



Action Items for Familial Child Sexual Abuse Prevention & Response

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1 Strengthen safe-family policies and expectations in the home

- ★ Establish clear household rules for privacy, nudity, bathing, bedrooms, sleepovers, and digital devices.
- ★ Respect boundaries (knock before entering; no forced affection).
- ★ Teach children they control their bodies and can say no to anyone, including relatives

2 Increase parental and caregiver awareness of grooming within families

- ★ Teach caregivers about subtle grooming: isolation, gifts, secrets, favoritism, and replacing parental roles.
- ★ Clarify that abuse most often occurs with someone known and trusted, not strangers.

3 Monitor sibling dynamics and age/authority imbalances

- ★ Avoid giving older children or relatives unchecked power (e.g., unmonitored babysitting or bedtime).
- ★ Address problematic sexualized behaviors between children early, seeking professional support if necessary.

4 Reduce opportunities for secrecy

- ★ Prevent regular, unsupervised access in private spaces by one adult or older sibling.
- ★ Keep physical spaces open and observable (open doors, shared areas).

5 Teach children body autonomy and how to disclose safely

- ★ Use clear language for body parts and private areas.
- ★ Explain the difference between secrets (not to be kept about bodies) and surprises.
- ★ Assure children of belief and support if they speak up.

6 Support parent–child communication habits

- ★ Promote daily check-ins on feelings, relationships, and worries.
- ★ Normalize family discussions about safety, boundaries, and consent.



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7 Identify risk factors within the family system

- ★ Watch for family stressors that increase risk: domestic violence, substance misuse, parental absence, mental health issues, or overcrowding.
- ★ Seek early intervention supports for parents or caregivers under strain.

8 Ensure multiple safe adults outside the family

- ★ Create connections with trusted teachers, health workers, coaches, or mentors whom children can talk to if something happens at home.
- ★ Give children specific steps on who to go to and how.

9 Plan and enforce mandatory-reporting and response actions

- ★ Caregivers suspecting or aware of intra-familial abuse must follow mandated reporting laws and seek professional safeguarding intervention.
- ★ Prompt removal and swift connection to child-friendly medical and mental-health services are essential for abused children.

10 Prioritize trauma-informed family support

- ★ Provide support for the non-offending caregiver (they are often also traumatized).
- ★ Offer counselling to siblings, who may experience fear, guilt, or displacement.
- ★ Rebuild safety, trust, and predictable routines in the home.

11 Address online familial risk and digital exploitation

- ★ Monitor device usage; ensure privacy controls and shared-screen norms.
- ★ Restrict bed-night access to devices when abuse risk is present from someone in the home.
- ★ Teach children to report uncomfortable comments or images from relatives.

12 Break cycles of silence and cultural normalization

- ★ Challenge beliefs that “family issues stay in the family.”
- ★ Boost community and professional engagement to lessen stigma and guarantee accountability.
- ★ Encourage adults to speak openly about their concerns and seek help without shame



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