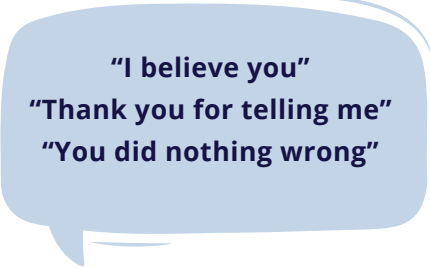
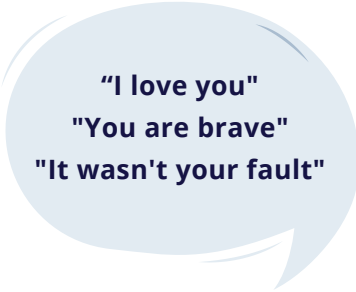


# For Parents/Guardians

As a parent/guardian, it can be difficult to know where to start. Many share the fear of not knowing the “right” thing to say. Statements that validate and support are always a safe place to start and can remind your child that they are **loved, heard, and safe.**



“I believe you”  
“Thank you for telling me”  
“You did nothing wrong”



“I love you”  
“You are brave”  
“It wasn't your fault”

## Encourage your child to talk/ask questions.

If they feel they may upset you, let them know it's okay to tell you about all their feelings, even the bad ones.

## Reinforce positives.

Remind your child of their strengths.

## Take care of yourself.

Remember to practice self-care so you can continue to support your child. It is okay to seek counseling or support for yourself.

## It's okay if you don't have all the answers.

Reassure your child that whatever happens next, you will face it together.

## Be mindful of what you say around your child.

A statement made from frustration or your own personal thoughts, can be harmful (ex: his/her life is ruined, etc.).

## Reassure them they did nothing wrong.

Many tend to blame themselves for what happened. If your child feels responsible, reassure them it was not their fault.

# Common Reactions

It can be difficult to talk with your child about how they are feeling after being victimized. Youth can have a variety of reactions and often act out their feelings rather than talking about them.

## Physical

Head or stomach aches, sleep disturbances, changes in appetite, inability to focus, weight gain or loss

## Emotional

Sadness, depression, outbursts, fearfulness, mood swings, anxiety, suicidal thoughts

## Behavioral

Sudden behavioral changes, increased irritability, increased or a change in risk taking behaviors (alcohol or drug use, self-harming behaviors, talking to strangers online, sexting), reverting to behaviors they have outgrown (ex: bedwetting)

**Help is available.** If your child is having thoughts of hurting themselves or someone else, seek evaluation at the nearest emergency room or call 9-1-1.

# Online Safety

Protecting children online is about creating and maintaining open lines of communication. Talk with your children about dangers and risks online, apps they use, and people they communicate with. Set family guidelines such as no-electronics zones (bathrooms and bedrooms after a certain time), know your child's account information (screen names, passwords, usernames), and have computers in common areas of the home.

To learn more about safety recommendations or resources, please visit our website at [ICAC.widj.gov](http://ICAC.widj.gov)