What to Do If Your Child Has Been Sexually Abused

- Listen to and believe your child.
- Do not blame your child for what happened.
- Tell your child s/he did well to tell you and that you are very sorry this happened.
- Give your child reassurance that you will protect him/her and s/he is safe.
- Protect your child from any further exposure to the offender. Tell your child you are doing so.
- Respond to questions or feelings your child expresses about the sexual abuse with a calm, matter-of-fact attitude, but do not pressure your child to talk about it.
- The most common immediate problems of sexually abused children include: sleep disturbances, irritability, loss of appetite, bedwetting, fears, acting like a younger child, changes in behaviors at school or with friends.
- Respect the privacy of your child by not telling a lot of people and not letting friends or family question your child.
- Maintain regular routines around the home—chores, bedtimes, rules.
- Inform brothers/sisters that something has happened to their sibling, but that s/he is safe and will be okay. Do not discuss details of the sexual abuse with the other children.
- Assure that all the children are protected from contact with the offender.
- Take the time to talk over your feelings privately with someone you trust: a spouse, friend, relative, or counselor. Do not discuss this within earshot of your children.
- Consult your child’s primary care physician or your local child abuse assessment center regarding follow-up medical care.
  - Multnomah, Washington County
  - Clackamas County
  - Columbia County
  - CARES Northwest
  - The Children’s Center
  - Amani Center
  - 503-276-9000
  - 655-7725
  - 503-366-4005
- Call the Department of Human Services (DHS) office in the county in which your child lives to report your concerns:
  - Multnomah County
  - Washington County
  - Clackamas County
  - Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook County
  - 503-731-3100
  - 503-681-6917
  - 971-673-7112
  - 1-877-302-0077