

Talking with Children about Sexual Abuse

Basic Safety Rules

- No one can touch your private parts except to keep you healthy.
- Adults and older kids do not need you to see their private parts or to help them with their private parts.
- Secrets about private parts are not ok.
- Taking pictures (or showing pictures) of private parts is breaking the rules.

Toddlers

- Teach the **correct** names of private parts; penis, vagina, breasts, bottom. Teach them these names as you are teaching the names of any other body parts.

3-5 Year Olds

- Teach children that their penis, bottom, vagina, and breasts are called private parts.
- Use teachable moments. Some examples for this age are: Check-ups, when they show or touch their private parts to others.
- Talk about the basic safety rules (see above).
- Children should know their full name and the city they live in.

7 – 8 Year Olds: Continue teaching the basic safety rules and talk more about them

- Adults and older kids know the rules.
- Some adults and kids have a problem with touching. They know they are breaking the rules.
- If someone breaks the safety rules, it's ok to talk about it.
- Who could you tell if someone is touching your private parts or asks you to touch theirs?
- Children should know their address and phone number.
- Teach children how to call 9-1-1.
- Begin to teach about Internet Safety. www.netismartz.org

9-12 Year Olds – Add to Basic Safety Rules

- If an adult or older child touches a younger child's private parts (or has younger kids touch their private parts), it is called, "sexual abuse."
- Friends may tell each other about sexual abuse. How could you be a good friend if someone told you someone broke the safety rules with them?
- Sometimes adults or older kids may show pictures of naked people or send messages that are sexual. **Being sexually abused is NEVER the kid's fault!**
- Sexual abuse stops when the secret is broken.
- Sexual abuse is too big a secret for a kid to keep.
- Talk about sexting and Internet pornography. This website is good resource: www.netismartz.org

Teenagers

- Ask what they know/believe about sexual abuse.
- Ask teens what they already know and fill in the gaps.
- Use film, television, or music as conversation starters.
- Speak with teens about healthy sexuality and consent. Contrast how consent does not occur when sexual abuse and sexual assault happens.

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