

Sparking the Body Safety Conversation

HOW DO I DO THIS?

Just as you talk with your child about bike safety or crossing the street safely, talk with them about keeping their body safe. Keep the body safety conversations with your child light - if you are relaxed, they will be, too. So...where do you start?

Talk with your child about different types of touches:

- * Safe Touch: A hug, kiss, tickle that makes them feel happy or good inside.
- * Not Sure Touch: Also a hug, kiss, tickle, etc., but it doesn't make them feel good/happy.
- * Not Safe Touch: A grown-up, teenager, kid or friend touches their private parts, makes them touch someone else's private parts, plays games about touching private parts, and/or shows them pictures of people without clothes on.

Teach your child the correct names for private parts.

Teach your child to trust their feelings:

- * Take the time to listen to your child talk about not liking or feeling uncomfortable/weird/nervous around someone (grown-up, teenager, kid).
- * Let your child know that if anyone touches them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable or scared, they can always tell you, even if it's someone they know or like.
- * Remind your child that it is NEVER too late to tell about touches they received and didn't like.
- * Encourage your child to listen to their inner voice. If they get a weird feeling inside about something, it's always okay to tell one of their safe adults.

Safe Secrets:

- * These can also be called surprises. These secrets have an end, like a surprise party or a gift for someone.
- * Can make children feel good inside and happy; like a secret handshake they make up with their friend.
- * Would not need to be kept secret from everyone. No one is in danger or needs help.

Unsafe Secrets:

- * Unsafe secrets can make children feel uncomfortable, weird, or scared to keep.
- * Unsafe secrets are secrets kids are asked to not tell anyone, ever., including their mom, dad, or caregiver.
- * It is important for children to be reminded that they can ALWAYS tell an unsafe secret. Even if they forget and remember later, it's okay to tell a safe adult.

Safe Adults:

- * Safe adults are grown-ups that your child knows well, sees often, trusts, and knows how to help you.
- * Safe adults can be found in your child's home, school, and community.
- * Keep in mind that when children are using ANY electronic device that is connected to the internet, there is potential for them to encounter inappropriate content and engage in interactions with unsafe people. Set boundaries for what websites they may visit, and be aware of any apps they use. Even games for children have chat capabilities.