



## **ACCESSIBILITY:**

To request this file in large print, please email [aoda@wcdsb.ca](mailto:aoda@wcdsb.ca) or call (519) 578-3660.

## **TIPS FOR SUPPORTING YOUTH MAKING A DISCLOSURE**

- Listen to the student and allow them to speak
- Stay calm and use a neutral tone with no urgency and where possible use the child's language and vocabulary (you do not want to frighten the child or interrupt the child)
- Be gentle, patient and non-judgmental throughout
- Highlight to the student it was important for them to tell you about what has happened  
assure them that they are not to blame for what has occurred
- Do not ask leading questions, for example gently ask, 'What happened next?' rather than 'Why?'
- Be patient and allow the child to talk at their own pace and in their own words
- Do not pressure the child into telling you more than they want to, they will be asked a lot of questions by other professionals and it is important not to force them to retell what has occurred multiple times
- Reassure the child that you believe them and that disclosing the matter was important for them to do
- Use verbal facilitators such as, 'I see', restate the child's previous statement, and use non-suggestive words of encouragement, designed to keep the child talking in an open-ended way ('what happened next?')
- Tell the child in age appropriate language you are required to report to the relevant authority to help stop the abuse, and explain the role of these authorities if appropriate (for a young child this may be as simple as saying 'I will need to talk to people to work out what to do next to help you')

[Excerpt from Government of Australia]