

Think First to Stay Safe!

Playing a “What if” game is a fun way to talk about family safety rules. It can also help children feel they have some control in a situation that is scary or that makes them feel uneasy. Let them know your rules and tell them they can make good decisions. Ask your child, “what would you do if...”



Let children know that you want them to make safe decisions and they can come to you with questions about any difficult decisions they might face. Start early having these conversations with your child. The more you talk about these topics, the easier it will be to discuss the tougher subjects as your child grows up! With your child, make a card that lists the names of people whom your child can:

-  Get into a car with
-  Tell your child their name, address, and phone number
-  Who has permission to enter your home if you are not home
-  Who they can give information to over the phone
-  Call if your child needs help
-  On the back of the card, draw a plan for getting out of the home in an emergency

Parents, teachers, and other caring adults can teach children guidelines for water, traffic and bike safety without children becoming fearful of swimming pools, crosswalks or riding their bicycles. Touching safety can be approached in the same straightforward, matter-of-fact manner. Here are some ideas for talking with children about touching safety:

- Include touching safety rules when you talk about other kinds of safety
- Repeat simple safety guidelines often: “In our family, we don’t keep secrets about touching. Grown-ups should never touch children on their private body parts except for health or hygiene reasons.” Or, “Never get in a car with a stranger you don’t know, no matter what they tell you.”
- Trust your inner voice (instincts, judgment, the uh oh feeling) if it is telling you something is not right. Trust your Gut!
- Establish your own set of family rules. Also, “It is OK to say no to anyone who wants to break one of our family rules. I will back you up.”
- Teach children that touching safety rules apply all the time and with anybody!
- Teach children that adults or kids are not always right; most people touch children in the right ways, but some don’t make good decisions about touching children. “If you aren’t sure about something another person says or does, ask me to explain it.”
- Let children know that you are approachable and that you will believe them and support them if they come to you with a tricky or dangerous, or confusing situation.
- Use correct vocabulary for the private parts of their body. Using the correct names for the private body parts enables children to express themselves clearly and not be misunderstood.



Safety Rule #1
No one should touch a child on the private parts of the body and tell them to keep the touch a secret.



Safety Rule #2
If any person touches your private body parts or wants you to touch theirs, say “NO”! GET AWAY and TELL SOMEONE!



Safety Rule #3
Any time you feel uncomfortable or confused about an affectionate touch, you can say “NO” and talk to a