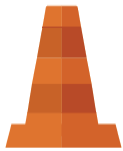


WHY IT'S TRICKY TO IDENTIFY



A perpetrator will try to keep the abuse a secret--and might manipulate the victim to keep the secret, too. The relationship might seem completely normal from an outsider's perspective.



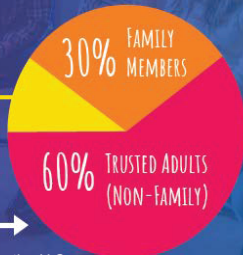
Some things that might be inappropriate in your home country may be culturally acceptable where you are hosted, and vice-versa. Be sure to talk with your host family and local contact person if you feel unsure about cultural norms.

"STRANGER DANGER" IS A MYTH.*

Only 10% of youth victims are sexually abused by a **stranger**.



Who else sexually abuses youth?



*Note: Statistics on prevalence of child sex abuse in the U.S.

AFS IS HERE FOR YOU!

Sexual abuse is never your fault!!!!

AFS has resources to help and support you on program.

Be sure to fill in your host family and local contact person's contact information below.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFO

Host family name & phone #:

Local contact person name & phone #:

24-hr Duty Officer phone #:

SPEAK UP IF YOU WITNESS OR SUSPECT SEXUAL ABUSE!

Report to AFS-USA Staff at
800-237-4636, extension 9.

YOUR BODY, YOUR SAFETY



**Intercultural
Programs USA**

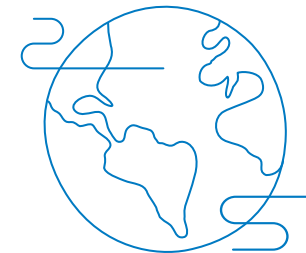
PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM SEXUAL ABUSE ABROAD

A collaborative effort by:

Rebecca Oswalt
AFS Manager of Participant Learning

Mia Oliveri
AFS Senior Participant Support Specialist

Emily Kawasaki
AFS Intercultural Learning Content Specialist



WHAT IS SEXUAL ABUSE

“**Sexual Abuse**” is sexual or romantic attention that is inappropriate or unwanted. Sometimes it may feel like a compliment, other times it may make you feel uncomfortable or even unsafe.

EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

Physical contact: When someone touches you and you feel uncomfortable and nervous. This includes touching, kissing, patting, massaging, pinching and brushing up against your body.

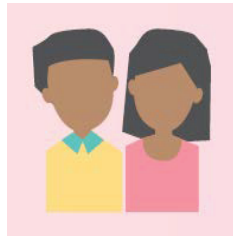
Verbal or written statements: When someone uses offensive or rude language or makes remarks that embarrass you. For example, the person may make direct statements that they would like to kiss or have sex with you. They might also make unwanted remarks about your body. Statements can be made in person, in writing, or electronically (email, texting, sexting, social media etc.)

Visual gestures and images: When someone shows you sexually explicit images, such as pornography. The person may also make gestures with their hands or body or look at you in a way that suggests a romantic or sexual intention.

AWARENESS OF CULTURAL NORMS HELPS ENSURE A GREAT AFS EXPERIENCE !!!

ADAPTING TO PERSONAL SPACE

AFS Participants must often adapt to different expectations for personal space. Failing to communicate preferences for personal space could lead to discomfort or misunderstandings.



EXAMPLE: If someone stood very close while talking to you, how might you feel? Without knowing the personal space norms in your host country, you might feel uncomfortable or even threatened.

TOUCHING AND GESTURES

Like physical space, physical touch and gestures can be interpreted differently across cultures. Be aware that some gestures and forms of physical contact are welcome in some cultures, but offensive in others.



EXAMPLE: If you gave someone a thumbs-up sign, how might they react? Without knowing the meaning of this gesture in your host country, you might make them feel embarrassed or offended.

HOW TO KEEP YOURSELF SAFE



Open Communication is necessary for your safety and well-being. If you experience any behavior that makes you

uncomfortable, don't assume that it'll stop. Be sure to tell an adult where you are going, especially if you are going alone – and always tell someone if something happens.



Trust your instincts if you feel unsafe. Remove yourself from the situation and tell a trusted person once you're in a safe space. Your body belongs to you, so speak up

if someone says or does something that makes you feel uncomfortable.



Be a friend to a friend. If you suspect that someone has experienced sexual abuse in any form, you should contact your local contact person or AFS

Support Staff immediately! It's every person's responsibility to report sexual abuse.