Children with disabilities are 2-4 times more likely to be physically or sexually assaulted than their peers. The abuser is often times known by the child.

**WHAT IS ABUSE?**

**PHYSICAL ABUSE**
Non-accidental injury, including striking, kicking, beating, biting or any action that leads to physical injury

**NEGLECT**
Failure to provide for a child’s basic needs such as adequate guardianship, food, clothing, shelter, education, emotional comfort or medical care, whether done intentionally or unintentionally

**SEXUAL ABUSE**
Unwanted sexual activity, with perpetrator using force, or making threats, or taking advantage of victims

**WHAT IF YOU DISCOVER OR SUSPECT ABUSE?**
- Remain calm and listen carefully
- Praise the child for telling about the abuse
- Keep the conversation calm, relaxed, and casual
- Avoid pushing for information if the person does not want to talk
- Avoid asking “leading” questions (e.g., Did Mary hit you? Did your brother hurt you?) – instead, ask “You have a bruise on your face, can you tell me what happened?”
- Tell him/her that it is not their fault if someone hurt them and they are not in trouble
- If you suspect abuse, say that you care about his/her safety and want to know what is going on so you can make sure they are safe

Call the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services Childline at 1-800-932-0313.

If you need immediate assistance, call 911.

www.paaautism.org/BeSafe

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