

Conifer Counseling Informational Page

A Child Reports Sexual Abuse, Now What?

DO:

- Reassure them they are not in trouble
- Bring them to a safe and private place
- Validate any feelings they express having (e.g. fear, anxiety, etc)
- Call the Colorado Child Abuse Hotline at [\(844\)264-5437](tel:(844)264-5437)
- Understand children recant, even when they told the truth
- Manage your feelings so the child doesn't feel responsible for making sure you are okay or shut down because they don't want to make anyone upset
- Talk to a counselor or other professionals about how this report impacted you

DON'T:

- Question or interrogate the child
- Ask if they are telling the truth/question their honesty
- Express disbelief
- Assume it didn't happen because you trust the adult
- Confront the adult
- Talk to anyone other than authorities or a counselor about the report
- Question other children you think may have been victimized
- Tell the child how they feel or should feel
- Express anger at the perpetrator

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