

Resources for Victims of Abuse

No one deserves to be abused. Unfortunately some individuals have experienced verbal, emotional, and/or physical abuse in their current or past relationships. Abuse happens in all social classes, neighborhoods, and professions. Below contains resources for those that are experiencing abuse as well as for those looking to support others or help prevent abuse.

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Community and Online Resources for those Experiencing Abuse

Many resources are available to you like support groups, counseling, shelters, print material, and confidential phone support.

- Call Encompass Christian Counseling: 330-595-2039
- Call Gentle Shepherd Counseling: 330-499-3065
- Crisis Hotline: 330-452-1111 (confidential, live counseling for sexual assault survivors)
- Crisis Text Line: Text 4hope to 741741 for 24-hour, confidential support from trained counselors
- Domestic Violence Crisis Line: 330-453-7233
- Stark County Crisis Line: 330-452-6000
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-8255 - Available 24 hours
- National Domestic Violence Hotline:
 - 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) - Available 24 hours
 - TTY: 1-800-787-3224 - Available 24 hours
- [Haven](#): A comprehensive list of what to do if you've been abused or assaulted and has a list of local organizations and numbers to provide further services.
- [Godly Response to Abuse in the Christian Environment](#): GRACE helps Christian ministries recognize, prevent, and respond to abuse in its various forms. This website is a rich resource of videos and articles for anyone looking for biblical answers on sexual, emotional, verbal, and/or physical abuse.
- [Freedom for the Captives](#): This ministry was created to help protect children from abuse in addition to empowering abuse survivors. Filled with Scripture and free resources, Freedom for the Captives is a wonderful place for congregations to learn about how to make their churches safe places for every child to worship Jesus.

Resources and Care at First Christian

- [REMEDY Groups](#): REMEDY is a 13-week experience for those needing hope and healing from addictions, sexual brokenness, mental health and more. If you have or are currently walking through a difficult season in life, REMEDY Groups can provide a safe place to find Jesus-centered community and pursue healing in Christ from sin and suffering. Applications are required. Register by March 15 at 5pm. To start the process, please register [HERE](#).
- Visit our [Care Page](#) to submit prayer requests, learn about counseling services, or get in touch with our pastor-on-call. If it is an emergency, please call 911.
- Ministry Safe Parent Training
 - Parent Training equips parents with a basic understanding and awareness of child sexual abuse risk and the *grooming process* of the abuser.
 - [Register today](#) for just \$2.

To Help Care for those who have Survived Abuse:

When helping pray through and guide others' discovery process in areas of deep or destructive sins perpetrated BY or AGAINST others, keep these four keys in mind:

PRACTICE

- Discernment: Listen to other's stories and the Holy Spirit through prayer as you consider how to best lead/respond
- Discretion: Understand that privacy, confidentiality and safety are what allow others to share. Be sure to protect this when offering help.
 - *NOTE: It should be clarified that confidentiality may not apply to active abuse situations or situations where danger is ongoing.*
- Discipling: No story is finished, so continue to see each person as a disciple, in process and pray for insight on how to challenge them toward their Next Step.
- Discipline: On occasion, some may need biblical intervention for ongoing sin, unrepentance or risk to self/others.
 - *If necessary, practice referral and/or contact professional help to help address issues that go beyond your expertise or capacity.*

DON'T

- Rush to rescue, rationalize or replace THEIR experience with YOURS
- Touch or talk without asking permission
- Promise to keep confidential if person indicates they are presently at risk of harm to themselves or others
- Hesitate to refer to a clinical mental health professional, pastor or emergency provider

Books (Also available as an audiobook on the North Canton Public Library app - Libby):

- [*Healing Together: A Guide to Support Sexual Abuse Survivors*](#) by Anne Marie Miller
- [*We Too: How the Church Can Respond Redemptively to the Sexual Abuse Crisis*](#) by Mary DeMuth

Recommended Readings

- [*Building Bridges of Hope*](#) by Sue Badeau
- [*Rid of My Disgrace: Hope and Healing for Victims of Sexual Assault*](#) by Justin and Lindsey Holcomb
- [*On the Threshold of Hope: Opening the Door to Healing for Survivors of Sexual Abuse*](#) by Diane Mandt Langberg, PhD
- [*Making All Things New*](#) by David Pawlison
- [*The Body Keeps Score*](#) by Bessel Van der Kolk MD
- [*What Happened to You?*](#) by Bruce D. Perry
- [*Spirit and Trauma*](#) by Shelly Rambo
- [*My Grandmother's Hands*](#) by Resmaa Menakem
- [*Mending the Soul*](#) by Mending the Soul Ministries
- [*Healing the Wounds of Trauma*](#) by Healing Trauma Institute

*For a Comprehensive List, [click here](#).

Questions to Help Recognize Abuse

How Safe Is Your Relationship? The following checklist will help you determine if you are in an intimate partner abusive relationship.

1. Do you accept blame for everything that goes wrong in the relationship/family?
2. Do you "walk on eggshells", watch what and how you use words, avoid concerns, not knowing how your partner will react?
3. Do you constantly try to get your partner's approval, turning yourself inside out trying to meet their ever- changing demands?
4. Have you given up interests, activities, family or friends that once were important to you to appease or avoid his anger?
5. Is your life based on trying to please your partner so as to avoid his/her wrath, anger, disapproval, or ridicule?
6. Have you let go of or stopped expressing your opinions, needs, attitudes, hopes, and dreams because the arguments or put-downs aren't worth the pain?
7. Is your partner relentlessly critical of you, always finding fault?
8. Is your spouse jealous, suspicious, or possessive of whom you see, talk to, go out with, or spend time with?
9. Does your spouse blame you or other people for all his failures and shortcomings?
10. Does your spouse say you are too sensitive, or overreacting if you get upset when he attacks you?
11. Do you constantly tell the children to be careful or quiet so they won't get upset and get in the way of another caregiver or family member in the home?
12. Are you ignored, punished with silence, walked away from, or do they refuse to talk to you, pulling away for hours or days? Then, suddenly act like nothing happened and don't want to talk about "it?"
13. Have you been pushed, thrown down, bumped, slapped, hit, or otherwise painfully touched by your partner?
14. Are you intimidated/controlled by objects thrown, slammed door/drawers, gestures, or postures and threats by your partner?
15. Does your partner constantly criticize family/friends, to the point that you are becoming increasingly isolated to avoid the negative disapproval?
16. Is your partner charming in public but without warning launches into a tirade when alone, making you feel crazy?
17. Does your partner belittle your accomplishments, your sexuality, feelings or needs, or your parenting, spiritual life or spousal role?
18. Are you the only one who sees the hurtful, angry side of your spouse and don't think anyone will believe you?
19. Does your partner withhold money, spend irresponsibly, run up credit card debt, without your knowledge and leave you to deal with the creditors and shortage of essentials, like food?

If you answered "yes" to seven or more of these questions, you and your marriage are at risk. God grieves in the midst of the pain that abuse brings—there is hope for change!

Family Resources

Child Sexual Abuse Statistics (from Body Safety Education by Jayneen Sanders):

- Approximately 20% of girls, 8% of boys will experience sexual abuse before their 18th birthday
- In approximately 85% of cases the child will know their offender
- 84% of sexual victimization of children under 12 occurs in a residence
- 453 pedophiles revealed they were collectively responsible for the molestation of over 67,000 children; that averages 148 children per individual
- The most vulnerable age for children to be exposed to sexual assault is between the ages of 3 and 8 years with the majority of onset happening between these ages
- 20% of women had experienced childhood sexual abuse, with the age of abuse being under the age of 12 years for 71% of these women
- In 98% of child abuse cases reported to officials, children's statements were found to be true
- 1 in 3 Australians would not believe a child if they disclosed sexual abuse
- 73% of child victims do not tell anyone about the abuse for at least 1 year. 45% do not tell anyone for 5 years. Some never disclose.

How to Talk to your Children | Family Discussion Guide

Consider and Discuss:

Dr. Gene Beresin, a child psychiatrist at Massachusetts General Hospital's Clay Center for Young Healthy Minds makes a number of important points about how to address concerns raised by troubling behavior on the part of leaders. The guiding principle is to stay away from discussion about details of another's personal life and, instead, focus on how the behaviors our children have been exposed to may raise questions in their mind. Conversations with children on this range of behaviors from supposed role models must begin with understanding how the child or student is processing the information they may see online, in the community or in discussions around the dinner table.

Here are a few initial questions that we recommend you use to trigger a productive discussion and to calmly ask these questions:

1. What have you seen? What have you heard?
2. What are you struggling with? What do you think about this?

3. How does it make you feel? What questions do you have?
4. Is there someone you want to talk to about it?
5. Where do you currently feel the biggest need personally? Spiritually, Emotionally? Physically?
6. Where do you see or sense the need elsewhere?

NOTE: This discussion might lead to exploring what similar behaviors they might have seen in friends, family, or acquaintances at home or in school. Parents can engage their children in discussion of how, in their dealing with similar challenges in their own life, they can find more effective alternatives in trying to achieve their goals. Parents should keep in mind that such conversations are not a one-shot event, but a process that ideally can become an important tool in shaping our children's moral development.

Books for kids/families:

- [God Made All of Me](#) by Justin and Lindsey Halcomb (recommended by GRACE)
- [A Terrible Thing Happened](#) by Margaret Holmes (this is also a good childrens' book for children who have witnessed abuse)
- [No Means No](#) by Jayneen Sanders
- [Some Secrets Should Never Be Kept](#) by Jayneen Sanders
- [My Body! What I Say Goes!](#) by Jayneen Sanders
- [Let's Talk About Body Boundaries, Consent & Respect](#) by Jayneen Sanders
- [Body Safety Education \(Parent Guide with Worksheets for Kids\)](#) by Jayneen Sanders