



## Supporting Your Child/Youth Following Children's Center Assessment

1. Take cues from your child for planning the rest of the day. The assessment may take several hours and can bring up uncomfortable memories. Your child may need extra support and time with you. Some children are ready to return to school, others are not.
2. Following the assessment, tell your child:
  - You're proud of him/her for coming to Children's Center
  - You're not going to ask questions
  - But you can handle anything s/he wants to tell you and s/he will not be in trouble
3. Do not ask your child a lot of detailed questions. While it can be difficult not to know details, it is more supportive if you let your child tell you in his/her own time and own way.
4. Remember that disclosure is usually a process, not a one-time event. Therefore, your child may have things to say on the way home or soon after the assessment. S/he may "test the waters" to determine what you can handle hearing.
5. If your child initiates and wants to talk to you about abuse concerns, deliberately remain calm and say:
  - "I'm glad you told/talked to me;"
  - "I'm proud of you."
  - "I love you."
  - "I believe you."
  - "It wasn't your fault."
  - "I feel sad/angry that this happened to you."
  - "I will work to keep you safe; I will take care of you."
  - Do not ask your child why s/he didn't tell sooner because that can cause guilt (children have good reasons why they didn't tell).
  - Do not ask a lot of questions. It is okay to ask: "Is there anything else you want me to know?"
  - Do not urge your child to forget about the abuse.
  - Do not talk about details of your own abuse history; this can be overwhelming for your child.
  - Do not alert the suspect
  - Do write down the entire conversation, capturing your child's words as closely as possible.
  - Do call the Child Abuse Hotline at 971-673-7112 or your caseworker, law enforcement, or your child's therapist right away.
  - Do work to keep your child safe from further abuse.
6. Follow Children's Center recommendations, including setting up a mental health assessment to determine your child's counseling/therapy needs, if this is recommended. Your Family Support Specialist can provide referrals for you.





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6. Contact Children's Center for any questions about the assessment or how to support your child toward healing. Contact law enforcement and/or DHS Child Welfare for updates regarding the investigation.
7. Get support for yourself. See Children's Center handouts on this topic in your caregiver packet. Consider setting up counseling for yourself. Your Family Support Specialist can provide support and referrals for you.

Last updated 1.2019

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