



## TEACH CHILDREN ABOUT SAFETY



**Talking with children about sexual abuse** can be a part of the safety conversations you're already having, like handwashing and social distancing or knowing what to do in a storm or fire.



### Talk to children about touching safety rules.

Tell children their bodies are special and belong to them. Explain that there are safety rules for all their body parts. Let them know that **NO ONE** should touch their private body parts except to keep them clean and healthy. Children also need to know that an adult or bigger kid, should never ask a child to touch their private body parts.



### Teach children the proper names of ALL their body parts.

Children need to learn the anatomically correct names for their genitals. Penises and vaginas are body parts just like eyes, ears, and noses. This knowledge will help them develop a healthy understanding of their bodies, and assist them in talking about inappropriate or questionable behaviors or touches that could lead to sexual abuse.



### Help children develop assertiveness skills.

Teach children to stand up for themselves *in a way that doesn't hurt someone else.*

Have children stand tall, look a mirror, and practice saying, "**No! I don't like that!**" and "**Stop it!! I'm telling!**"

Explain to children that sometimes **adults can be wrong.** Tell them **it is okay to tell an adult, NO or STOP,** especially if an adult is touching them in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable.

Children need to know that touching safety rules apply to EVERYONE, all the time.



SEXUAL ASSAULT  
CENTER



If you or someone you know has been affected by sexual violence, **it's not your fault. You are not alone.**

Help is available 24/7 through the **Statewide 24 Hour Crisis and Support Line: 1-866-811-RISE (7473)** and online [www.sacenter.org](http://www.sacenter.org).

**BE  
BRAVE**

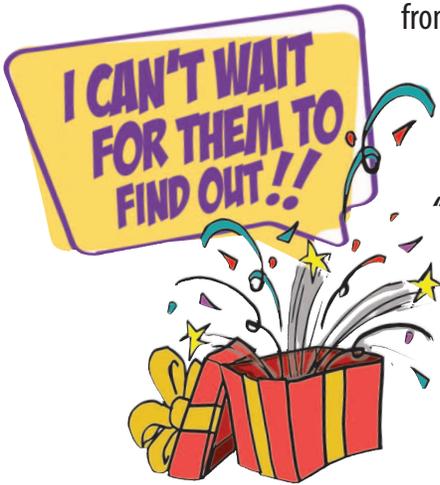
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**SHHH...  
DON'T EVER TELL.  
...it's our secret**



### Set up family rules about secrets.

*Teach children that secrets can be harmful, especially secrets about touching. "Forever Secrets" make people feel confused, sad, or afraid. Explain that "Forever Secrets" are VERY DIFFERENT from "Happy Surprises."*



*"Happy Surprises" create excitement and make people smile.*

*It is never okay for an adult or older kid to ask children to keep "Forever Secrets," especially secrets about touching. Direct children to tell a safe adult if anyone asks them to keep a touching secret.*

*Reassure children that it's OK to tell and to keep telling until someone listens.*



**Help children identify safe adults in their lives.** *Teach children that a safe adult is someone they feel comfortable with and can contact easily. Help children identify qualities that safe adults have like someone who takes care of children, is respectful and trustworthy, or is a good listener. Children should be able to identify several safe adults, at home, school, and in their communities. Make lists to post at home and carry with them. Let the safe adults know who they are so they are ready if the child reaches out. Teach children what to do if they can't reach a safe adult they know. Help them identify other safe adults, like those who respond to calls and chats through child abuse hotlines or other help lines where trained adults are always waiting to respond to their concerns.*



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