



**RESPONDING
SENSITIVELY
TO
DISCLOSURE**

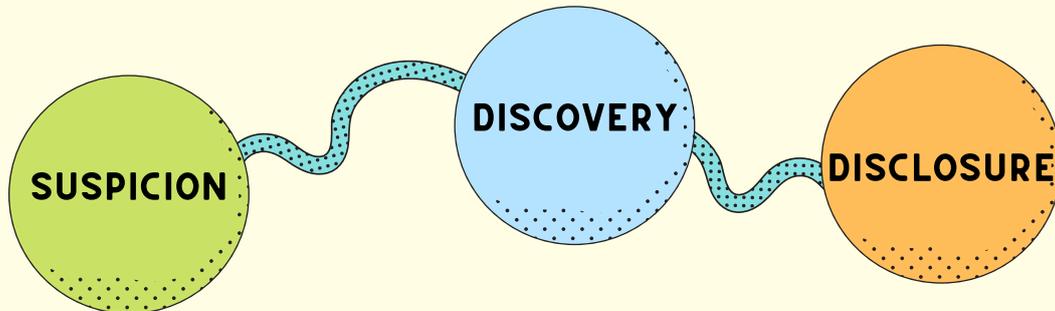


**CIRCLES OF
SAFETY**

DID YOU KNOW?

Most children never disclose abuse. A large-scale study found that 61% of the CSA-related cases were identified through accidental and eyewitness detection, while less than one third were purposeful disclosures initiated by the child victim.

There are three ways to learn if your child is a victim of sexual abuse:



You may witness some red flag behaviours exhibited by an adult (spending a lot of alone time with the child, giving special gifts) or an older child (showed pornography).

You witness a boundary violation. It could also be online- finding naked photos of children, inappropriate conversations with adults.

The child reveals that they have been victimised.

Acting on the suspicion and discovery can lead to disclosure.

YOUR REACTION MAKES A DIFFERENCE, SO MAKE IT COUNT

You learn that the child has been victimised. Here are some suggestions to respond sensitively:

- **Remain calm**- Don't get angry or overreact, you may cause them to feel more anxious and withhold information.
- **Listen actively**- Allow them to speak as per their comfort. Don't probe them for details.
- **Be compassionate and praise your child**- "I am glad you told me, This was not your fault, I admire your courage, it's not easy to talk about this."
- **Reassure and support the child**- "I believe you. Now, I will take care of this. You are safe."
- **Don't minimise the child's feelings**- "Why didn't you say no? Maybe he didn't intend to..."
- **Don't confront the abuser or threaten any harm**- It can discourage the child from disclosing any further details especially if the abuser is someone they cared about.
- **Maintain confidentiality**- Try not to discuss the disclosure with others who are not directly linked to keeping the child safe.
- **Never pressure the child to adjust, forgive or forget**- It hinders the child's ability to heal, and enables the perpetrator to continue their destructive behaviour.
- **Take action and report**- It could save a child's life. Contact Childline Helpline 1098; NCPCR Helpline 9868235077 or report using the E-POCSO inbox on the NCPCR website (<https://ncpcr.gov.in/index2.php>); SAMVEDNA (Tele-counselling helpline)- 18001212830.

SUPPORT

RESPONDING SENSITIVELY
TO DISCLOSURE

BE AN
ACTIVE
LISTENER

"I BELIEVE
YOU"

PRAISE
YOUR CHILD

USE SAFE
LANGUAGE

MAINTAIN
CONFIDENTIALITY

DONT
PROBE FOR
DETAILS

DON'T ASK
TO FORGIVE,
FORGET OR
ADJUST

"I ADMIRE
YOUR
COURAGE"

TAKE
ACTION &
REPORT

DONT
MINIMISE
THEIR
FEELINGS

DON'T BE
ASHAMED

"When people ask me about what made the biggest difference in my healing, I tell them that I was believed and tremendously loved. I never felt blamed or shamed into silence." — Aishah Shahidah Simmons



ABOUT CIRCLES OF SAFETY

Circles of Safety (CoS) sensitises the community on prevention of child sexual abuse through education. We seek to cultivate a change in culture in which adults are no longer uncomfortable or afraid when discussing sexuality and related topics, but instead, acknowledge that no topic is too taboo or cumbersome when the safety of our children is at stake.



www.circlesofsafety.com

TAKE THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS PREVENTING CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE

- **Ask for a private consultation**
- **Organise a workshop for adults**
- **Implement the Circles of Safety student curriculum for 1-12 graders**



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