults
- People experiencing homelessness
- Survivors of abuse or neglect
- Individuals in foster care
- Immigrants & refugees
- People facing financial hardship

# Teaching Safety

- Discussing Sensitive Topics with Kids Info Sheet
- Eliminating the Use of Corporal Punishment
- How Do CACs Help Kids?
- Love 146
- Parenting Tip Sheet
- Student Resource Card



# TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT SENSITIVE TOPICS

A PREVENTION & SAFETY GUIDE FOR ADULTS

thecpca.org

(845)454-0595



## Why These Conversations Matter

- 1 in 4 children experience trauma or victimization before age 18
- 1 in 10 children are sexually abused before age 18
- 1 in 4 students are bullied; 1 in 5 are cyberbullied
- 90% of youth ages 8–16 have viewed online pornography
- 11 years old is the average age of first exposure to pornography
- 1 in 5 teens have engaged in sexting

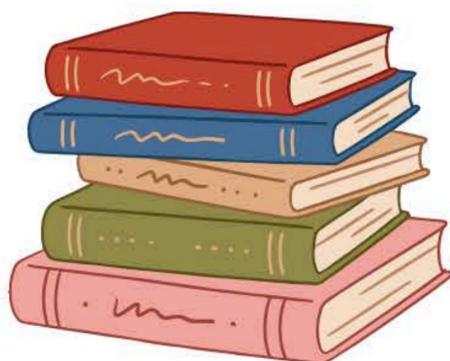


## Keys to Successful Conversations

- Learn about the topic before talking with your child
- Use age- and developmentally appropriate language
- Let children talk and ask questions first
- Have ongoing conversations, not one “big talk”
- Answer honestly, but avoid too much information
- Reinforce safety rules and help-seeking skills

## Conversation Starters

- Books, shows, or movies
- Journals or letters
- Topic cards or a “conversation jar”
- Trusted, age-appropriate websites



## How to Talk With Your Child

- Stay calm and listen carefully
- Use open-ended questions:
  - “Can you tell me more?”
  - “What happened next?”
- Validate feelings:
  - “I’m glad you told me.”
  - “You’re not in trouble.”



# TALKING TO CHILDREN ABOUT SENSITIVE TOPICS

A PREVENTION & SAFETY GUIDE FOR ADULTS

## What to Avoid

- Graphic or frightening details
- Leading or investigative questions
- Blaming language (“Why didn’t you...”)
- Pressuring a child to talk
- Promising secrecy you can’t keep



## Your Role as an Adult

Staying involved, informed, and available helps children:

- Recognize unsafe situations
- Know they can ask for help
- Feel supported and protected

## If a Child Shares a Concern

- Stay calm and listen
- Thank them for telling you
- Ask open-ended questions only
- Do not investigate
- Report concerns when required
- Reassure them they did the right thing



# ELIMINATING THE USE OF PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT

*Physical punishment – an adult’s use of physical force (e.g., corporal punishment, spanking, paddling) to punish a child or correct a child’s inappropriate behavior – increases aggression in young children and is ineffective in teaching a child responsibility and self-control.<sup>1</sup> New evidence suggests that corporal punishment may cause further harm to the child by affecting healthy brain development.<sup>2</sup> A number of strategies exist to promote positive parenting and discipline strategies that do not include hitting or the physical use of force with children.<sup>3</sup>*

## EVIDENCE

Substantial evidence shows negative long-term outcomes for children who are disciplined through corporal punishment.<sup>4</sup> In fact, findings indicate that children who are physically punished (i.e., spanked) have similarly negative outcomes to children that are physically abused.

In 2018, the American Academy of Pediatrics released an updated **position statement** opposing the use of corporal punishment. Outlined in this position statement are the negative developmental outcomes associated with physical and verbal punishment and the need to raise awareness of alternative discipline strategies that do not require hitting a child, but rather teaching appropriate behavior.

# 31

## STATES

have legislatively banned corporal punishment in schools or public institutions.<sup>5</sup>

## LEGISLATIVE ACTION TO ELIMINATE THE USE OF PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT

Legislative approaches can reduce corporal punishment and can shift attitudes towards more effective, positive discipline strategies.<sup>6</sup> Countries with legislative restrictions or bans on corporal punishment have less public support and use of corporal punishment and have significantly less youth violence.<sup>7</sup>

# 19

## STATES

allow physical punishment in public schools for children from preschool through 12th grade. AL, AK, AZ, CO, FL, GA, ID, IN, KS, KY, LA, MO, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, and WY.<sup>8</sup>

## PREVENTION STRATEGIES TO ELIMINATE CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

The evidence linking physical punishment to negative outcomes for children has led to strategies designed to support and promote positive parenting and discipline strategies.

- [Healthy Families America & other evidence - based childhood home visiting programs](#) provide information, caregiver support, and training about the importance of positive parent-child relationships, child health and development, and support in addressing concrete needs. Outcomes seen through home visiting include a decrease in physical punishment, with an increase in more positive discipline with less verbal aggression.<sup>9</sup>
- [Universal public awareness campaigns](#) have the ability to shift societal norms by correcting misperceptions about the use of physical punishment and providing concrete alternatives. Organizational policies such as “No-Hit-Zones” help to create cultures where hitting of any kind is not tolerated.<sup>10</sup>
- [Legislative approaches that ban the use of physical punishment in school settings](#) have the ability to ensure that no child will experience physical punishment while at school. A recent survey commissioned by **Prevent Child Abuse America** found that only 18% of adults in the United States support corporal punishment in schools.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sege, R. D. & Siegel, B. S. (2018). Effective discipline to raise healthy children. *Pediatrics*, 142, 1-10. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2018-3112>

<sup>2</sup>Cuarteras, J., Weissman, D. G., Sheridan, M. A., Lengua, L., & McLaughlin, K. A. (2021). Corporal punishment and elevated neural response to threat in children. *Child Development*, 1-10. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13565>

<sup>3</sup>Gershoff, E., & Lee, S. (Eds.). (2020). *Ending the Physical Punishment of Children: A Guide for Clinicians and Practitioners*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv1chrwb>

<sup>4</sup>Gershoff, E. T., & Grogan-Kaylor, A. (2016). Spanking and child outcomes: Old controversies and new meta-analyses. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 30, 453-469. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1037/fam0000191>

<sup>5</sup>Gershoff, E. T., & Font, S. A. (2016). Corporal punishment in U.S. public schools: Prevalence, disparities in use, and status in state and federal policy. *Social Policy Report*, 30, 1-37.

<sup>6</sup>Zolotor, A. J., & Puzia, M. E. (2010). Bans against corporal punishment: A systematic review of the laws, changes in attitudes and behaviors. *Child Abuse Review*, 19, 229-247. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1002/car.1131>

<sup>7</sup>Elgar, F. J., Donnelly, P. D., Michaelson V., Gariépy, G., Riehm, K. E., Walsh, S. D., & Prickett, W. (2018). Corporal punishment bans and physical fighting in adolescents: An ecological study of 88 countries. *BMJ Open*, 8, 1-8. doi: 10.1136/bmjopen-2018-021616

<sup>8</sup>Gershoff & Font (2016)

<sup>9</sup>Gershoff, E. T., Lee, S. J., & Durrant, J. E. (2017). Promising intervention strategies to reduce parents’ use of physical punishment. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 71, 9-23. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2017.01.017>

<sup>10</sup>Gershoff, E.T., Font, S.A., Taylor, C.A., Budzak-Garza, A., Olson-Dorff, D., & Foster, R.H. (2018). A short-term evaluation of a hospital no hit zone policy to increase bystander intervention in cases of parent-to-child violence. *Children and Youth Review*, 94, 155-162.

<sup>11</sup>Klika, J. B., & Fleckman, J. (2021). Physical punishment: Attitudes, behaviors, and norms associated with its use across the US. *Prevent Child Abuse America*. Retrieved from [www.preventchildabuse.org](http://www.preventchildabuse.org)



**National  
Children's  
Alliance®**

*The Force Behind  
Children's Advocacy Centers*

## How do CACs help kids?

Watch our explainer video and learn what they do and how you can help us support them.



Scan or visit [nationalchildrensalliance.org](https://nationalchildrensalliance.org)



921 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, SE WASHINGTON, DC 20003 (202) 548-0090



# YOU CAN HELP END HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

## WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Human Trafficking is the use of force, fraud or coercion to get another person to provide labor or sex in exchange for something of value (money, drugs, food, shelter, clothing, etc). Child sex trafficking is when anything of value is given for any sex act with a someone under 18 years of age.

## IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU

**KNOW IS BEING TRAFFICKED...** reach out to the National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888 (text: 233733) or browse their directory at [www.humantraffickinghotline.org](http://www.humantraffickinghotline.org) to find resources and help.

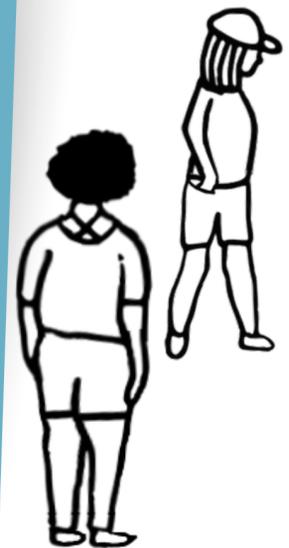
### A FEW

### RISK FACTORS

- 🍴 Food insecurity
- 🏠 Housing instability
- 🗣️ Family rejection
- 💔 History of abuse, especially sexual abuse
- 🛡️ Child welfare or juvenile justice system involvement
- 🍷 Substance dependence
- 👪 Family or friends involved in trafficking
- 🛂 Undocumented or temporary immigration status

### A FEW PROTECTIVE FACTORS INCLUDE...

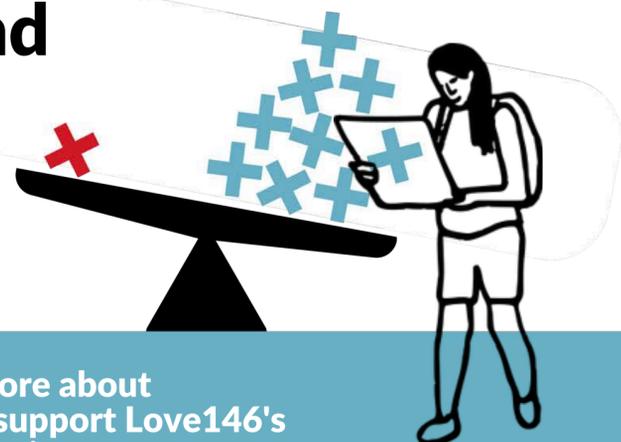
- 👤 Supportive adult relationships
- 🧠 Positive self-image and strong self-esteem
- 🤝 Understanding of healthy relationships
- 👋 Consent and refusal skills
- ⚖️ Perception of legal rights
- 💬 Knowledge of online safety
- 🔒 Usage of strong privacy settings
- 💡 Awareness of trafficking and exploitation
- 😊 Having basic needs met
- 🏡 Community connection & availability of extracurricular activities



## TIP THE SCALES:

Help end trafficking by supporting solutions that **reduce risk** and **increase protection**.

You could make the critical difference in someone's life.



**LOVE146**  
END CHILD TRAFFICKING AND EXPLOITATION

You can learn more about trafficking, and support Love146's prevention & survivor care programs at [www.love146.org](http://www.love146.org).



**Personal Safety Program**  
Main Office: 845-454-0595  
[thecpca.org](http://thecpca.org)

**If you or someone else is in immediate danger, call 911.**

### Student Resources

**If you or a friend are in need of help or support, please talk to your Safe Adults or use the resources listed inside this card. No matter the situation, there is always help available.**



**TEEN SAFETY  
MATTERS™**

## Help / Hotlines

### Abuse

- ✦ National Child Abuse Hotline
- ✦ Call/Text 1-800-4-A-Child (422-4453)
- ✦ [Childhelpline.org](http://Childhelpline.org)
- ✦ NYS Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-342-3720

### Sexual Abuse/Assault

- ✦ Darkness to Light Helpline
- ✦ Call 1-866-FOR-LIGHT (367-5444)
- ✦ Text "Light" to 741741
- ✦ [Darknesstolight.org](http://Darknesstolight.org)
- ✦ Family Services Rape Crisis & Crime Victims Hotline: 845-452-7272

Rape, Assault, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN)

- ✦ Call 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)
- ✦ [Hotline.rainn.org](http://Hotline.rainn.org)

### Relationship/Dating Abuse & Violence

- ✦ Love Is Respect
- ✦ Call 1-866-331-9474
- ✦ Text "Loveis" to 22522
- ✦ [Loveisrespect.org](http://Loveisrespect.org)

### LGBTQ Support

- ✦ The Trevor Project
- ✦ Call 1-866-488-7386
- ✦ Text "Start" to 678678 [TheTrevorProject.org](http://TheTrevorProject.org)
- ✦ Dutchess County Pride: Call 845-440-3430, Text 845-380-6549

### Human Trafficking

- ✦ National Human Trafficking Hotline
- ✦ Call 1-888-373-7888
- ✦ Text "Help" to 233733
- ✦ [Humantraffickinghotline.org](http://Humantraffickinghotline.org)

### Online Exploitation

- ✦ Cybertipline
- ✦ Call/Text 1-800-THE-LOST (843-5678)
- ✦ [Cybertipline.org](http://Cybertipline.org)

### Mental Health/Substance Abuse

- ✦ SAMHSA National Helpline
- ✦ Call 1-800-662-HELP (4357)
- ✦ [Samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline](http://Samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline)
- ✦ Dutchess County Helpline: Call or Text 845-485-9700, Toll Free 1-877-485-9700

### Crisis/Suicide

- ✦ Crisis Text Line
- ✦ Text HOME to 741741
- ✦ [Crisistextline.org](http://Crisistextline.org)
- ✦ National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Call 988 [Suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://Suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

# Supporting Youth Further

- Child Advocacy Center (CAC) 101
- Healthy vs. Unhealthy Teen Relationships Graphic
- National Center for Missing & Exploited Children
- Parenting Tip Sheet
- Supporting Children Who Have Been Victimized Info Sheet



# CACs 101

## *A look into your local CAC*

### **WHO?**

A group of qualified individuals from varying disciplines trained in crisis intervention who work together to support children and families once a report is received from the State Central Registry.

### **WHAT?**

A CAC, or Child Advocacy Center is a child-friendly space to which families come to meet with investigate partners, take part in Forensic Interviews, attend non-invasive medical exams and get connected to services.

### **WHY?**

Children experiencing abuse or neglect are often asked to repeat their story to many different people at varying times. A CAC eliminates the need for revictimization and helps reduce retraumatization of both children and their families.

### **WHEN?**

At a CAC, the Advocates and Investigators are typically meeting with a family very early on after a report is received. It is most likely that an incident just took place and an investigation was just initiated. The role played by the CAC is crucial even this early on in an investigation.

\*A CAC is not a walk-in facility. Services and support are only available to clients and families that are connected to a Child Protective or Law Enforcement case or referral.

# HEALTHY VS. UNHEALTHY TEEN RELATIONSHIPS



Teens in **HEALTHY** relationships should:

- Communicate respectfully and listen to each other's feelings, opinions, and needs.
- Take responsibility for their actions and apologize.
- Trust each other.
- Respect their partner's space, privacy, and boundaries.
- Spend time with family and friends outside the relationship.
- Feel safe around one another and understand "no means no."



# HEALTHY VS. UNHEALTHY TEEN RELATIONSHIPS



## Teens in UNHEALTHY relationships:

- Communicate poorly such as name-calling, yelling, or mocking each other.
- Refuse to talk about a disagreement or apologize.
- Pressure their partner to do things they do not want to do.
- Show up unannounced.
- Tell their partner who they can and cannot hangout with.
- Isolate their partner from their friends or family.



*"You all are so awesome and passionate about the work you do and I am so honored to be a part of FAON."*

– FAON Provider



[NCMEC.org/support](https://ncmec.org/support)



To reach out to a member of NCMC's team for assistance, please email [gethelp@ncmec.org](mailto:gethelp@ncmec.org) or call **1-877-446-2632 ext. 6117**

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# NCMEC RESOURCES FOR CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Survivors, Caregivers & Families



NCMEC is here to help survivors, caregivers and families impacted by online child sexual exploitation.

Our team can provide free assistance and support by suggesting counseling recommendations, peer support, offering guidance on removing child sexual exploitation content from the internet and legal referrals.

## **Seek Counseling & Community Resources**

NCMEC provides assistance to people who need help coping with a missing or sexually exploited child. We offer mental health intervention to people in need as well as local referrals to our nationwide network of mental health professionals called the **Family Advocacy Outreach Network (FAON)**. They are ready to help.



## **Find Survivor & Family Support**

**Team HOPE** is a group of peer support volunteers who have lived experience with missing and exploited children's needs. This group of adult volunteers can assist families of missing or exploited children, as well as adult survivors of certain types of child sexual abuse or exploitation, abduction or other missing child circumstance.

## **Remove Images, Videos & Comments Online**

NCMEC works closely with technology partners to identify and remove child sexual abuse material from the Internet. We also provide supportive guidance and tools to help the victims and caretakers report and remove exploitative images and videos from the internet.

## **Locate an Attorney to Help You Understand Your Legal Rights and Pursue Monetary Restitution**

A child whose sexually exploitative photos are shared online has a legal right to seek monetary restitution from all offenders who create, share or possess these images. Because the process to seek monetary restitution is complex and often confusing, it is helpful for you to have an attorney when you navigate the legal system. NCMEC can talk you through these legal issues and help find an attorney who will work on your behalf.

# A SIMPLE GUIDE TO NURTURING PARENTING

Six practical ways to build connection, confidence, and healthy behavior

Parenting is not about being perfect, it's about being intentional. Research from the Nurturing Parenting Programs shows that everyday interactions and how we respond, can comfort and teach adults to shape children's emotional health, behavior, and self-worth. Small nurturing choices repeated daily create powerful long-term outcomes.



# SIX PRACTICAL WAYS FOR PARENTS TO BUILD CONNECTION, CONFIDENCE, AND HEALTHY BEHAVIOR

## 1 Choose Nurturing Over Fear

Teach instead of scare. Calm, respectful correction helps children learn faster.

- Use calm voice
- Correct without shaming
- Focus on teaching
- Protect dignity

## 2 Use Age-Appropriate Expectations

Behavior problems are often skill gaps, not defiance.

- Ask: "Is this age-normal?"
- Expect repetition
- Emotions take time
- Skills grow with practice

## 3 Lead with Empathy

Name feelings first, then guide behavior.

- "I see you're upset"
- Validate feelings
- Keep limits firm
- Calm before correcting

## 4 Guide More, Punish Less

Show what to do, not just what to stop.

- Redirect behavior
- Offer 2 choices
- Use logical results
- Model appropriate behaviors

## 5 Build Confidence & Independence

Let children try, choose, and contribute.

- Praise effort
- Give small jobs
- Allow safe choices
- Support problem-solving

## 6 Stay Calm & Connected

Connection improves cooperation.

- Pause before reacting
- Repair mistakes
- Give daily 1:1 time
- Listen with eye contact

# Safety Brief: Supporting Children Who Have Been Victimized



## Academic Needs

**The following strategies may help the child regain confidence in their ability to succeed at learning and may lessen frustration with difficult tasks:**

- Find ways to provide one-to-one assistance or tutoring in problem areas—from both adults and peers, if possible.
- Break down large projects into smaller tasks so that the child can have more frequent feedback and a sense of satisfaction from completing a task.
- Minimize competition and try to set up failure-proof tasks.
- Eliminate timed tasks or allow the child more time to complete tasks.
- Provide well-defined procedures for transition from one activity to another.
- Assign the child a classroom job, such as helper to the teacher.
- Ask resource staff how to obtain other academic help for the child, if necessary.
- Ensure access to all educational services for which the child is eligible (e.g., free or reduced price meals programs, Title I services, and bilingual programs).

## Emotional Needs

**It is important to acknowledge the child's strengths and skills and not simply the victimization. Reinforce positives by providing experiences that leave the child with a feeling of accomplishment. Help the child identify something they can do well. The following strategies may help a child increase their self-esteem:**

- Let your behavior indicate to the child, "I like you. I like to be with you."
- Use statements such as, "You have done this very well. I think you have gotten better at this task."
- Acknowledge and validate the child's positive qualities.
- Play games that will be winning situations for the child.
- Begin each day with a clean slate.
- Read to the child or have them read to others.
- Use stories in which children are the heroes and overcome great odds through competence, strength, and intelligence.
- Help the child talk about feelings. Label feelings, both your own and the child's. Encourage the child to express their feelings.
- Encourage the child to express their feelings through creative mediums, such as art, music, dance, and writing.
- Help the child to identify and become part of extracurricular activities or clubs.

# Safety Brief: Supporting Children Who Have Been Victimized



## Behavioral Needs

Children who have been maltreated sometimes find that acting out in school is the only available form of expression for their feelings of anger, fear, and guilt. It is imperative to redirect inappropriate behaviors, but remember that these children may be extremely sensitive to adult control. However, they may respond well to structure and limitations on highly stimulating tasks. The goal is to help the child build up a sense of self-control that comes from an ability to predict events and participate successfully. The following strategies may help to structure learning situations in ways that may be helpful to children:

- Be consistent, calm, and clear in your directions. When speaking, bend down or sit down with the younger child to speak directly to them in a quiet voice.
- Help the child realize there are consequences to behavior, and the child can make a good choice to exercise control over behavior.
- Provide time and reasons for the child to get up and move around to discharge some energy. Encourage structured play or exercise. Do not withhold recess, lunch, or physical education as punishment.  
Avoid taking away possessions as a disciplinary measure.
- Set up the classroom to help the child stay on task. Move the child's desk closer to the teacher's desk; use a study carrel or timer.  
Avoid using corporal punishment. The child has had adults use power and force
- inappropriately and must be shown other ways to solve problems.  
Do not allow destructive behavior as an expression of anger. Talk about appropriate release
- of anger. Have children demonstrate or rehearse appropriate behaviors.  
Model nurturing concern toward others. Foster empathy and sensitivity to others. Verbalize
- those feelings and model empathetic behaviors. Watch for this behavior and praise the child when they are appropriately empathetic toward others.

## Social Needs

Young children will learn how to get along with their peers by first getting along with the adults who are important to them. Do not expect good peer relations until the child can forge a relationship with an adult. Help the child learn social skills through these strategies:

- Be a role model; demonstrate and talk about acceptable ways of behaving with others. Express your own feelings appropriately.
- Offer guidance on how to deal with peers. Social skills or friendship groups are useful. Locate and use books on the topic of making friends.
- Set up group activities so the children have a chance to learn from each other. Cooperative learning is a model that may empower these children.

# Activities To Do With Kids

- Crossword Puzzle Level 1
- Crossword Puzzle Level 2
- Know Your Personal Information Worksheet
- My Support Web
- Pinwheel Coloring Sheet
- Safe Adult Activity
- Safe Adult Drawing Sheet
- Tell A Safe Adult Coloring Sheet
- Word Scramble



# Personal Safety

U	N	S	A	F	E	T	O	U	C	H	E	R	T
E	S	A	F	E	A	D	U	L	T	U	U	E	E
E	D	W	U	R	T	R	I	C	K	S	N	M	L
R	N	U	U	N	R	N	F	I	F	T	S	E	S
E	E	A	N	A	S	T	U	T	T	M	A	R	T
D	I	R	S	G	T	A	E	T	E	U	F	G	R
F	R	E	A	S	R	F	F	E	T	O	E	E	O
L	F	P	F	T	E	A	C	E	F	T	S	N	N
A	E	O	E	R	R	R	E	G	W	R	E	C	G
G	F	R	G	A	O	T	T	A	I	O	C	Y	S
I	A	T	A	N	S	A	R	I	F	G	R	P	T
T	S	I	M	G	A	N	R	T	V	E	E	D	R
D	E	N	E	E	A	A	D	M	S	E	T	L	S
T	T	G	S	R	O	U	C	A	A	R	S	E	R

- ASSERTIVE
- SAFE ADULT
- UNSAFE WORDS
- UNSAFE SECRETS
- UNSAFE TOUCH
- UNSAFE GAMES
- EMERGENCY
- TRICKS
- SAFE FRIEND
- STRONG
- RED FLAG
- REPORTING
- STRANGER

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/9417289/>



# Personal Safety

O	U	N	S	A	F	E	S	E	C	R	E	T	S
I	E	L	O	G	A	A	N	E	G	L	E	C	T
N	C	N	R	T	S	G	A	L	F	D	E	R	L
A	R	E	M	S	A	F	E	F	R	I	E	N	D
P	O	G	N	I	M	O	O	R	G	Y	R	S	I
P	F	S	C	O	E	R	I	C	O	N	E	E	S
R	E	L	A	T	I	O	N	S	H	I	P	S	A
O	T	F	U	F	E	A	L	N	R	G	F	M	F
P	R	R	T	E	E	M	P	A	T	H	Y	S	E
R	I	A	T	S	R	A	D	N	D	T	R	I	T
I	C	U	E	R	N	N	D	A	L	N	R	F	Y
A	K	D	R	E	U	U	Y	U	A	U	N	I	G
T	S	A	O	O	I	B	U	L	L	Y	I	N	G
E	S	U	B	A	L	A	N	O	I	T	O	M	E

RELATIONSHIPS  
 NEGLECT  
 FORCE  
 BOUNDARIES  
 SAFETY  
 RED FLAGS  
 INAPPROPRIATE  
 COERCION  
 UNSAFE SECRETS  
 SAFE FRIEND  
 FRAUD  
 SAFE ADULT  
 GROOMING  
 EMOTIONAL ABUSE  
 BULLYING  
 EMPATHY  
 TRICKS

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/9417439/>



**Complete the following, post in a visible location,  
and review with your child often.**

**My name is** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Child's first name) (Child's last name)

**and I was born** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Child's Birthday -  
Month/Day/Year)

**My parent/guardian's name(s) is/are**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Parent's first name) (Parent's last name)

**My parent/guardian phone number is**

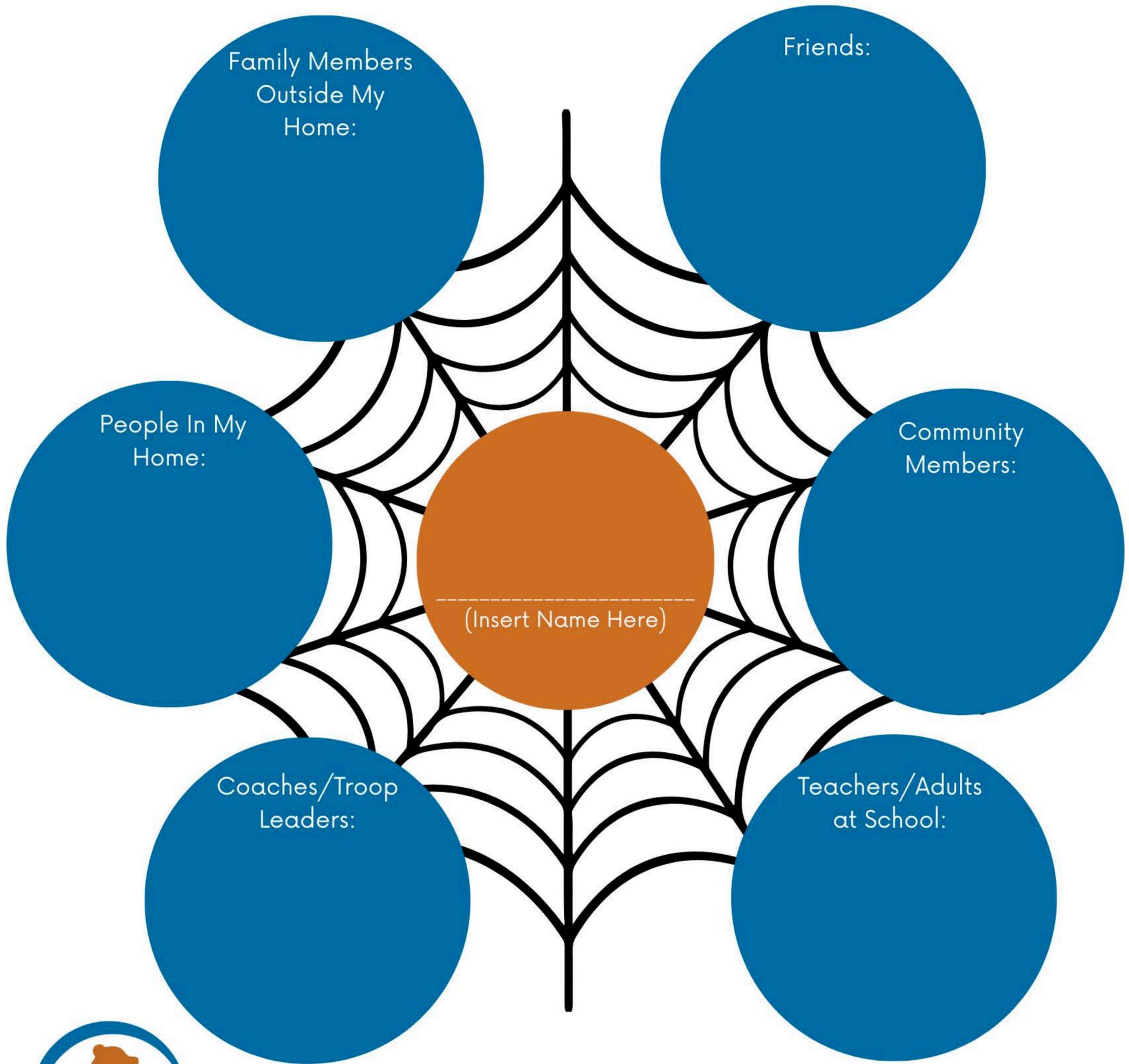
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Area code/phone number)

**I live at**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Student's full address, including city and state)

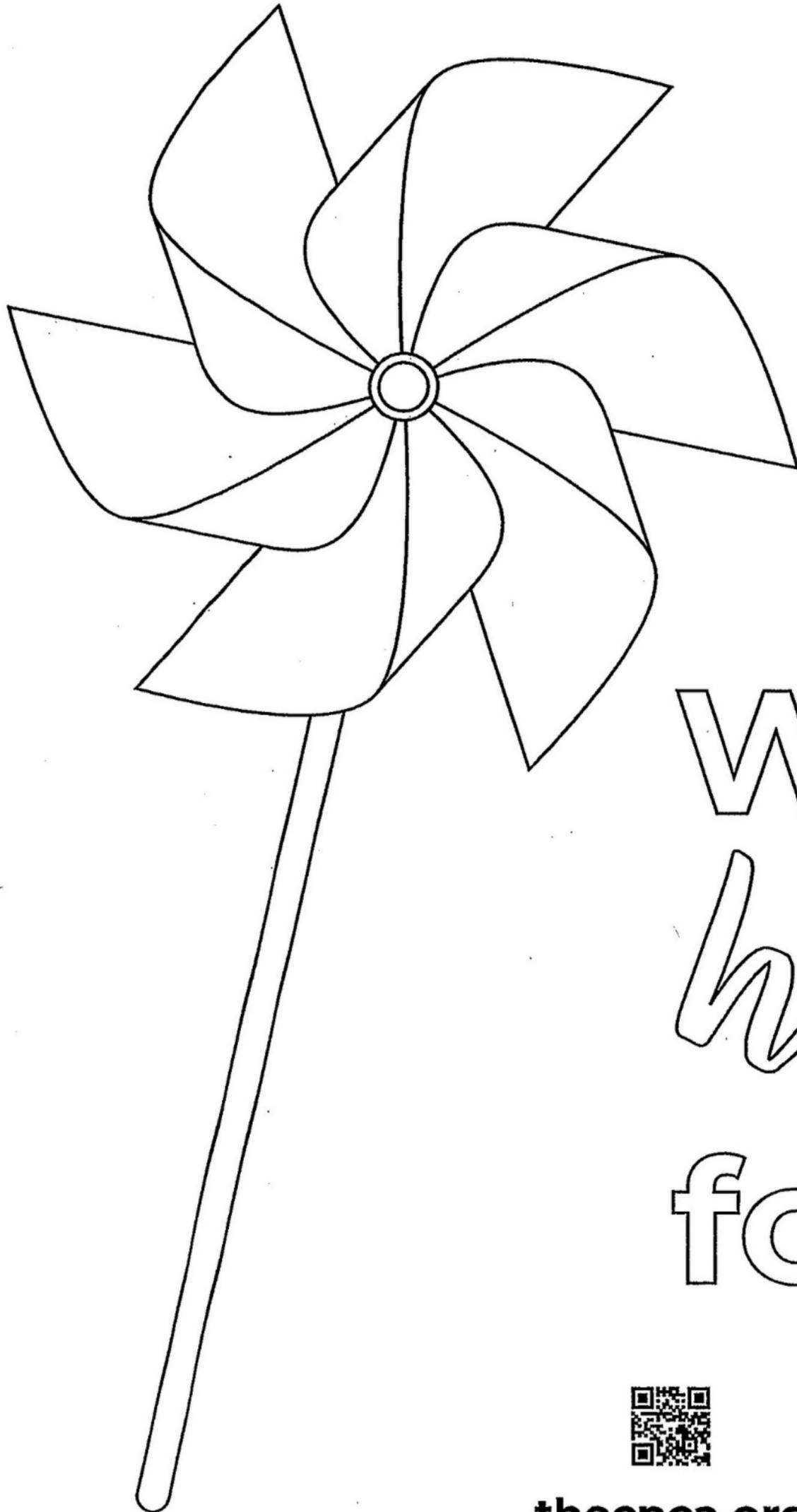
# My Support Web

Who Can I Go To For Help?



**I AM NEVER ALONE. I HAVE PEOPLE I CAN TURN TO FOR SUPPORT**

# Child Abuse Prevention Month



We are  
*heroes*  
for kids



**thecpca.org**

thecpca.poughkeepsie @thecpca @the\_cpca

**NYS Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-342-3720**

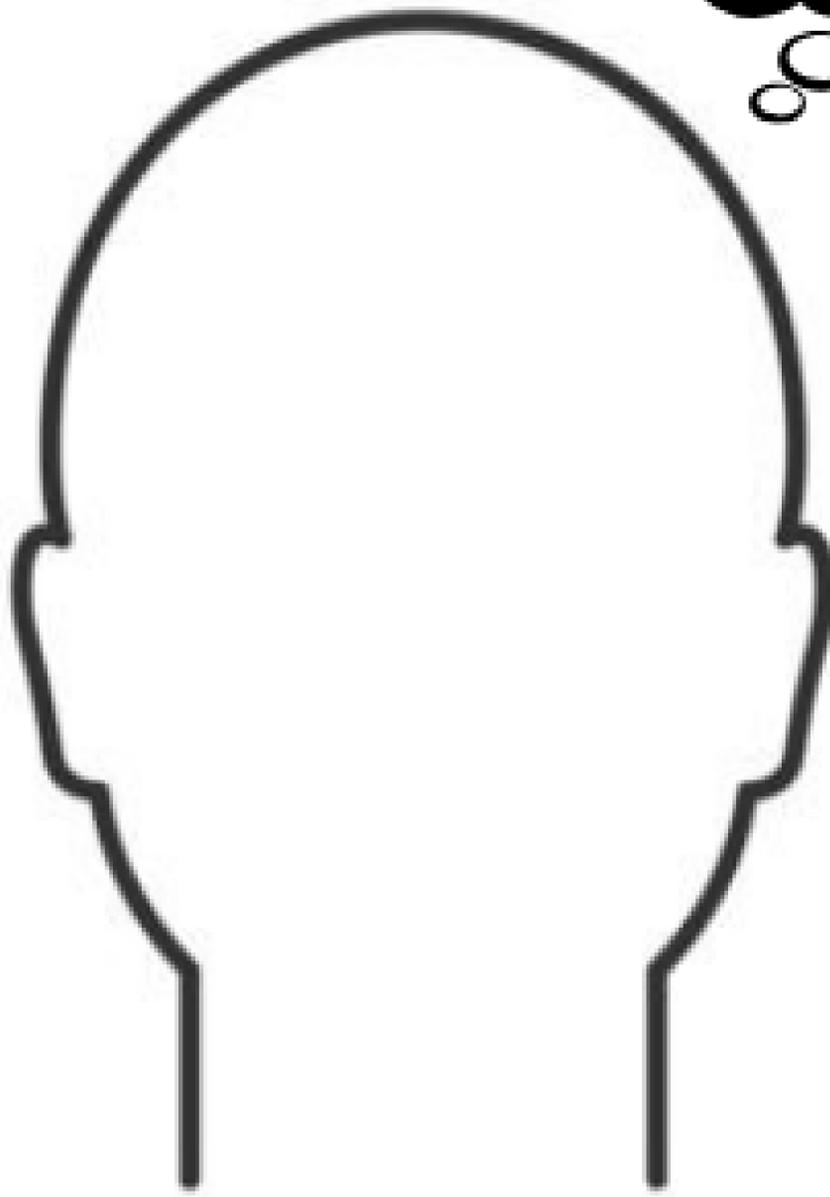
Name: \_\_\_\_\_

My safe adult at home is...  
\_\_\_\_\_

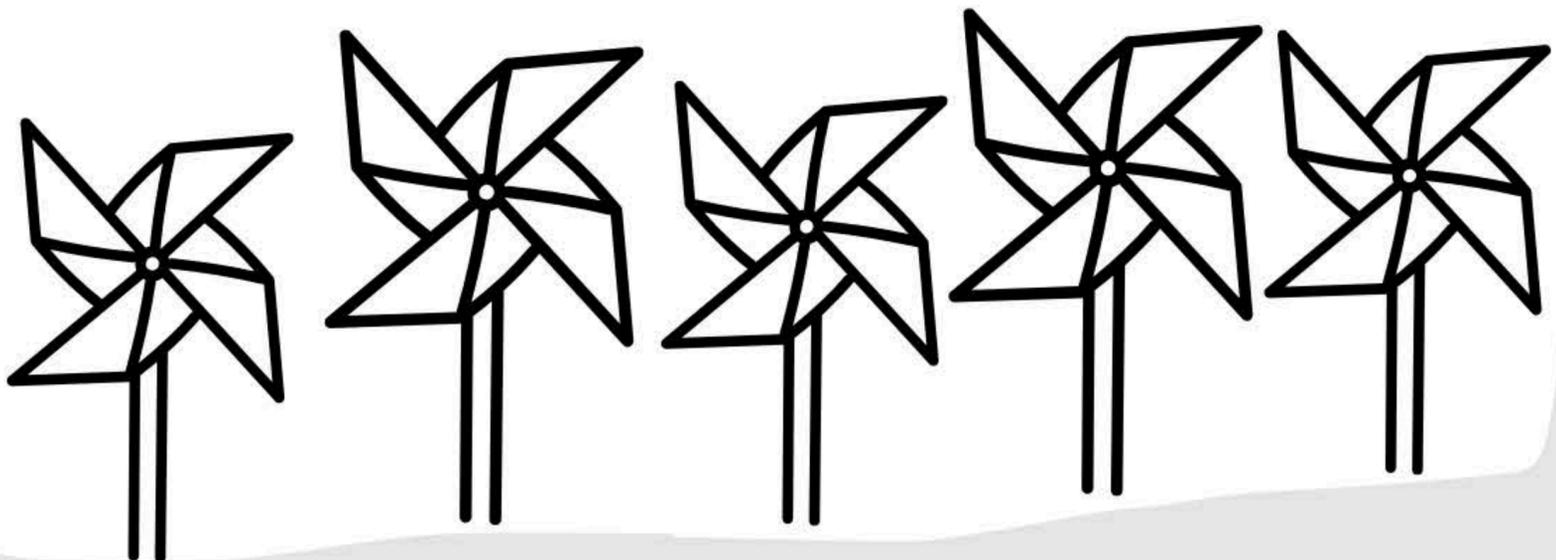
My safe adult at school is...  
\_\_\_\_\_

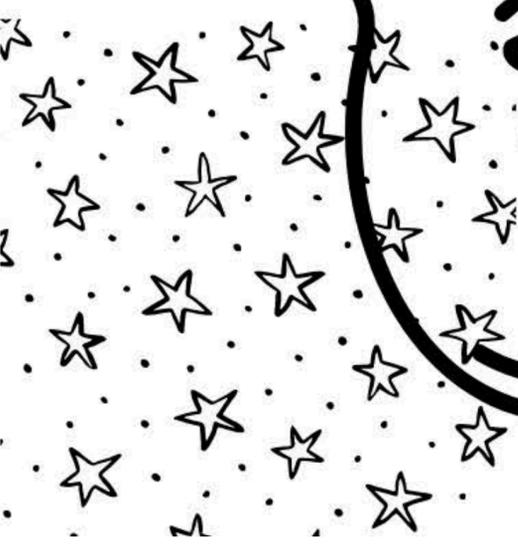
My safe adult in my family is...  
\_\_\_\_\_

Another safe adult I have is...  
\_\_\_\_\_

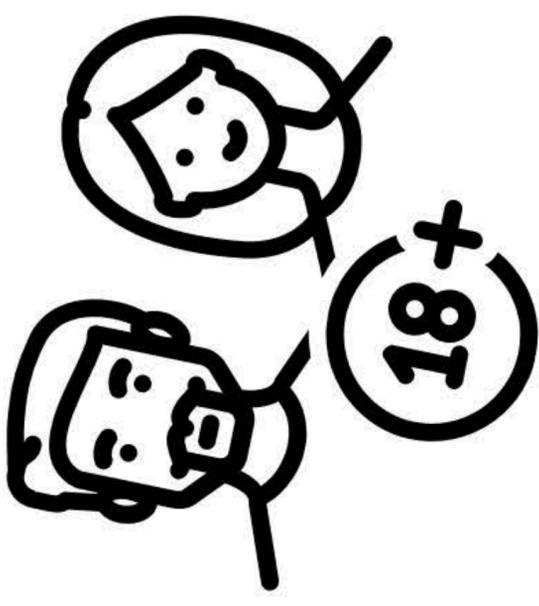
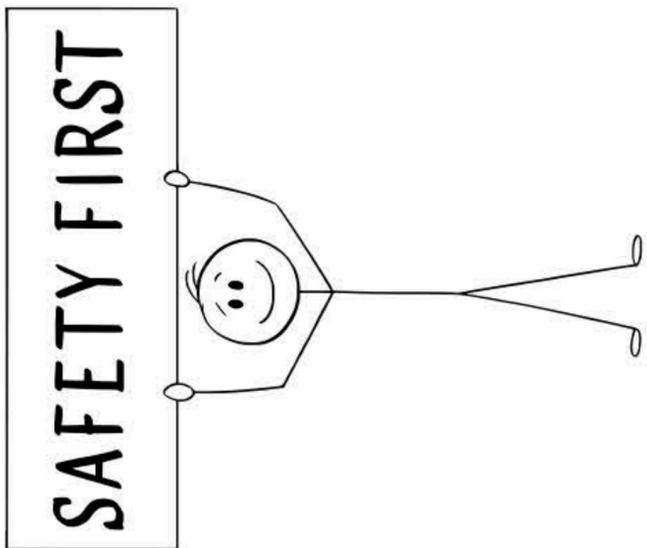


DRAW YOUR  CPCA  
**SAFE ADULTS**

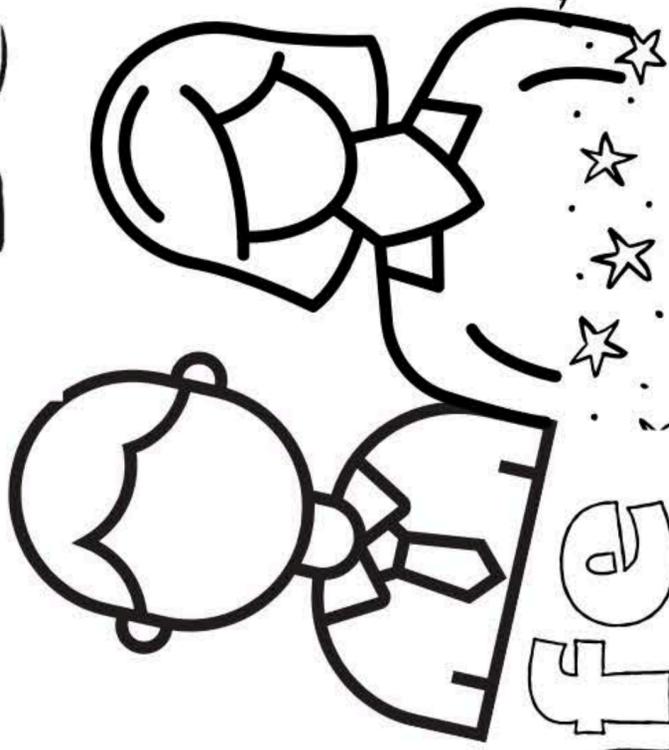




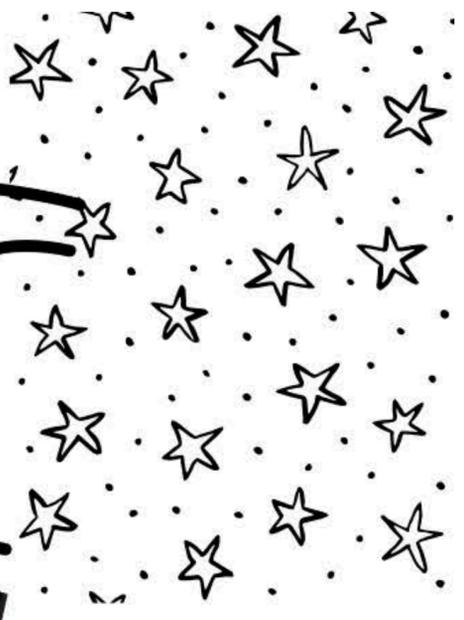
STAY SAFE



TAALUK IT UP!



TRELLLA SAFE  
ACULTI!



# CHILD ABUSE

## WORD SCRAMBLE

Unscramble the following words about child abuse & safety

CELTGEN \_\_\_\_\_

ASBEU \_\_\_\_\_

RATTEHN \_\_\_\_\_

SABUHCYIPLAE \_\_\_\_\_

TIXNEOALPITO \_\_\_\_\_

MGONROGIR \_\_\_\_\_

LTAFDEUSA \_\_\_\_\_

RIVEASEST \_\_\_\_\_

DENUBOARIS \_\_\_\_\_

NSTCEENO \_\_\_\_\_

FRAIKTFCGIAN \_\_\_\_\_

ETSRSEC \_\_\_\_\_

## WORD BANK

Assertive

Neglect

Exploitation

Threaten

Consent

Safe Adult

Boundaries

Secrets

Abuse

Trafficking

Grooming

Physical Abuse

# Stay Connected





**THECPCA.ORG**



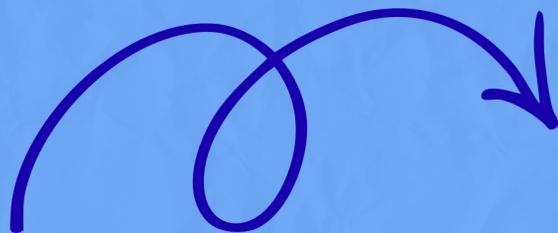
**@THECPCA**



**@THECPCA**



**(845)454-0595**



**SCAN THE QR CODE TO  
VISIT OUR WEBSITE**

