



Information from the German Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect  
(„Deutsche Gesellschaft für Prävention und Intervention bei Kindesmisshandlung  
und -vernachlässigung e.V.“)

# Ignorance scares us – Knowledge makes us strong!

Would you know when a child  
is sexually abused ?

You can help to prevent sexualized  
violence towards girls and boys!

[www.dgfpi.de](http://www.dgfpi.de)

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Together we're strong  
for child protection!

englisch



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## What is sexual abuse?

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**Sexual abuse means a person uses his or her position of power, in other words, uses the lack of knowledge, the trust and dependence of a girl or boy to satisfy his or her own needs for power and sexual satisfaction.**

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This includes, e. g., when a perpetrator

- touches or lets himself/herself be touched by a girl or a boy for the purpose of his/her own sexual arousal
- forces or persuades a child to see him or her naked or to watch sexual activities
- uses children for pornographic purposes or shows them pornographic material
- rubs his penis between the thighs, bottom cheeks or against the whole body of a child
- forces or persuades a girl or boy to have oral, anal or vaginal sex – thus rapes her/him
- forces a girl or a boy to keep it secret

## Information

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**for mothers, fathers, educators, teachers and all persons interested in actively protecting children against sexualized violence.**

When adults think of sexual abuse, most of them think of a violent and brutal attack by strangers or distant acquaintances. This impression is wrong!

In about 75% of cases of sexualized violence, the perpetrators are people who are well known by the children. Often it is even someone who the girl or boy loves or trusts (e. g. father, stepfather, grandfather, aunt, uncle, teacher, pastor, brother...).

The majority of perpetrators is male, however some girls and boys experience sexualized violence also from women. Sexualized violence is not only exercised by adults, also children and adolescents commit sexual offences.

The acts of sexualized violence are planned by the perpetrators, and the intensity of the offences increases. It rarely remains a one-off occurrence. Usually the abuse goes on for years until adults understand the signals from the girl or boy, believe them and stop the abuse. Sexualized violence is a painful experience for people affected and their confidants.



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## Knowledge makes us strong!

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### **You can talk about it with a girl or boy in this way:**

“Your body belongs to you, you are important, you have the right to protect yourself. E.g., you have the right to take a bath or sleep alone. You can decide how, when, where and by whom you want to be touched. Your feelings are important, they make you unique and you can trust them. Show how you feel. Say when you are scared, sad, happy or confused.

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Touches are important for every human being. Loving, pleasant and tender touches feel good. Some touches really hurt. Such touches are not ok. Nobody likes to be beaten, kicked or pushed.

Some ways of being touched don't match your feeling and are somehow strange but you can't explain why. Some of them confuse you, like e. g. long or too strong hugs. To be tickled can be funny at the beginning, but it becomes uncomfortable if the person doesn't stop although you want him/her to. Some adults take advantage of children; they touch you without considering how you feel about it. They may be a friend, an educator, a sports trainer, an aunt, a cousin, or your father or mother. It may also be that someone himself/herself wants to be touched and persuades or forces a girl or boy to touch him/her.



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Even words and looks can be strange, uncomfortable and offending.

If someone wants to be touched by you or touches you in a way that you don't like, you are allowed to defend yourself. You have the right to say "no". It can be really frightening to say "no". It can also happen that adults don't pay attention to your "no". It's not your fault when someone sexually abuses you.

There are nice secrets that make fun like surprises. But there are also bad secrets that e. g. cause stomachpain or make you feel uncomfortable. Even if you promised not to tell: You are allowed to pass bad secrets on.

You are allowed to talk about what happens to you and to get some help.

## What can I do when I hear about sexualized violence?

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### **Believe the child.**

The experience shows that in most cases girls and boys don't come up with sexual offenses.

### **Keep calm.**

Your panic or dismay would only bedevil or silence the child.

### **Get information and seek help for yourself and the girl or boy affected.**

You are not alone in that! Think about: Who could help you (e. g. friends, relatives)? Contact a counseling service!

You can also get help and  
counseling here:

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N.I.N.A. – Nationale Infoline  
Network and contact point for sexual violence  
of girls and boys  
Tel: 01805 - 123 465  
[www.nina-info.de](http://www.nina-info.de)

**Your donation can help to protect girls and boys!**

Donation's account (German Society for Prevention  
of Child Abuse and Neglect)  
DGfPI e.V.  
Bank für Sozialwirtschaft  
Konto 1 131 100  
BLZ 370 205 00

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