

Here are some tips on preventing child sexual abuse from the New Orleans Police Department's Crime Prevention Office:

Preventing Child Sexual Abuse Tips For Parents

1. Talk to your child every day and take time to really listen and observe. Learn as many details as you can about your child's activities and feelings. Encourage him or her to share concerns and problems with you.
2. Let your child know that he or she can tell you anything, and that you'll be supportive.
3. Teach your child that no one not even a teacher or close relative has the right to touch him or her in a way that feels uncomfortable, and that it's okay to say no, get away, and tell a trusted adult.
4. Don't force kids to kiss or hug or sit on a grown-ups lap if they don't want to. This gives them control and teaches them that they have the right to refuse.
5. Always know where your child is and who he or she is with.
6. Tell your child to stay away from strangers who hang around playgrounds, public restrooms and schools.
7. Be alert for changes in your child's behavior that could signal sexual abuse such as sudden secretiveness, withdrawal from activities, refusal to go to school, unexpected hostility toward a favorite baby-sitter or relative, or increased anxiety. Some physical signs of abuse include bed-wetting, loss of appetite, venereal disease, nightmares, and complaints of pain or irritation around the genitals.
8. If your child is a victim of any crime, from stolen lunch money to sexual abuse, don't blame him or her. Listen and offer sympathy.

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