Childhelp | PREVENTION EDUCATION

BODY SAFETY & BOUNDARIES

Teaching kids about body ownership, personal safety, and personal boundaries are important to help protect kids and prevent abuse, online and offline. Talk openly and frequently about safety topics. Use these tips to help you get started.

EDUCATE

Educate kids about personal safety topics such as body ownership, boundaries, secrets, and safe and unsafe touches. Look for everyday opportunities to have safety conversations.

EMPOWER

Empower kids with control of their bodies, with the right to say NO to unwanted touches, and with choices in unsafe situations, such as get away, stay away, and tell a safe adult.

PROTECT

Protect kids by talking openly about personal safety with them and with other adults. Help them identify multiple safe adults they can talk to if they're ever hurt, confused, or feel unsafe.

BODY OWNERSHIP

Teach kids the importance of body ownership and personal boundaries by empowering them to know: "My body belongs to ME." Kids are often taught to listen to and obey adults. However, this may contribute to abuse by reinforcing they should listen to adults, even if the adult's behavior is unsafe or abusive.

- Instead, teach kids they have the right to control their body and to say yes or no to affection and touches and that it's okay to say no to hugs, kisses, or tickling.
- Teach them that no one should touch their private body parts (where they wear a bathing suit) unless it's for medical reasons and you or another safe adult are present.

SAFE VS. UNSAFE TOUCHES & BEHAVIORS

Teach kids how to recognize safe vs. unsafe touches and behaviors, and actions they can take if they experience them.

- Teach them safe touches make them feel cared for (high-fives, wanted hugs) and unsafe touches may hurt or make them feel uncomfortable, confused, or icky.
- Explain that if someone tries to touch, look at, or take pictures of their private body parts, this is always unsafe.
- Teach them the importance of emotional boundaries as well; No one should scare, threaten, or manipulate, or pressure them into doing anything unsafe.
- Empower them to say NO, get away, and tell you or another safe adult.

SECRETS VS. SURPRISES

Teach kids the importance of not keeping secrets.

- Teach them that surprises about safe and happy things (gifts or parties) are okay but safe adults never ask kids to keep secrets.
- Teach them if someone asks them to keep a secret, they should tell you or another safe adult.



Need Help?
Visit childhelp.org/resource-library for more information or to find your local reporting contact information. The Childhelp National Child Abuse Hotline is available 24/7 to provide support and resources. Call, text, or chat: 1-800-422-4453 or visit ChildhelpHotline.org.

Preventing **ABUSE BY** *building* **CONNECTED, PROTECTIVE COMMUNITIES**

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