

Frequently Asked Questions

Q Will the person who is alleged to have abused me be allowed to have contact with me?

A *No. After a report of abuse is made, the person who is alleged to have abused you is removed from contact with you during the facility's investigation. This does not mean that you will be released from the facility or moved to another facility, but you will be protected.*

Q Will the facility punish me or treat me different (retaliate) if I report abuse?

A *No. If you make a report of abuse and have told the truth, you should not be punished, treated differently or receive any discipline. You will be protected from further harm and the case will be investigated. If you are retaliated against, report it to a trustworthy adult immediately and it will be investigated.*

Q Will I have to testify in court?

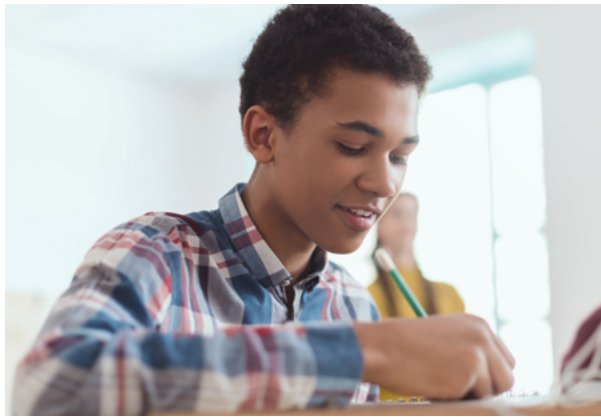
A *Investigators will ask you questions about what happened. If the abuser faces criminal charges, you may be asked to testify in court.*

Q Will reporting affect my release date or placement status?

A *No. Making a report of abuse will not extend your stay in Juvenile Rehabilitation, lengthen your community supervision term or change your current placement status. You may be moved to another facility.*

Q What is false reporting?

A *False reporting is deliberately making a report that you know is not true. Making a report of sexual abuse solely because you don't like someone is an example of false reporting. However, reporting sexual abuse because you have a reason to believe it has happened is NOT considered false reporting.*



How to Report Abuse

If you are a victim of or a witness to sexual abuse or harassment, or if you have knowledge of any incident of sexual abuse or harassment, you need to report it. Reporting can be difficult, but it will help keep you and others safe.

How You Can Report:

Talk to or send a letter or note to any of the following:

- Counselor
- PREA compliance manager
- Staff supervisor
- Nurse
- Treatment manager
- Your attorney
- Parents or guardians
- An adult you trust
- Complete a Youth Complaint Form.

If you don't feel comfortable talking with someone in the facility, you can call at **1-866-END-HARM** (1-866-363-4276).

You do not have to give your name, but when you do it makes the investigation easier.

If you would like copies of this document in an alternative format or language, please contact DCYF Constituent Relations (1-800-723-4831 | 360-902-8060, ConstRelations@dcyf.wa.gov).

Youth Safety Guide

What you should know about sexual abuse and sexual harassment



If abuse happens to you ...
End the Silence.



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES



What You Should Know

Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR) is committed to protecting your right to be safe from sexual abuse and sexual harassment in our facilities. We have a ZERO tolerance policy toward all forms of sexual abuse and sexual harassment. This means EVERY REPORT of abuse or harassment will be investigated.

Some Facts About Sexual Abuse

- It happens to males and females of all ages.
- Sexual abuse is about power and violence - not love.
- Sexual abuse has nothing to do with sexual orientation.
- Victims and offenders may be of any sexual orientation (i.e., heterosexual, homosexual, etc.).
- Just because a victim of sexual abuse became sexually aroused does not mean he or she was not raped or gave consent. These reactions are normal and involuntary.
- It is common for survivors of sexual abuse to have feelings of embarrassment, anger, guilt, panic, depression and fear following the event. These feelings may not surface for months or even years.
- Most reports of abuse are made after-the-fact and are still successfully prosecuted.
- Youth cannot give consent to have sexual contact with staff. It is a crime.
- Sexual contact between JR youth is prohibited; you will receive consequences for violating facility rules and, in some cases, it is a crime.

No one should be abused. End the Silence.

Staying Safe

Here are some things you can do to remain safe:

- **Avoid isolated areas.** Always stay in plain view of staff members. Abuse happens more often when a youth is isolated and alone with another person.
- **Avoid situations that make you feel uncomfortable.** Trust your gut feeling. If a situation feels wrong, it most likely is. Work to get yourself out of the situation and then report it.
- **Do not accept any offer of protection.** Someone offering to protect you from consequences or harm from others will want something in return.
- **Do not accept loans, favors or gifts.** Do not borrow, gamble or trade anything. Avoid owing anything to anyone.
- **Do not let manners get in the way of keeping yourself safe.** Do not be afraid to shout “no” or “stop it now.”
- **Report incidents and dangerous situations,** including sexual harassment (unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and derogatory sexual comments). This can help staff stop abuse before something happens.

Who Can Commit Abuse

It is not easy to know what an abuser looks like. Abusers can be someone you know, a friend, relative or a stranger. Any person in a facility may commit abuse. Abusers are not always detention or corrections officers or facility staff members. They can be visitors, volunteers, probation officers, other residents, medical personnel, counselors, teachers or other persons in the facility that you meet. Abuse committed by any person against you is wrong and should be reported immediately. No one deserves to be abused and abuse is always a crime.



If You are Sexually Abused

- **Report it!** All reports of abuse will be investigated even if the abuse occurred days, weeks or even years ago.
- **Protection.** Staff will ensure that you are immediately separated and protected from the person who allegedly abused you.
- **Evidence.** Staff may ask you not to shower/wash, eat or drink, use the restroom, brush your teeth or change your clothes. This will help preserve evidence needed for an investigation to take action against the person who abused you.
- **Services.** You will receive emergency medical treatment and be offered access to victim support services and counseling.
- **Retaliation (revenge).** Staff will keep a close eye on you and anyone that cooperates with an investigation to protect you against others seeking retaliation. If you are retaliated against, report it.

Many people want to help you. The important thing is to tell someone about the abuse or harassment. Do not be silent.