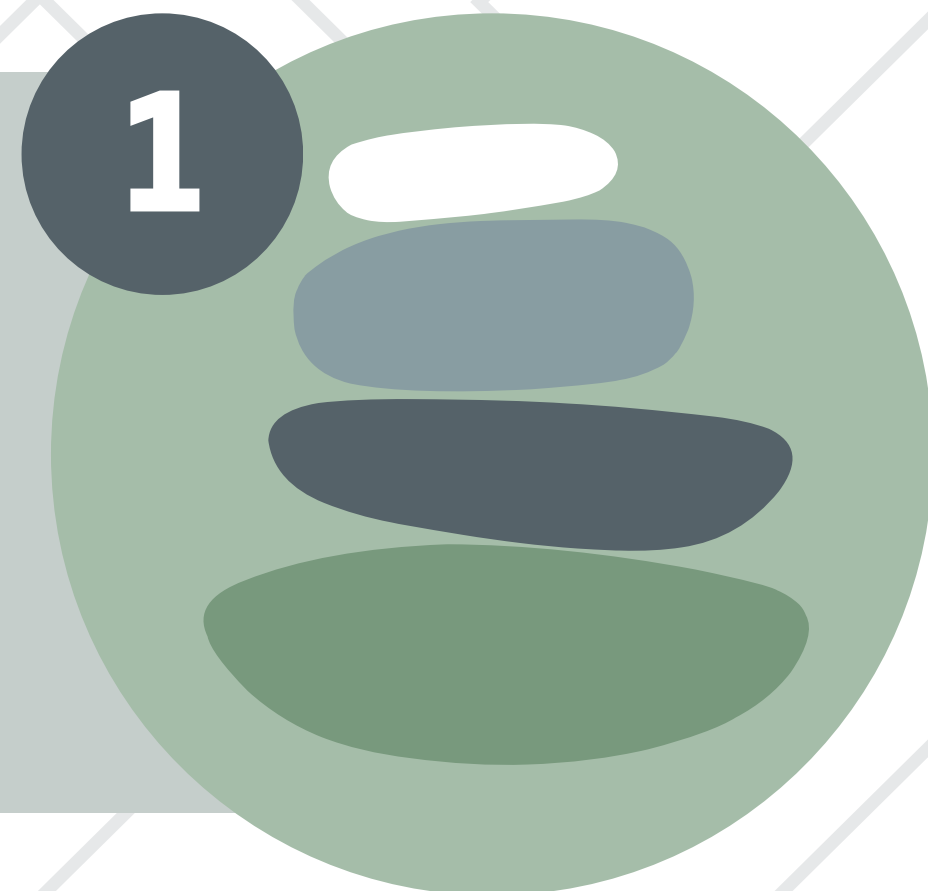


# A CHILD DISCLOSED ABUSE, NOW WHAT?



## Remain Calm

Don't express panic or shock or be overly critical of the offender. Children are protective of people they care about, even if they are being abused. Reassure the child did the right thing by telling you.

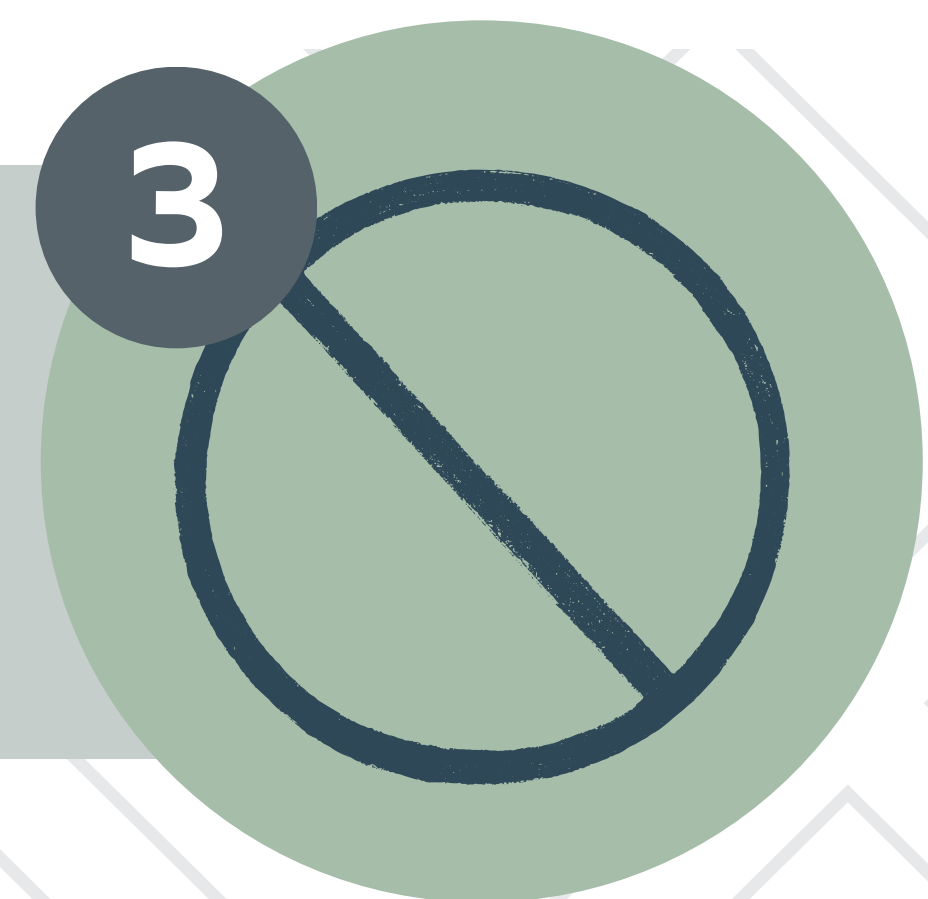


## Be a Listener, Not an Investigator

Only collect information such as the child's name and any details the child willingly discloses so you can relay it to DCFS/law enforcement. Do NOT ask leading or probing questions. By prodding for more details or asking direct questions, you risk harming an investigation or further traumatizing the child

## Do NOT Make Promises You Can't Keep

If the child asks you not to tell anyone, remind the child that it is your job to help keep him or her safe and you will do whatever you may need to do to keep him or her safe.



## Believe and Thank the Child

Children rarely lie about sexual abuse. Thank the child for having the courage to report this to you.

## Report the Abuse ASAP

Call the DCFS hotline at 800-252-2873 to report the abuse. Do NOT discuss the details with anybody who doesn't need to know. This betrays the child. Only share information with those you must tell in order to keep the child safe.

