



Stop It Now!®

Together We Can Prevent the Sexual Abuse of Children

About Stop It Now!

Stop It Now! believes that all adults must accept the responsibility to recognize, acknowledge and confront the behaviors that lead to the sexual abuse of children. We offer adults tools they can use to prevent sexual abuse – before there's a victim to heal or an offender to punish. In collaboration with our network of community-based Stop It Now! programs, we reach out to adults who are concerned about their own or others' sexualized behavior toward children.

About the Stop It Now! Helpline

If you need additional resources and support, call the Stop It Now! Helpline (1.888.PREVENT), available Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm Eastern time. For more than 10 years, our national toll-free Helpline has provided thousands of adults a unique outlet to confidentially voice their concerns. The Helpline offers callers the support, information and resources they need to help keep children safe, and to create healthier families and communities.

For more information, contact Stop It Now! at:

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The Gift of Safety Reflections on Father's Day

By Peter Pollard
Public Education Director



Once a year, on Father's Day, men are invited to pause—to acknowledge the deep emotional connection between father and child, to honor the often hidden capacity men have to be nurturing parents, and to consider how best to mend the fabric when relationships have gone awry.

For many fathers, a child's expectation of safety is considered the most sacred trust a parent holds.

What better time than Father's Day to think about the special role men can play in preventing child sexual abuse?

As fathers, as men, we are the models that boys and girls constantly and carefully observe to learn how men are supposed to behave in the world, how they should act as adults and how they can expect to be treated. What they see establishes the pattern for the next generation.

Ironically, great opportunity exists in the sad fact that men and boys are responsible for the lion's share of all sexual abuse. That fact offers men, especially fathers, an important choice.

We can defensively dismiss the information as a broad, unfair indictment of men and move on. Or instead, we can muster the courage, real courage, to identify and change common attitudes and behaviors that both sexualize children and elevate sexual gratification for men to the status of a right. That combination sets children up for abuse.

Fortunately, the path to prevention is fairly straightforward.

First, let's clarify some simple points.

- Preventing sexual abuse is about preventing abusive behavior, not just sexual behavior.
- Abuse is defined by lack of consent for an interaction.
- True consent can't be given if a significant power imbalance exists.
- Children can never legally give consent for a sexual act with an adult or with a more powerful child.
- Adults have the power and responsibility to make sure that everyone understands and honors these standards.

So at its heart, preventing sexual abuse involves teaching, modeling, and insisting on respectful use of power. That's a challenge fathers and men are well suited to take on.

By encouraging our peers with our own words and actions to embrace those standards, by refusing to support entertainers and media that violate those standards, by demonstrating that we firmly respect others' right to privacy and control over their own bodies, men can make the world safer for all children.



These are prevention activities we all can do every day to nurture and protect those who depend on us for safety.

And isn't safety the best gift fathers can give to show love for their children?

Stop It Now! has a wide range of resources on its website (www.stopitnow.org) including:

- Answers to [commonly asked questions](#) about child sexual abuse.
- Checklists of [warning sign behaviors](#) in an adult or child you care about.
- Tips and strategies for having difficult conversations with other adults contained in our [Let's Talk guide](#). We know that talking about child sexual abuse is already hard – and it's even more difficult when you care about all of the people involved.
- Accurate information on [sexual abuse between children](#).

You Can Help Stop Child Sexual Abuse

Stop It Now! is an independent, national non-profit organization that depends on the commitment and support of courageous individuals and organizations.

To find out more about what you can do to help prevent child sexual abuse - and to make a financial contribution - visit [Stop It Now!](#) online at www.stopitnow.org.