

Listening to a disclosure from a Survivor/Victim under 18

If you or someone you know are currently being abused,



find the **ChildHelp** hotline in your country **HERE**, or speak to someone you trust.

Do's

- Remain calm and composed.
- Believe the child.
- Explain it's not their fault.
- Give positive messages and praise for their courage to speak up
- Answer honestly.
- Respect the child's privacy.
- Keep a stable environment.
- Report to the appropriate child protection service in your country.
- Be fully present with them, give them time, space and your full attention.
- Assure them they have done the right and brave thing by telling you.
- Keep them informed of who you will speak to about this and why.
- Remain constant. Don't treat that child too differently to how you interacted with them before.
- Realize that sharing this information with you can be uncomfortable and embarrassing for them.
- Realize that receiving this information can be traumatic for you too. Give yourself time and space to process, and, if needed, share with your own trusted support individual in strict confidence.
- Seek guidance if you are unsure of what steps to take next.
- Seek mental health support if you are triggered by what the child disclosed.

Don'ts

- Do not overreact or panic.
- Do not pressure for details.
- Do not confront the offender.
- Do not blame the child.
- Do not rush them.
- Do not let them feel they have burdened you with this information.
- Do not promise them their offender will be prosecuted.
- Do not share this information online.
- Do not gossip about what has been shared with you in confidence.
- Do not let this situation overwhelm you. You can ask for help in dealing with it too.
- Do not avoid them.
- Do not make them feel guilty for having burdened you with this information.
- Do not tell the child to "forget about it" or "keep quiet" and "move on".