

Guilt

- Some children felt special when they were with the abuser. The abuser told them they were special. Or the abuser did nice things for them, or treated them like grown-ups.
- Children who were treated as special liked the person who ended up abusing them and had good feelings when they were with them. They may feel confused or guilty about those feelings. It's natural to like someone who treats you special.
- Maybe the abuser really did like you, but didn't know the right way to let you know how he or she felt.



- It's okay if he touching felt good to you — gentle touching usually does. You may not have known what the abuser was doing was wrong . . . But he or she *did* know it was wrong. So the *abuser* is the one who should feel guilty, not you.
- Other children feel guilty because of all the changes in their family once they told about the abuse. They think they caused it.
- If you feel that way, please remember that those feelings belong to the abuser, not to you. You don't have to carry them around anymore.