



# 25 Things you can do to prevent child abuse

All children deserve great childhoods and we all have a role to play in making sure that our community is the best place for children and families to thrive. Here are 25 things you can do to help prevent child abuse.

1. **Make children a priority.** Make sure the children you know are safe and healthy.
2. **Pay attention to what the children around you say and do.** Children need to know they are special and that someone is looking out for them.
3. **Be a nurturing parent or caregiver.** All children deserve to grow up in a caring and loving home.
4. **Take a parenting class.** You might hear some new ideas and your experiences might help other parents.
5. **Learn about child development.** Sometimes we expect children to do more than they are able to do.
6. **Reach out to other family members, friends and neighbors.** Being a parent isn't easy. We all need help sometimes. Offer to babysit, cook a meal, or just listen.
7. **Become a foster or adoptive parent.** All children need to belong.
8. **Model patience and respect for others.** We all learn from each other and children learn by watching us.
9. **Volunteer as a coach or mentor.** One caring adult can make a difference in a child's life. You can be that adult.
10. **Sponsor a child abuse prevention training at work.** With everyone on the same page, we can't lose!
11. **Learn more about child abuse and how it affects all of us.** Child abuse can lead to lifelong problems such as mental illness, drug and alcohol abuse, and other health issues.
12. **Participate in April Child Abuse Prevention Month.** Blue ribbons and pinwheels are the national symbols of child abuse prevention. Decorate everything! Find out what others in your area are doing and join in.
13. **Ask elected officials to support programs that help children and families.** After all it's your tax dollars.
14. **Host or sponsor family events like health fairs, fun nights, and block parties.** Child abuse often happens in isolation. Having fun together builds friendships and a sense of community.
15. **Get schools and faith based organizations involved in the conversation.** Kids should be safe everywhere!
16. **Write a letter to the editor if you see an article on child abuse.** By raising your voice, you raise awareness.
17. **Develop resources at your local library.** Create a display during April Child Abuse Prevention Month or anytime.
18. **Share information about Shaken Baby Syndrome with new parents.** Crying is the #1 reason adults give for shaking an infant. It's easy to get overwhelmed or frustrated when a baby won't stop crying. Tell everyone to never, ever shake a baby. Remember, if you can't calm your baby, calm yourself.
19. **Learn the signs and symptoms of child abuse.** Pay attention to changes in a child's behavior. Not all children will have bruises or outside signs of abuse. Do you know what to look for?
20. **Get help if you need it.** Did we mention parenting isn't easy? We all need support. Don't be afraid to ask for help.
21. **Start a parent support group in your community.** We all need a safe place to talk about our parenting struggles.
22. **Talk about child sexual abuse.** Talk to your family, your friends and your children. 1 in 10 children will be sexually abused before their 18th birthday. We need to talk about this!
23. **Hold abusers accountable.** Don't turn your head. If you see something, say something.
24. **Report suspected abuse or neglect.** You may be a child's only lifeline to safety. Call 1-800-25ABUSE in Illinois.
25. **Support Prevent Child Abuse Illinois.** Sign up to volunteer or give a donation in honor of a child you love!

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