

The YMCA of Snohomish County commitment to abuse prevention.

We want all children and teens to be safe. Unfortunately, child abuse does exist, including physical, emotional, and sexual abuse and neglect.

FACT: Most abuse happens by people that youth know and trust. Abusers can be caretakers, friends, neighbors, activity leaders, parents, relatives, and even other youth.

FACT: While rare, every major youth-serving organization in the country has had incidents or allegations of abuse by a staff member, volunteer, or program participant.

We take these steps to keep your child safe:

- We thoroughly screen staff and volunteers, including completing criminal background checks.
- We train our staff in abuse prevention.
- We carefully supervise and monitor our programs.
- We teach children about appropriate and inappropriate touching through our personal safety talks.
- We have policies to limit circumstances in which staff and volunteers are alone with a child or teen where others cannot observe them.
- We have policies that limit staff contact with children and teens outside of the YMCA programs.

We believe that quality programs for youth require open, ongoing communication between families and staff.

It takes everyone's help to stop abuse.

If you have any questions or concerns about preventing abuse, contact your branch program director or executive director.

YMCA OF SNOHOMISH COUNTY

Everett Family YMCA & Big Brothers Big Sisters of Snohomish County
4730 Colby Ave | Everett, WA 98201
425 258 9211

Marysville Family YMCA
6420 60th Drive NE | Marysville, WA 98270
360 653 9622

Mill Creek Family YMCA
13723 Puget Park Dr. | Everett, WA 98208
425 337 0123

Monroe / Sky Valley Family YMCA
14033 Fryelands Blvd. | Monroe, WA 98272
360 805 1879

Mukilteo Family YMCA
10601 47th Place W. | Mukilteo, WA 98275
425 493 9622

Stanwood-Camano YMCA
7213 267th St. NW | Stanwood, WA 98292
360 629 9622

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Snohomish County
10520 19th Ave. NE, Ste. B | Everett, WA 98208
425 252 2227

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FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

KEEPING KIDS SAFE

An abuse prevention guide for families
YMCA OF SNOHOMISH COUNTY



Here's how we can work together to keep your child safe.

Talk to your child about his or her experiences in YMCA programs, school, sports, and other activities.

Drop in on your child's programs.

Trust your instincts. Don't wait to tell us if something seems "strange." Speak up!

Watch for warning signs of abuse:

- Unexplainable bruising or other physical markings.
- Disturbed sleeping or eating patterns.
- Abrupt changes in behavior
Anxiety, clinging, aggressiveness or withdrawal, depression.
- Fear of a certain person or place.
- Discomfort with physical contact.
- A child who abuses other children.

Listen and watch for signs of your child receiving special attention that other children or teens are not receiving including favors, treats, gifts, rides, increasing affection or time alone, particularly outside the activities of school, child care, and other activities.

Every once in a while, ask your child or teen these questions:

- Is anyone scaring or threatening you?
- Is anyone asking you to keep secrets?
- Has anyone said anything to you that made you feel bad?
- Is anyone touching you in a way that you don't like?

Encourage your child to tell you or another trusted adult if anything happens to him or her.

We encourage youth to tell and get help.

Personal safety talks are incorporated into our programs so that youth will learn skills that can help them avoid a potentially abusive situation.

We encourage children to tell an adult if someone is bothering them or touching them in a way they don't like. The main message is about respect, one of the YMCA's core values. Children and teens are taught to respect themselves and give respect to others.

The YMCA of Snohomish County Personal Safety Message

- I have a right to be safe.
- I deserve respect.
- My body belongs to me.
- If someone makes me feel uncomfortable, scared or hurt, or touches my private areas, I will yell "STOP" and **GO TELL** an adult who listens.

If you have any questions or would like to see the discussion materials, please feel free to contact your YMCA program director.

Read our staff Code of Conduct for Prevention of Abuse. If it's not posted at your YMCA, ask to see it. If someone breaks it, let us know immediately.



KNOW



SEE



RESPOND

Responding to a child or teen who discloses to you.

Your child or teen may share a past or current situation of abuse with you. Here is a good way to respond.

Stay calm. Avoid overreacting or expressing shock or outrage.

Listen. Allow him or her to talk freely. Be sensitive to vague disclosures.

Be supportive. Let your child know you believe him or her. Tell your child he or she was right to tell you. Express your love in words and gestures.

Assure your child the abuse was not his or her fault. Avoid questions that could make your child feel responsible, such as, "Why didn't you tell me before?"

Reassure your child that you will do everything you can to keep him or her safe.

Steps to take:

- If you think your child is physically injured, seek appropriate medical attention.
- If you see signs of distress, withdrawal, or acting out, consider counseling for your child.
- Talk to your YMCA program director for assistance.
- Talk to your YMCA human resources director at 425 374 5704.
- Call Child Protective Services (CPS) or the police to report any abuse.

Local CPS office numbers are:
1 866 END HARM or 1 866 363 4276