Making a report of child abuse isn’t easy or comfortable but it is necessary. It is best not to overthink the situation and instead trust your gut and make the report. However, based on the low reporting rates nationwide, “just making the report” isn’t happening. Some people need extra encouragement. Read the list below and if you are still unsure, call Blue Sky Bridge @ 303-444-1388.

1. You are protecting an innocent child.
2. Getting the secret out is the first step towards healing.
3. Don’t worry about being wrong. You don’t have to prove or investigate.
4. The abuser won’t stop on their own.
5. Your report could lead to jail time and treatment which work to prevent future victims and incidents.
6. Sexual abuse causes long-term physical and psychological damage that only gets worse with repeated abuse.
7. The burden of wondering if something is happening is removed from your shoulders.
8. If you are a [mandated reporter](http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDHS-Main/CBON/1251651932321), you can face legal consequences for NOT reporting.
9. Even if there isn’t enough evidence for the authorities to act on your report, it may become part of a series of reports that can lead to action later.
10. Even though your report might not result in legal action, the investigation may cause other services to take place, like counseling or family support.

**Faulty logic that leads to underreporting**

No discussion of reasons to report would be complete without acknowledging some of the most common reasons adults **don’t** report. Although any of the reasons below are understandable and frightful, the consequences are likely worse. Beyond lack of knowledge about child abuse and local reporting laws, other reasons why adults don’t report (and why any adult should ignore those thoughts) are listed below:

Not wanting to get involved –Your silence and secrecy works to aid the abuser.

Someone else will report – Most children don’t tell multiple adults so you are likely the only one who knows.

Fear that reporting will make the situation worse – Law Enforcement and Boulder County Housing and Human Services are here to help protect children and families.

Fear that reporting will have negative impact on your relationship with the child/family – This isn’t about you, it is about being a voice for someone who is vulnerable.

You don’t believe the child is telling the truth– This may be especially true if the abuser is related to you, or maybe someone that you don’t believe would ever do something that terrible. **Believe them**. Estimates are that children are telling the truth in over 90% of cases.

Shock or fear about what you may have seen or heard – Imagine what it is like to be experiencing that horror. As unbelievable as it may seem, you need to share what you know so the violence can stop.

Self-doubt – Intuition is our strongest power, listen to it.

The child will be taken away - Many [mandated reporters](http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDHS-Main/CBON/1251651932321) believe that when they make a child abuse or neglect report the child will be removed from their family. In fact, less than 5% of children reported for abuse or neglect are removed from the home and usually it is not long term. For those who are not removed, their families are provided with services to insure the safety of the child.

**Ready to make a report? Click** [**HERE**](http://www.longmontpinwheel.org/wp-content/uploads/How-to-Make-a-Report_2019-update.docx)**.**