



**rape and abuse
crisis center**

advocacy. counseling. education.

Feelings of Incest Survivors

FEAR

- Fear of the family being torn apart if they tell anyone. For example, there exists a fear that the abused child will be removed from the home and placed in foster care.
- Fear of the threats that were made and what would happen if they told anyone. For example, there exists a fear the offender may threaten to hurt another family member, the child, or family pets.
- Fear of no one believing them because they are children and the offender is older.
- Fear the offending family member may not love them anymore if they say no or resist.
- Fear that if they say no, the offender may abuse other siblings.
- Fear of others finding out and having shocked and negative reactions. This fear may cause many victims to isolate themselves from peers.

GUILT

- "If I tell someone and the offender is sent to jail, it will be my fault."
- "I should have known it wasn't okay and stopped it." Many children believe they should have known from the beginning that the abuse was wrong, even though no one ever told them about sexual abuse.
- "It must have been something I did to make this happen."
- Feeling guilty about experiencing anger toward the offender because s/he is a family member and something must have caused the abuse (i.e.: alcohol/drug use). *These are excuses, not causes.*

EMBARRASSMENT

- Many people have been brought up with the understanding that their bodies and sexual activities are private and not to be discussed. Telling anyone about the sexual abuse may be embarrassing and painful.
- Worried that others may find out and have a shocked and/or negative reaction.

ANGER

- Anger that they can't do anything about the situation.
- Anger that when/if they tell anyone about the abuse, they may not be believed.

24-hour Crisis Line (701)293-7273

www.raccfm.com

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F: Education/Revised Handouts/Feelings of Incest Survivors

- Anger at the offender because s/he said they cared about the child, but have instead, caused that child a great deal of pain.
- Anger at themselves for not being able to stop the abuse.

AFFECTION TOWARD OFFENDER

- Feelings of love and affection, along with the feelings of fear and anger toward the offending family member are normal.
- There are good times as well as bad times.