

5 Days of Action



ADULTS COMING TOGETHER TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL ABUSE

YMCAs promoting child protection during National Child Abuse Prevention Month

The Mississippi Gulf Coast YMCA is marking Child Abuse Prevention Month with Five Days of Action, April 22-26, 2019. Leading up to Healthy Kids Day®--a national initiative to improve the health and well-being of kids--Five Days of Action focuses on preventing child sexual abuse by sharing tips on how adults can prevent child sexual abuse.

During April and all year long, the Y encourages adults and organizations in the community to play a vital role in making the Mississippi Gulf Coast a safer place for children. This year's Five Days of Action theme is "Know. See. Respond." When adults know how abuse happens, see the warning signs, and respond quickly to prevent abuse, they foster a culture of child abuse prevention. Together, we can bring awareness to the issue of child sexual abuse in our communities and have important conversations around how we can all work together to prevent it from happening.

During the week of April 22nd, we will share information and resources with our members and the community on how to keep our children safe.

Information will be shared through a variety of methods such as email blasts, social media, and within our facilities. Please consider supporting the movement of child sexual abuse prevention by sharing the information with family and friends and participation in our daily calls to action.

The Five Days of Action is an initiative of the YMCA Guardians for Child Protection, with support from:



Day1



The Mississippi Gulf Coast YMCA and the YMCA Guardians for Child Protection, with support from the YMCA of the USA, Darkness to Light, the Redwoods Group Foundation, and Praesidium have made materials available to help adults learn more about preventing sexual abuse.

Join in on the Five Days of Action and help create a safer world for children with the three habits of sexual abuse prevention – KNOW.SEE.RESPOND. Head over to fivedaysofaction.org/pledge (<http://fivedaysofaction.org/pledge>) to sign the pledge and learn more.

Day 2: KNOW



KNOWing the facts about child sexual abuse can help you better understand what to look for and how to prevent abuse.

People who abuse children often become friendly with the potential victim and their families. Being vigilant lets the adults in your child's life know that you are watching.

Learn more at fivedaysofaction.org/pledge (<http://fivedaysofaction.org/pledge>) and tips on protecting kids

Day 3: SEE



Signs that a child is being sexually abused are often present, but they can be indistinguishable from other signs of child stress or trauma.

Offenders are often seen breaking rules and pressing boundaries. When we see boundaries being crossed, we must be an active bystander & take risks and stand up to other adults.

Learn more at fivedaysofaction.org/pledge (<http://fivedaysofaction.org/pledge>) and tips on protecting kids

Day 4: RESPOND



Offenders are rarely caught in the act of abusing a child, but they're often seen breaking the rules and pressing boundaries. If you suspect abuse, respond by reporting it.

Only 4 to 8% of child sexual abuse reports are false. The most important action you can take is to believe a child who discloses and report the appropriate authorities.

Learn more at fivedaysofaction.org/pledge (<http://fivedaysofaction.org/pledge>) and tips on protecting kids.

Day 5



A child who discloses abuse has taken a huge risk in telling you. Give attention, compassion, and belief. Be prepared to act.

When it comes to reporting abuse, it can be intimidating but it doesn't have to be! If you are prepared, you will know exactly when and how to respond. In our area, call the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services at

1-800-222-8000 or <https://www.mdcps.ms.gov/report-child-abuse-neglect/>

Learn more at fivedaysofaction.org/pledge (<http://fivedaysofaction.org/pledge>) and tips on protecting kids

During the week in our branches:

- ✓ We will ask members, staff, and volunteers to **sign a pledge to protect children**. We will display these signed pledges throughout our branches during the week to promote and emphasize the importance of community-based prevention.
- ✓ April 26th, 11:00am – 1:00pm: The Blossman Family YMCA, through a collaboration with the Gulf Coast Center for Nonviolence, will collect items for children entering shelters.
Requested items:
Undergarments (various sizes for boys and girls)
Socks
Kid's toothbrushes & toothpaste
Sketch pads/drawing supplies

By bringing awareness to the issue of child sexual abuse to your community, you are making a difference. By stepping up and speaking out against child sexual abuse, you are not only saving childhoods, but improving the lives of all of us.