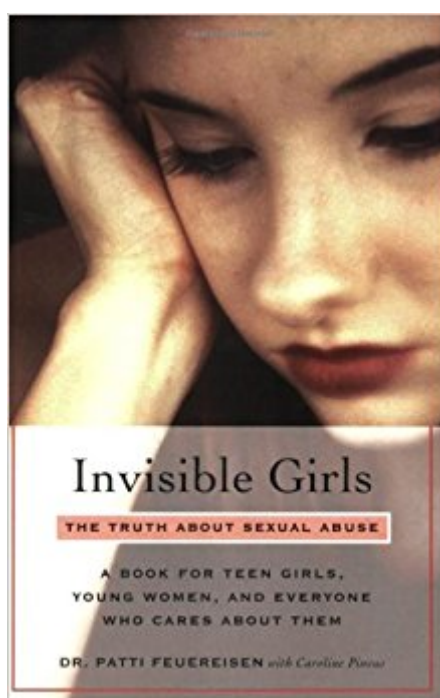


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# Invisible Girls: The Truth About Sexual Abuse--A Book For Teen Girls, Young Women, And Everyone Who Cares About Them



## Synopsis

Dr. Patti Feuereisen has been working with teenage girls for twenty-five years and has been a pioneer in helping abused girls find their voices. What she discovered in listening to hundreds of girls was not only that sexual abuse of young girls is in fact epidemic, but if the abuse can be processed when girls are still young—in their teens and early twenties—remarkable healing can take place. Girls and young women who are given an opportunity to speak out will most often go on to thrive as adults; without such an opportunity the traumatic effects of their abuse will often continue to cause them difficulty long into adulthood. *Invisible Girls* weaves together powerful first-person narratives with gentle guidance and seasoned insights to help girls through the maze of feelings that swirl around the abuse experience. This gives every young woman who struggles with the scars of sexual abuse the courage that comes from knowing that she is not alone, while other girls come out from behind the veil of secrecy to become vibrant, healthy, and whole.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Grade 9 Up—Written by a psychotherapist, this book sets personal narratives within a generalized discussion of sexual abuse of girls and young women. Feuereisen addresses myths about female sexuality and abuse, considers contributing family dynamics, and offers advice on preventing, reporting, and recovering from abuse. Individual chapters are given to father-daughter incest, other incest, abuse by teachers and clergy, and different types of rape. The writing is clear and frank, including sufficient details without becoming salacious. The personal voices are the strength here, reminding other victims that they are not alone and that healing is possible.

Individuals of various races and ethnicities tell their stories within their cultural contexts. Carolyn Lehman's *Strong at the Heart: How It Feels to Heal from Sexual Abuse* (Farrar, 2005) is an equally impressive title with greater emphasis on the importance of telling one's story to aid in the recovery process. Linda L. Foltz's *Kids Helping Kids Break the Silence of Sexual Abuse* (Lighthouse Point, 2003), for a younger readership, offers similar treatment on the importance of speaking out, with less explicit detail. © Joyce Adams Burner, Hillcrest Library, Prairie Village, KS Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

"If you are a teenage girl, this book may save your life. Invisible Girls will help you see the truth." -- InvisibleInsurrection.org, April 7, 2005 "Invisible Girls speaks the truth of sexual abuse like no other book has dared." ---Lyn Mikel Brown, author of "Meeting at the Crossroads," "Raising Their Voices," and "Girlfighting"

This book is amazing, it has helped me so much. Parts of it I felt like were my biography or something. It's just so supportive, I felt like it had an answer to everything. It was this book that made me realize (for the first time in my life) that maybe what happened to me wasn't my fault after all. I'm still learning that. This book was ten years in the making. Instantly I knew why, it truly is amazing. It helped me so much. I'm already re-reading it. I think what I like about it the best is that you managed to include everything a young survivor needs to hear in a way that is comforting and safe. My healing would be totally different, and probably stalled at this point, if it weren't for me having this book to read.

The stories in this book are so moving - it's hard to imagine that this kind of sexual abuse goes on, but it does and it needs to be discussed. Anyone who's ever experienced anything like this can read this book and find that there's hope and know that they can heal from the pain they've experienced. I would give this to anyone who's ever been sexually abused and anyone who wants to understand more about incest, date rape, etc. It's an important discussion that needs to be opened up - and maybe by talking about it, by it not being such a taboo subject, maybe the cycle of sexual abuse can be ended. I think it's a really well written and very helpful and hopeful book. Thanks, Dr. Patti!

This book is very interesting for adults. I'm not sure yet if I'm ready to give it to my 15 year old granddaughter.

This is a wonderful and very helpful book. Dr. Patti is also a great person! Chantell Snyder

As a professional in this field I am always looking for books that can be given to teenage victims of sexual abuse. I will not, however, be giving anyone this book, even though I purchased several copies prior to reading it. I applaud anyone who works with victims of sexual abuse, and I welcome resources that are helpful in processing childhood sexual abuse. All books that draw attention to sexual abuse and offer support to victims have some merit, yet I was disappointed by the exploitative nature of this book as many of the vignettes describe detailed information regarding the sexual abuse and end with "I am so glad I met Patti (the author of the book)." Instead of focusing on the victims healing and growth, it appears to applaud to the therapist's ability. Speaking of the therapist's ability, I was extremely concerned by the vignette of "Garnet" on page 116, in which Patti said Garnet disclosed egregious abuse by her father. Garnet had knowledge her sister was also being abused, yet instead of reporting the allegations directly to Child Protective Services, Patti called Garnet's mother into a therapeutic session and disclosed the abuse to Garnet's mother. Garnet's mother then alerted Garnet's father which allowed him to coach Garnet and Garnet's sister prior to the investigation beginning. Garnet's father was never charged and he was allowed to stay in the home to continue sexually abusing Garnet's sister. Had Patti reported the abuse to Child Protective Services and allowed them to conduct their investigation without interference, perhaps the outcome would have been different. Lastly, I will add Patti wrote a defensive retort to the one person who wrote negative review of this book. Everyone has a right to their opinion.

A few months ago, I started dating a very successful, attractive, and intelligent girl who revealed very early on our relationship that she was the victim of sexual abuse. Although she didn't provide details and I didn't pressure her for details, I had no idea the impact this could have on someone and as I got to know her better and see her more often, we actually started getting farther apart emotionally. This really confused and upset me because I was in love with her and I really wanted to be close to her. As a result, I began to push her to be closer emotionally and to share her feelings with me more often. Within a few weeks, she broke-up with me because I think of the pressure I applied to be close, among many other things that only now make so much sense. We remain, however, today as friends. After we broke up, I came across "Invisible Girls" and read it cover to cover twice. As I read the book, so many things that happened in our relationship and some of my friend's characteristics were now so understandable. I wish that I had read this book as soon as she

told me her story as I could have been so much more understanding and more supportive toward her than I was. For example, each time that she pushed me away, I would try to talk to her about it and try to get her to share her feelings with me, but in reality I was actually just pushing her away. After I read this book, I learned that such people really don't want to push people away but that is what they have done for years to protect themselves and it shouldn't be taken personally. I should have been more patient and understanding to my friend during these times. I highly recommend this book for anyone who wants to understand the affects that sexual abuse has on people, and to hear what steps individuals can take to recover, overcome and move forward confidently in their lives as independent people. It has given me the perspective and understanding to be unconditionally supportive, kind, loving, gentle and understanding toward my friend, which is the very least that my awesome friend should expect from anyone in her life. This really is a great book.

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