

The

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Woodlands

C O M M U N I T Y M A G A Z I N E

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE WOODLANDS TOWNSHIP

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April is Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month

Children's Safe Harbor shares tips for preventing child sexual abuse.

While it may be an uncomfortable topic, taking steps to prevent child sexual abuse is an important part of protecting children. Victoria J. Constance, MSPH, Ph.D., Executive Director of Children's Safe Harbor, shares these tips:

- Know that sexual abuse is more common than people think. Approximately one in 10 children will be sexually abused by the time they turn 18. It can happen to both boys and girls of all ages, races, ethnicities and family backgrounds.
- Sexual abuse is usually committed by someone that the child knows and trusts – often family members or close family friends.
- Teach your child the correct names for body parts which parts are “private,” and that other people should not touch or see. People who abuse children often

ask them to keep secrets. Teach your child that they should never keep secrets from their parents/caregivers.

- Most sexual abuse occurs when a child is alone with an adult or older child. Consider minimizing these situations. Choose group activities or activities in public places when possible. Drop in unannounced when other people are caring for your child.
- Teach your child about online predators. Instruct them not to give out personal information or exchange photos. Teach your child that they should never take photos of their private parts. Monitor your child's Internet use and apply parental controls.
- If a child discloses that abuse has occurred, listen in a calm and supportive way. Always report the abuse. If you suspect a child is

in immediate danger, call 9-1-1 or Children's Safe Harbor at 936-756-4644.

Children's Safe Harbor's mission is to protect and enhance the life of every child who has the courage to battle sexual or severe physical abuse. **In 2019, there were 2,615 courageous children who came forward to discuss their experiences with childhood trauma and abuse.**



The original artwork depicted was created by an adolescent female sexual abuse survivor served by Children's Safe Harbor.



For more information, please visit www.ChildrensSafeHarbor.org.

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