



## Taking Charge



**How People with Developmental Disabilities Can Reduce Their Risk for Sexual Abuse**

**FLORIDA COUNCIL AGAINST SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

### ■ It's Not Your Fault

If someone has touched your body or had sex with you when you didn't want them to it is not your fault. It is the person who hurt you that did something wrong, not you.

### ■ You Might Have a Lot of Different Feelings if Someone Hurts You

Everybody feels different after being touched or hurt in bad ways. It is normal and okay to have lots of feelings. It can hurt in a lot of ways that don't show on the outside.



### ■ It is Okay to Tell

There are laws to protect you. You don't have to suffer alone. It is okay to tell someone what happened to you even if the person who abused you told you not to.

Dial the Statewide Hotline at

**1-888-956-7273**

to Get Help



Florida Council Against Sexual Violence  
1820 E. Park Avenue, Suite 100  
Tallahassee, FL 32301  
850-297-2000  
[www.fcasv.org](http://www.fcasv.org)

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## ■ What is Sexual Abuse?

Sexual abuse is another way that some people abuse or hurt other people. Most people do not like to talk about or think about sexual abuse—and that is part of the problem.

- Sexual abuse is when a person looks at, takes pictures, or touches you on your private body parts without your permission
- Sexual abuse is when someone forces you to touch them on their private body parts without your permission
- Private body parts are: breasts, vagina, penis, anus, buttocks and mouth
- Sexual abuse is sometimes called rape or sexual violence



## ■ Reducing Your Risk for Sexual Abuse

### **RULE #1: Your Body Belongs to You**

- Your entire body is private
- Ask the people who help you to get your permission before they touch your body. This is the respectful thing to do
- No one should ever have sex with you or touch your private body parts unless you say “yes”

### **RULE #2: Trust Yourself**

Pay attention to how you are feeling. Trust yourself if someone is making you feel uncomfortable, confused, scared, bad or sad. You need to protect yourself. You do not need to worry about the other person’s feelings.

### **RULE #3: It is Your Right to Say “No”**

There are many ways you can be sexually abused. Remember, you have the right to say “No.”

- Say “No” when someone touches you in a way that hurts, that you do not like, or you do not understand
- Say “No” when someone asks you to take off your clothes so they can look at you or touch you
- Say “No” when someone tells you to touch them or another person on their private body parts and you don’t want to
- Say “No” when someone wants to take naked pictures of you

## ■ If You Have Been Abused, Talk to Someone You Trust

People can help you to start to feel better if you tell them what happened. Ideas for people to talk to include a friend or family member that you trust, a doctor or nurse, a police officer or an advocate.

## ■ Caring People Want to Help You

Advocates are caring people you can talk to by phone or in person. Their help is free during the day and night. To find someone in your area to talk to, you can call this Hotline number for free:

**1-888-956-7273**

