

Green Bear Guidelines

Mental Health Safety



Mental Health Facts

- Some of the first seen and most serious consequences of child sexual abuse are emotional and mental health changes.
- These changes can lead to disturbances in normal development, missing school, and poor grades.
- Problems from adolescence leading to adulthood for child victims of sexual abuse include substance abuse, suicidal ideations/attempts, depression, and mental health disorders.

How Does Sexual Abuse Effect Mental Health . . .

Post-traumatic Stress Children who have suffered sexual abuse have difficulties determining the difference between safe and traumatic situations they have endured. They can have difficulty sleeping and become easily angered or startled by noises. Older children may isolate themselves or abuse substances such as drugs or alcohol.

Emotional Changes Sexual abuse interferes with emotional maturity. Abused children may have difficulty managing feelings and emotions.

Self-destructive behavior If not addressed, difficulty handling emotions can lead to self-destructive behaviors like substance abuse, depression, and thoughts/attempts of suicide.

Healing

- Your child needs to know they will always have your love and support
- Normalize activities by returning to a child's daily routine - reconnect with friends, encourage activity, participate in events.
- The best chance for healing is therapy. There are many different types of therapies for children including trauma-focused therapy, pet therapy, play therapy, and many others. To schedule a session or request a referral, contact SEMO-NASV at 573.332.1900.

