

Child Victimization

***Provided by the Fairfield County Prosecuting Attorney's Office – Kyle Witt
Office of the Victim Assistance Division***

Children are very vulnerable to crime and unfortunately, they sometimes become victims. Teens become victims more than any age group. Children experience the same crimes as adults, from robbery, sexual assaults, car theft, relationship violence, assaults and even stalking. How you as an adult respond can make a difference on how the child copes with and recovers from the victimization.

Some behaviors to watch for, especially in teens:

- Change in eating or sleep habits
- Acting out
- Attention seeking
- Risk taking
- Decreased school performance or attendance
- Fear of attending school
- Withdrawal of peers
- Nightmares
- Anger
- Hopeless and helplessness
- Difficulties in concentration
- Depression or Anxiety
- Mood swings
- Clinginess
- Other rapid behavior changes

Things TO say:

- I'm glad you told me
- I'm proud of you
- Nothing you did or didn't do makes you deserve this.
- This happens to other people too.
- I'm sorry this happened to you.
- I believe you.
- I'll support your decisions.

Things NOT to say:

- Get over it
- This wouldn't have happened if you hadn't.....
- I told you not to go....
- Just forget it even happened.
- Try not to think about it.
- This is my fault.
- I want to kill the person who hurt you.

Things to Remember:

- Remain Calm in front of your child.
- Child will be aware of your reactions.
- Focus on what your child needs
- Avoid being judgmental
- Give child time to process what happened.
- Just listen don't try to have answers for everything.
- Report to school authorities or law enforcement
- Access mental and medical services