



Empowering Kids Against Sexual Abuse

Age: 1-3 years

9+
months

Teach Proper Names for Genitalia Without Embarrassment

Kids that grow up feeling that they cannot talk about their genitalia in an open & honest manner are more hesitant to tell someone if there is a problem or someone has done something inappropriate. When you use correct terms your children can communicate effectively and if they start using a made up name for their penis or vulva/vagina, find out why.

18+
months

Private Parts are Private Because They're Special!

Teach your children that private parts are the parts of our body covered by a bathing suit. Explain that no one, not even mom or dad, should be touching or looking at their privates unless there is a problem - like a 'boo boo,' to change a diaper, or wipe after using the toilet. At a doctor's visit it is ok because it's for their health and mom or dad is there. Dressing, using the toilet, and bathing are times when people should have privacy.

18+
months

Forced Affection is Not Respect

By this age, some children will feel afraid or hesitant to hug, be held, or kissed by someone they're not comfortable with. This is OK and their need for personal space should be respected. Well-meaning parents are often afraid of hurting the feelings of others, such as a loving grandparent, but the subliminal message being sent to the child is that sometimes they will be forced to engage in unwanted physical contact - even with a family member, and that they're expected to submit. A "hello" or wave "hi" is acceptable until the child is comfortable.

18+
months

Respecting "No"

Lead by example and teach your children that saying "no" when someone has touched, tickled, or engaged in physical contact that is unwanted, the person must stop and respect the other person's right to not be touched. Make sure that friends & extended family follow this rule as well.

2+
years

Secrets vs Surprises and Gifts Only With Permission

Convicted abusers have admitted how easily they gained the silence of a child simply by asking or rewarding them. Teach your children the difference between secrets & surprises. A surprise is one thing - because the end result will be the person finding out. A secret is not allowed. Lead by example and make sure your children and your friends/family know that secrets are not allowed - even if it's just over sneaking some cookies before supper. Gifts should only be received after asking mom & dad if it's ok.

Empowering kids against sexual abuse not only helps protect them, it encourages a sense of self-respect and confidence, the groundwork for understanding consent, being respectful toward others, and strengthens the parent/child relationship.

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