

WHAT CAN YOU DO NOW?

- *Most sexual assault crimes can be reported to law enforcement even many years later. If you wish to report to law enforcement, contact them to find out the statute of limitations.*
- *Working with law enforcement is not for everyone. Some people would rather seek justice through personal healing.*
- *Visit www.lafasa.org to find free, individual and group counseling options in your area.*
- *Oftentimes survivors make the best advocates in their communities. Some people find speaking out, doing community-based prevention, or working with survivors empowering. It is hard work, however and can be triggering to some. Contact a sexual assault center in your area to find out ways you can advocate for change and help other survivors.*

LaFASA

*Louisiana Foundation
Against Sexual Assault*

Sexual Assault Crisis Centers provide a 24-hour crisis hotline, information and referral, free counseling and more!

www.lafasa.org

MAIN 225.372.8995
HELPLINE 888.995.7273

2133 Silverside Drive, Ste. A
Baton Rouge, LA 70808



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LaFASA

Adult Survivors of
CHILDHOOD
SEXUAL ABUSE

WHAT IS CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE?

The term “childhood sexual abuse” includes a variety of behaviors that can seriously harm and traumatize children. Childhood sexual abuse includes any sexual behaviors between an adult and child under 13, as well as abuse of older adolescents by older adults and teens. What all forms of sexual abuse have in common is that they are about *power and control*. The abuser is often a trusted person in an authority position. Ninety-three percent (93%) of perpetrators are someone the child knows.

Abusers often target children who they see as most vulnerable. Abusers use grooming techniques, such as gifts, compliments, and special treatment to build trust with the child, and to make them feel responsible for the abuse.

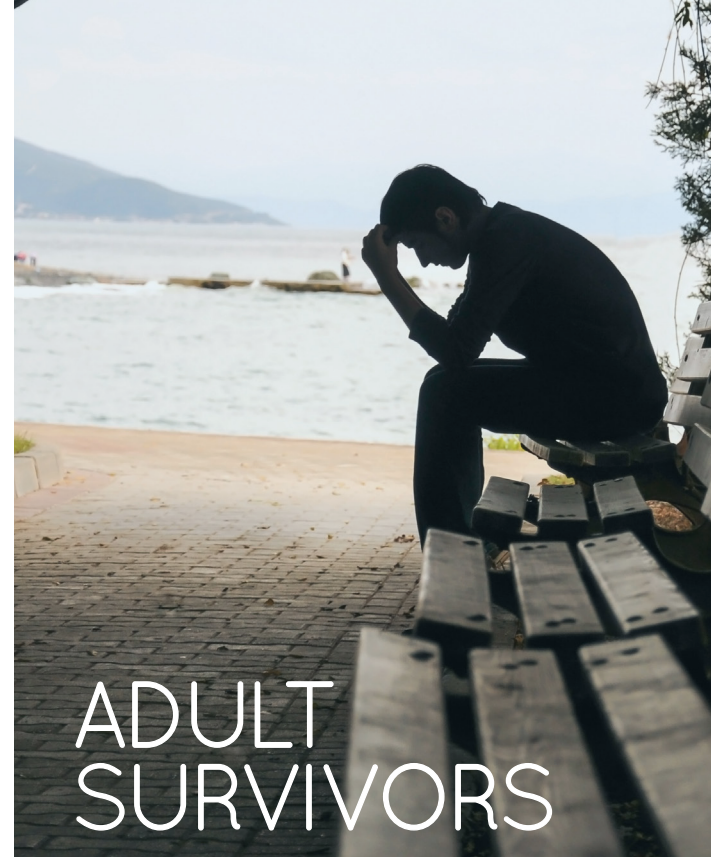
Survivors often feel self-blame, and may not come forward to authorities or their families for years. Sexual abuse is the most underreported crime, and we know that the majority of survivors do not report in a timely manner. That does not mean that the abuse did not happen or that it was not severe.

Statistics show 44% of sexual assault victims are under the age of 18.

Betrayal by Systems

Sometimes the people and institutions who are supposed to protect and support children after sexual abuse end up hurting them. Many family members, schools, churches, or agencies don't take children's disclosures of abuse seriously, blame them or punish them. We call this retraumatization, and for some survivors it can have as much or more of an impact on them than the sexual abuse itself. Survivors may not trust systems such as law enforcement, child protection, hospitals, or schools. They may feel alienated from their unsupportive family members, sending them deeper into their feelings of isolation, shame, and blame. This is why it is important for all people, especially parents and first responders, to be supportive and believe victims. Sexual abuse is never a child's fault. We must believe survivors.

Call the LaFASA helpline for 24/7, free and confidential support and information services. 888-995-7273



ADULT SURVIVORS

Adult survivors of childhood sexual abuse may experience the following:

- Mental health challenges
- PTSD
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Suicidal thoughts
- Substance abuse
- Emotional problems
- Self-blame
- Feelings of worthlessness
- Questioning your faith
- Disassociation
- Physical health
- Reproductive health issues
- STI's
- Gastrointestinal issues
- Chronic pain
- Relationship problems
- Fear of sex / Issues around sex and sexuality
- Lack of trust
- Social isolation
- Codependency

These effects are *not* inevitable. Getting support from professionals and loved ones can help.