

TALKING WITH CHILDREN ABOUT SAFETY FROM SEXUAL ABUSE

RELATIONSHIP

Emotional connection
+ Consistent involvement
= A protective bond

RESILIENCE

Self esteem
Having choices
Feeling supported

FROM BIRTH

- Start talking early
- Use proper names for body parts
- Talk about parts of the body that others should not touch
- Use a gentle, matter of fact tone

AS THEY GROW

- Give examples of people the child knows
- Ask children not to keep secrets
- Use “comfortable” and “uncomfortable”
- Teach children about privacy
- Allow children to have boundaries
- Encourage questions
- Recognize normal development
- Teach respect for others’ boundaries

MORE INDEPENDENT

- Play the “What If?” game
- Ask children about time spent with others
- Use examples of people they know, even youth
- Use everyday opportunities
- Let children think of solutions
- Play the “5 Senses” game
- Teach children about gut instinct
- Help identify safe adults
- Teach children they can avoid isolation with others
- Teach about the act of sex

- Find strategies together to exit unsafe situations
- Teach “public and permanent” for digital safety
- Listen with your eyes and ears
- Ask about feelings
- Ask open-ended questions
- Convey your values and opinions
- Encourage healthy relationships
- Talk about choices and consequences

These are general guidelines for talking about safety from sexual abuse as children grow up. Many of the suggestions are appropriate for all ages.

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1. Why is relationship with parents and caregivers a critical part of a child's safety from sexual abuse?

2. What can you teach your child(ren) about private body parts, given their age and development?

3. Write down some "what would you do if examples" that you could talk about with your child.

4. Think about the social and sexual situations that pre-teens and teens face. What are some of the important conversations adults need to have with them about these situations?

5. What protective conversations will you have with your children this week?

MORE TRAINING & RESOURCES

Stewards of Children is a prevention and response training for youth serving organizations, parents, and caregivers. Facilitator-led or Online. Learn more at www.D2L.org/stewards

For more information on sexual development and behavior and sexual behavior problems in children visit www.nctsn.org

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

- Talking with Children about Safety From Sexual Abuse • Healthy Touch for Children and Youth
- Bystanders Protecting Children • Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

Learn more at www.D2L.org/training

Sign up for ongoing information about child sexual abuse prevention at www.D2L.org/join