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Facts About Child Sexual Abuse

According to the Child Welfare League of America, Alaska consistently has one of top 5 rates of child abuse in the United States:

For every 1,000 children in Alaska, 42.2 were victims of abuse. That means that every year, approximately 8,000 children in Alaska are physically or sexually abused. This only represents reported cases that result in substantiation or indication of abuse. Numbers of unreported cases may be much higher.

Other Facts About Child Sexual Abuse:

It is not usually a violent act. It is more typically a gradual process of sexualizing (or grooming) the relationship between the child and abuser over time.

It is a violation of the child's very nature, which is to be vulnerable, curious, trusting, and dependent. Because trickery, manipulation, deceit, coercion, secrecy, threats, play, or bribery are part of child sexual abuse, a disruption to the child's normal development can occur and increase the risk of problems in childhood and adult life.

Child sexual abuse usually occurs without a witness. Often, there isn't outward physical evidence, so it can be difficult to detect.

Child sexual abuse does not impact all children in the same way.

Multiple episodes of sexual abuse are very common.

Even if a child was sexually abused only once, it was still a violation to that child.

Supportive adults and counseling for the child and family can help with coping and starting a healing process.

Ignoring, minimizing, denying, hoping it will go away, or not talking about it does not help a child cope, begin a healing process, and continue to develop in healthy ways.